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THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

FORT SUPPLY, INDIAN TERRITORY: FRONTIER OUTPOST

ON THE SOUTHERN PLAINS, 1868-1894

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY

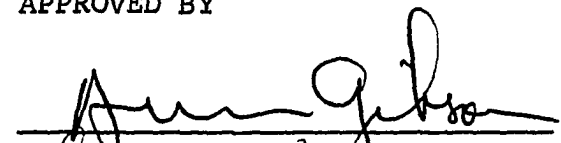
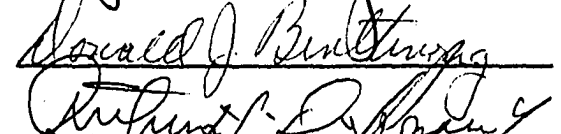
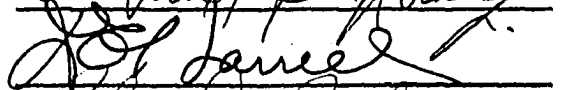

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Norman, Oklahoma

1967

FORT SUPPLY, INDIAN TERRITORY: FRONTIER OUTPOST
ON THE SOUTHERN PLAINS, 1868-1894

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PREFACE

In my first month of graduate training in Western history at the University of Oklahoma I was introduced to Fort Supply. At the time I was working part-time for the Division of Manuscripts on the Walter S. Campbell Collection. Many of the interests of Campbell soon became my own. Indians, Dodge City, the Santa Fe Trail, and dozens of other western topics spiced the correspondence, manuscripts and research papers of the late Professor Campbell, who often wrote under the pseudonym Stanley Vestal. In the volumes of material one military post, Fort Supply, northwestern Indian Territory, struck my fancy.

Some weeks after my initial contact with the post, in the fall of 1963, I spent several days at a friend's house in the Oklahoma Panhandle on Beaver River. On my journey northwest from Norman I passed through Supply, Oklahoma and the scattered buildings of the old fort, now a State Mental Hospital. Those next few days on Beaver River, an area often scouted by troopers from Fort Supply, left me with an abiding in-

terest in the post and region.

A short time later I presented a paper on the formation of Fort Supply in Professor Donald J. Berthrong's Western history seminar. Once I had located the post I determined to tell the complete story. For three years I kept the post in mind, visited the region four times more, and gathered maps and a list of sources. At last in the spring of 1966 I began full time research on the project and the reward has been great. Fort Supply has yielded an exciting story of frontier life in western Indian Territory.

Many persons have assisted me in this study, and in each case the aid has been a significant contribution. The staff of the University of Oklahoma Division of Manuscripts has been particularly gracious. Professor of History, Arrell M. Gibson has given encouragement and counsel during all of the difficult research and later corrected the manuscript with a professional eye. Curator Jack D. Haley worked with me on Fort Supply since my first encounter with the post, and has consistently offered good advice, friendship and research leads. Professor Donald J. Berthrong has taken time from his duties as Chairman of the Department of History to lead me through the difficult years of the 1870's and greatly enhanced the value of the study by allowing the author to use his own

painstaking research from the Office of Indian Affairs at the National Archives. Miss Sara Jackson of the Old Army Records Division, National Archives guided my research with unfailing skill and good humor. Thanks are also offered to Professors Arthur H. DeRosier and D. Edward Harrell for reading the manuscript.

A special commendation is due Dean Carl Riggs of the University of Oklahoma Graduate College for financial assistance through the National Science Foundation, Science Faculty Fellowship which made possible my National Archives research. Mr. and Mrs. William Zimmerer of Arlington, Virginia, very dear friends, opened their house to me for the month I scoured the National Archives, and made my stay enjoyable as well as profitable.

My wife, Eleanor, has assisted me in many ways, not least of which was to correct and proof-read the manuscript. The mistakes are, of course, all my own.

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FORT SUPPLY, INDIAN TERRITORY: FRONTIER OUTPOST
ON THE SOUTHERN PLAINS, 1868-1894

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Fort Supply was established in 1868 as an operational base for the United States Army in its extended campaign to control the Southern Plains. The years following the Civil War saw this region ripped by savage warfare. Relentlessly pushed by white intruders, warriors from the plains tribes mounted violent raids along the frontiers of Colorado, Kansas and Texas. Wagon trains were attacked and burned, horses and mules stolen, settlers and miners killed. Torture, murder and pillage became the fate of numerous pioneers.

It cost the United States \$40,000,000 and countless lives to contain the Plains Indians after the 1864 Sand Creek Massacre.¹ The energy of 8,000 troops was expended until

¹Senate Exec. Doc. No. 13, 40 Cong., 1 Sess., 2.

October, 1865 when a full treaty commission, consisting of Major General John B. Sanborn, Major General W. S. Harney, Kit Carson, William Bent, Jesse Leavenworth, James Steele and Thomas Murphy met with the hostiles. The Treaty of the Little Arkansas River brought temporary peace as Cheyennes and Arapahoes, Kiowa-Apaches and Kiowas and Comanches accepted reservations.²

The truce, however, succumbed in the early months of 1866. Texas' control of its public lands nullified the proposed reservation for the Kiowas and Comanches, and Kansas similarly refused Cheyenne settlement along its southern border.³ Before long Cheyenne Dog Soldiers, the warrior society conspicuously absent from the Little Arkansas meetings, were suspected of hostilities. In spite of the efforts of Agent Edward W. Wynkoop to bring them into the treaty fold, the Dog Soldiers remained at large, harassing wagon trains and livestock herds. Those Cheyennes committed by the treaty became restless and farther south the Kiowas, led by Satanta and

²Charles J. Kappler (ed.), Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties (Washington, 1903), II, 887, 890, 892; William H. Leckie, The Military Conquest of the Southern Plains (Norman, 1963), 25; Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Year 1865, 528-533.

³Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Year 1868, 35.

Lone Wolf, raided through a defense-poor Texas undergoing Federal Reconstruction.⁴ The fires of Indian raids once again swept the Southern Plains charring frontier settlements.

Governor Samuel J. Crawford of Kansas journeyed to Washington and urged greater Federal protection. A peace commission was sent to counsel with the hostiles and this meeting resulted in the Medicine Lodge Treaty. The Kiowas, Comanches, and Apaches of the Plains pledged themselves to a reservation of 3,000,000 acres between the Washita and Red rivers, and the ninety-eighth and 100th meridians.⁵ A week later, on October 28, 1867, the Cheyennes and Arapahoes came to terms. More than 2,000 Cheyennes received presents, a fresh supply of clothing, blankets and ammunition, plus the government's promise to provide \$20,000 annually for their benefit over a period of twenty-five years. The Indians also retained the privilege of hunting buffalo south of the Arkan-

⁴Leckie, Military Conquest, 31-34; Marvin Garfield, "Defense of the Kansas Frontier, 1866-1867," Kansas Historical Quarterly, I (August, 1932), 326.

⁵Kappler, Indian Affairs, II, 984-989; Leckie, Military Conquest, 62. The Kiowa-Comanche Reservation began at a point where the Washita River crosses the ninety-eighth meridian; thence up the Washita River to a point thirty miles, by river, west of Fort Cobb; thence due west to the North Fork of Red River; thence down said North Fork to the main Red River; thence down said river to its intersection with the ninety-eighth meridian; thence north, on said meridian line to the place of beginning.

sas. In return the Cheyennes agreed not to impede railroad construction or restrain overland transportation, never to molest the whites, and to move to a new 4,300,000 acre reservation bounded by the thirty-seventh parallel and the Cimarron and Arkansas rivers.⁶

Unfortunately the Medicine Lodge Treaty was no more successful than the Treaty of the Little Arkansas River. With scarcely an interruption for the winter months, the Texas frontier was overrun by war parties early in 1868. Kiowas under Lone Wolf ravaged Texas in January and February, and Comanche warriors were equally active.⁷

By late May, 1868 the Cheyennes entered the new hostilities. Warriors from this tribe burned Council Grove, Kansas. In mid August rampaging war parties streaked through the Saline and Solomon valleys and onto the eastern Colorado frontier.

⁶Kappler, Indian Affairs, II, 984-989; Donald J. Berthrong, The Southern Cheyennes (Norman, 1963), 297-298. The Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation began at the point where the Arkansas River crosses the thirty-seventh parallel of north latitude; thence west on that parallel to the Cimarron River; down the Cimarron to the Arkansas River; up the Arkansas River to the place of beginning.

⁷Leckie, Military Conquest, 65; Philip McCusker to W. B. Hazen, December 22, 1868, in the Sherman-Sheridan Papers, typescript in the C. C. Rister Collection, 117, Division of Manuscripts, University of Oklahoma Library. The Sherman-Sheridan Papers will hereafter be cited as the S-S Papers.

Depredations on settlers and the overland traffic continued through September on the Cimarron crossing and the Santa Fe Trail.⁸

Appeals to the War Department for better protection led to eventual military action. Post Civil War military structure divided the United States into Divisions, Departments and Districts, commanded respectively by Lieutenant, Major, and Brigadier Generals. The Great Plains, stretching from the Rio Grande to the northernmost border of the United States, and eastward from the Rocky Mountains to the ninety-eighth meridian, was designated the Division of the Missouri, commanded by Lieutenant General William T. Sherman. Boundaries of the Departments within this Division frequently changed, but in general the Southern Plains were administered by the Department of the Missouri, while the Departments of the Platte and Dakota controlled the Northern Plains.⁹

General Sherman named Major General Philip H. Sheridan

⁸United States Army, Military Division of the Missouri, Record of Engagements with Hostile Indians Within the Military Division of the Missouri From 1868 to 1882 (Washington, 1882), 8; Berthrong, Southern Cheyennes, 303-307; "In sixty days that summer they killed 117 settlers and took 7 women into captivity." Oliver H. Knight, Following the Indian Wars (Norman, 1960), 71; Annual Report of the Secretary of War for the Year 1868, 13-16.

⁹Report of the Secretary of War, 1868, 1.

commander of the Department of the Missouri, and duty was assumed March 2, 1868. At this time the Department of the Missouri included the State of Missouri, plus the military Districts of Kansas, Upper Arkansas, Indian Territory, and New Mexico, totaling about 150,000 square miles. To control Indian hostilities that, by March, 1868, were of monumental proportions, Sheridan was allowed 1,200 cavalry and 1,400 infantry at twenty-four frontier posts. Central and southern Kansas was dotted with Forts Leavenworth, Riley, Dodge, Harker, Hays, Zarah, Larned, Wallace, and a camp near Fort Hays. In Colorado Territory, Forts Lyon, Reynolds, and Garland formed a western frontier with Forts Bascom, Bayard, Craig, Cummings, McRae, Selden, Stanton, Union, and Wingate in New Mexico Territory. South of Kansas, Forts Gibson and Arbuckle stood in Indian country, and Fort Smith in Arkansas was associated with the Indian Territory posts.¹⁰

As commander of the troubled department, Sheridan was anxious to cooperate with his superior in bringing the Indian problem to a conclusion. Following his spring, 1868 inspection of Forts Hays and Dodge, the Department Commander meditated on his problem. Containing warlike Indians was difficult

¹⁰Philip H. Sheridan, Personal Memoirs (New York, 1888), II, 297; C. C. Rister, Border Command (Norman, 1944), 42-43.

under the best of circumstances, but protecting outlying settlements with an undermanned and widespread command was virtually impossible considering the warfare technique of Southern Plains tribes.

The Indian moved about the plains in small parties. He struck settlements and commerce swiftly. Riding twenty-four hours non-stop after an attack the roving red man could put 100 miles between himself and his pursuers. Frontier troops had little success in contacting such a mobile enemy. Moreover, the semi-arid, treeless expanse on which the Indian lived hampered punitive expeditions. The climate, the soldiers' ignorance of survival techniques on the plains, and the tremendous problems of supply made extended campaigns seem impossible.¹¹ In winter the tribesmen camped in the protected river valleys of southwestern Indian Territory, and generally were quiet until spring.

With this in mind Sheridan developed an attack plan which would make most effective use of his limited military resources. If his troops were used defensively the remainder of the summer of 1868, Sheridan reasoned, once winter approach-

¹¹Rister, Border Command, 72; C. C. Rister, "Colonel A. W. Evans' Christmas Day Indian Fight (1868)," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XVI (September, 1938), 277.

ed the Indian and his grass-fed pony would not be as active and could be dealt with decisively.¹² Weakened ponies and a contracted winter campground was made to order for the movement he planned. An extensive and deftly prepared winter campaign would force the Indians onto their proper reservations, at the same time showing the winter season offered no respite from pursuit. The lesson would be clear: security can come only in obedience to the treaty.

This design seemed to fit well into General Sherman's long-range strategy as outlined by his biographer Robert G. Athearn:¹³

The last steps in laying the main Pacific Railroad were now underway, and before long California would be connected with Omaha. Shortly, also the 'Eastern Division' now better known as the 'Kansas Pacific,' would reach Denver. With the two great lines cutting across Kansas and Nebraska to the mountains, a steel fence would shut the Indians out of a great strip of land reserved for the whites. The Indians, now assigned by law to reservations on either side of the white preserve, could be herded on their reservations by force, if necessary.

¹²Report of F. M. Gibson, as published in Melbourne C. Chandler (comp.), Of Garry Owen in Glory. The History of the Seventh United States Cavalry Regiment (Annadale, Virginia, 1960), 13; Sheridan, Personal Memoirs, II, 297; Leckie, Military Conquest, 88; William T. Sherman to A. C. Hunt, October 22, 1868, Headquarters of the Army, Letters Received, Records of the War Department, in Donald J. Berthrong Collection, Division of Manuscripts, University of Oklahoma Library.

¹³Robert G. Athearn, William Tecumseh Sherman and the Settlement of the West (Norman, 1956), 223.

Sherman agreed with Sheridan that Indians who rejected prior agreements should be reminded of their obligations.

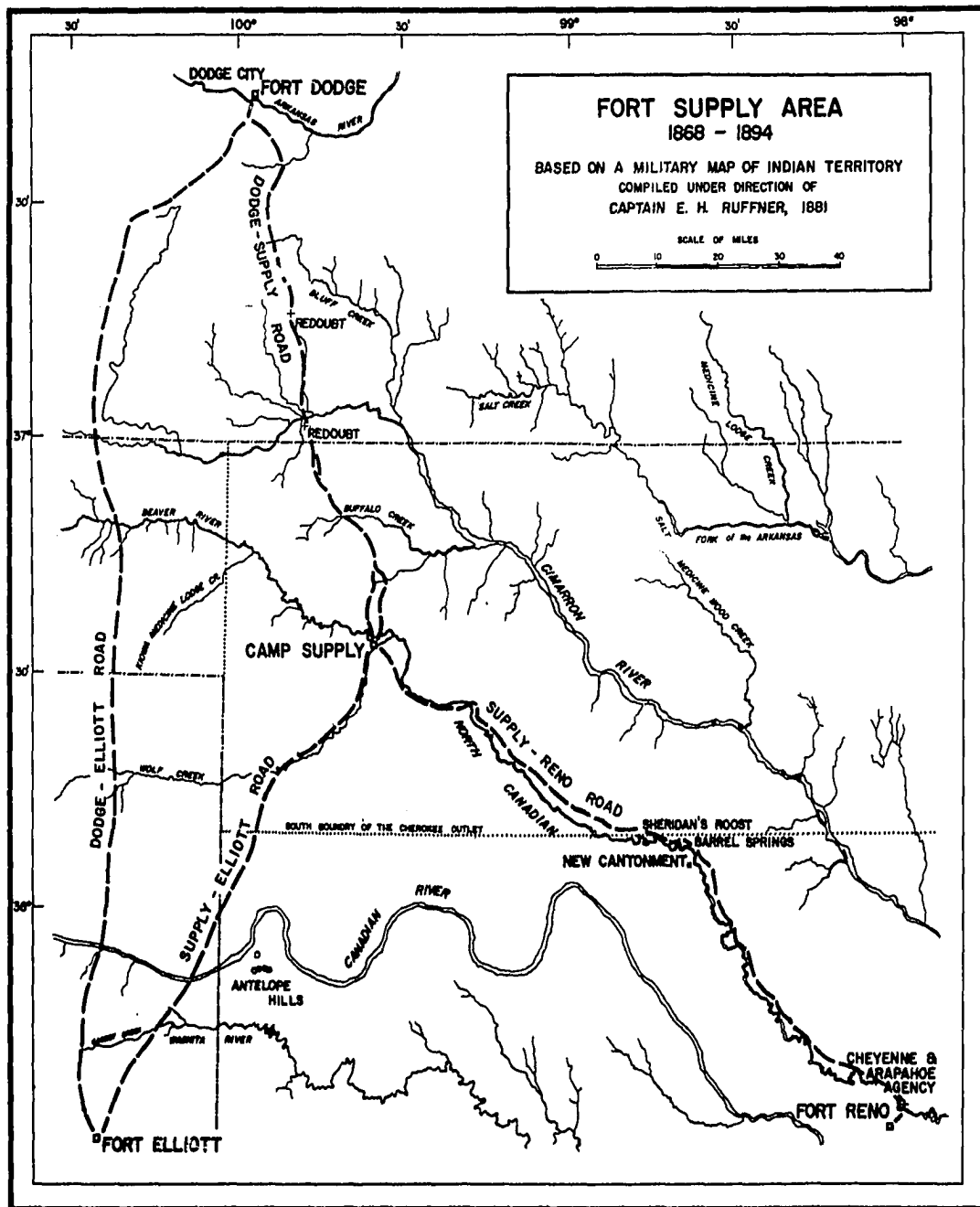
Eight hundred persons had died in Indian raids since June, 1862.¹⁴ Twice since October, 1865 the Indians had cast off treaty obligations and taken up the lance.

On August 21, 1868 Sherman telegraphed the War and Interior Departments that he had ordered General Sheridan to drive the Indians "south of the Kansas line and in pursuing to kill if necessary." That same day Sheridan informed Kansas Governor Crawford that he would order all Indians to their reservations. Those who refused to obey would be attacked.¹⁵ In September Sherman advised Secretary of War John M. Schofield of his intentions. He reported that red men had continued their aggressions, refused peace and virtually demanded war. He would give them enough of it "to satisfy their hearts content."¹⁶

¹⁴Record of Engagements, 14; House Exec. Doc. No. 1, 41 Cong., 2 Sess., 44.

¹⁵Sherman to J. R. Townsend, August 22, 1868, Office of the Adjutant General, Letters Received, Records of the War Department, in Donald J. Berthrong Collection, Division of Manuscripts, University of Oklahoma Library. Hereafter these records will be cited as AGO, Letters Received, OU. Marvin Garfield, "Defense of the Kansas Frontier, 1868-1869," Kansas Historical Quarterly, II (November, 1932), 457.

¹⁶Sherman to John A. Schofield, September 26, 1868, AGO, Letters Received, OU.



CHAPTER II

CAMP SUPPLY IN THE WINTER CAMPAIGN, 1868

Between late August, 1868 when Sheridan began requesting authority for a winter campaign, and the receipt of approval, Indians were met several times in combat. The location of Camp Supply was directly affected by one of these incidents.

Brigadier General Alfred Sully commanded the District of the Upper Arkansas, directly subordinate to General Sheridan. Upon receiving intelligence that Cheyenne families and stock were assembled near the Cimarron River in Indian Territory, Sheridan ordered Sully and a force of more than 500 men south of the Arkansas to attack.

Nine troops of the Seventh Cavalry under Major Joel H. Elliott and one company of the Third Infantry, led by Captain John H. Page, followed Sully across the Arkansas two miles west of Fort Dodge on the afternoon of September 7, 1868. After riding about thirty miles from dusk on the 7th until nearly three the next morning, the troops rested. At seven

they returned to their saddles and rode to Goose Creek, Kansas arriving about 2 p.m. on the 8th. Indian trails were checked at this point, and later the troops moved south on Goose Creek for the night.¹

Next day Elliott and four troops of cavalry followed the few visible Indian trails while the remainder of the force moved eight miles south to await developments. A messenger from Elliott arrived at 4 a.m., September 10, bringing news of Indians and reville brought the troops to their feet. Thirteen miles south and west out of camp Elliott rejoined the main command and the line of march proceeded down the Cimarron. Four hours later the advance party of scouts John Smith, Ben Clark and Amos Chapman were attacked but emerged from the scrape unhurt. Shortly Elliott's vanguard repulsed an attack, counting two dead Indians. Night was spent within one mile of the confluence of the Cimarron and Crooked Creek.²

Camp was broken at 6 a.m. on September 11, and just as

¹E. S. Godfrey, "Some Reminiscences, Including an Account of General Sully's Expedition Against the Southern Plains Indians," Cavalry Journal, XXXVI (July, 1927), 421-422; George H. Shirk, "Campaigning with Sheridan: A Farrier's Diary," Chronicles of Oklahoma XXXVII (Spring, 1959), 74; Alfred Sully to C. McKeever, September 16, 1868, AGO, Letters Received, OU.

²Ibid.; Record of Troop G, Seventh Cavalry for September, 1868 as published in Chandler, Of Garry Owen, 26-27.

the rear guard formed, a party of Indians entered camp at full gallop and carried off two men of F Troop, Seventh Cavalry. Private Louis Curran lost his life in the attempted rescue but his comrade was recovered. Encouraged by their near success and the capture of four horses, the hostiles harassed Elliott's column for the next ten miles. About 200 Cheyenne Dog Soldiers, fully armed and supplied, attacked under bugle call but were driven off with a loss of eight warriors. At the site of a deserted Indian village, six miles from Beaver River, the Indians struck Elliott's column again in great force but were repulsed with heavy casualties. The final surprise Indian raid at 2 a.m. on the 12th was ineffectual.³

Sully's line of march continued at dawn the next day. Some sixteen miles out, about mid day, as he approached Beaver River the Indians made another stand. Eight troop of cavalry and one company of infantry dislodged the Indians from their stronghold in the surrounding sandhills. An intense general action continued for two hours. When the Indians withdrew, with perhaps twelve casualties, Sully continued fifteen miles down Beaver River.⁴

³Ibid.; Shirk, "Campaigning with Sheridan," 74-75.

⁴Ibid.; Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 1, Records of the War Department, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

On the morning of September 13 camp was broken early and troops crossed the ridge that divides Beaver River from Wolf Creek, struck Wolf Creek only one-fourth of a mile south of what would become the site of Camp Supply, and marched southeasterly two miles. Confused by the false trails laid down for him, Sully rode blindly into a trap. A large body of Cheyennes, Arapahoes, Kiowas and Comanches held the sandhills on all sides of a pass and almost succeeded in capturing the supply train. Holding the infantry in the rear to protect the wagons, Sully ordered half the cavalry to move against the sandhills on foot. Heavy resistance cost the life of Private Cyrus McCorbitt, but in the end the Indians were dislodged. Later it would be known that the Indian village was but a short distance beyond, and had the entire cavalry force been used a Washita campaign might never have been necessary. The weary command camped on the North Canadian River, barely one-half mile from the future Camp Supply.⁵

Convinced the Indian families had gone south to the Wichita Mountains, Sully decided to return to Fort Dodge. Twenty miles, with continual Indian harassment, were made in that direction on the 14th, and the following day's march crossed the Cimarron at the head of the Salt Plains and brought

⁵Ibid.; Gibson, Report, in Chandler, Of Garry Owen, 11.

the command thirty-two miles closer to the Arkansas. The main command remained in camp on Bluff Creek on the 16th as sick and wounded went forward to Dodge. The next day General Sully left Major Elliott in command and proceeded to Fort Dodge where he arrived later that day.⁶

Although something less than effective, Sully's expedition scouted 255 miles, much of it in uncharted Indian Territory, respectably engaged the enemy, and counted twenty to thirty warriors dead, with troop casualties held to three killed and six wounded. At best the movement demonstrated the need of a much stronger force if the Indians were to be dealt a telling blow.⁷

Some weeks after this campaign, Sully would be commissioned to set up a base inside the Indian Territory for use by a large attack force.⁸ Recalling his September 13 and 14 engagements near the confluence of Beaver River and Wolf

⁶Ibid.

⁷Berthrong, Southern Cheyennes, 320. General Sheridan in his Annual Report listed seventeen to twenty-two Indians killed and two troopers killed and one wounded. Report of Secretary of War, 1868, 18.

⁸Arrangements had already been made for the establishment of a supply base "at a point one hundred and ten miles (110) south of Dodge," by October 10, 1868. P. H. Sheridan to Sherman, October 10, 1868, AGO, Letters Received, OU.

Creek, Sully named this area for his base camp. In Addition to his own recollections of the site Sully relied on the judgment of Major Elliott, Captain Page and scout John Smith. All three men would return to the area with the field command to develop an operational depot in November, 1868.⁹

On October 9, 1868 Sheridan received authority from his superiors for the winter campaign.¹⁰ The difficulties and hardships troops were sure to encounter caused several experienced officers and frontiersmen to discourage the project, but Sheridan continued preparations. He was confident the better fed and clothed soldier had the advantage.¹¹ To make sure the soldiers kept that advantage was the duty of the depot Sully was order to establish. Vast amounts of supplies accumulated at Forts Dodge and Lyon, some of which would later be transferred to Sully's depot. Three months subsistence was also sent to Fort Arbuckle as Sheridan expected his command to draw rations from this post when they moved into southern

⁹De Benneville Randolph Keim, Sheridan's Troopers on the Borders (Philadelphia, 1870), 101-102; Charles J. Brill, Conquest of the Southern Plains (Oklahoma City, 1938), 120; Sheridan, Personal Memoirs, II, 308.

¹⁰House Exec. Doc. No. 1, 41 Cong., 2 Sess., 44.

¹¹Sheridan, Personal Memoirs, II, 307; Rister, Border Command, 92.

Indian Territory.¹²

The end of October saw the completion of most of these arrangements. Directions were then given to the commander at Fort Bascom, New Mexico Territory to organize a column and march eastward and to Major Eugene A. Carr to move southeastward from Fort Lyon, Colorado Territory. Sully, in command of the third column would lead the main force to the supply post at Beaver River and Wolf Creek.¹³ In a campaign projected for six months, the Indians would be struck a hard blow and forced onto their reservations. Sheridan wrote Sherman on November 1:¹⁴

The plan of operations . . . was, to let the small column from Bascom, consisting of six companies of the 3rd Cavalry, two companies of the 37th Infantry, and four mountain howitzers, aggregating five hundred and sixty-three men, operate along the main Canadian--establishing a depot at Monument Creek, and remaining out as long as it could be supplied--at least until

¹²Sheridan, Personal Memoirs, II, 310; Sheridan to Samuel J. Crawford, October 9, 1868, AGO, Letters Received, OU; 400,000 rations were sent to Fort Dodge, 300,000 rations to Fort Lyon, and 300,000 rations to Fort Arbuckle from Fort Leavenworth, via Fort Gibson. House Exec. Doc. No. 1, 41 Cong., 2 Sess., 45.

¹³House Exec. Doc. No. 1, 41 Cong., 2 Sess., 44; Sheridan, Personal Memoirs, II, 308; Keim, Sheridan's Troopers, 101.

¹⁴Sheridan to Sherman, November 1, 1868 (COPY), Ben Clark Collection, Division of Manuscripts, University of Oklahoma Library.

sometime in January; the column of General Carr to unite with a small force under General Penrose--then out, composed of one company of the 7th and four small companies of the 10th Cavalry--establishing a depot on the headwaters of the North Canadian, and operate south, towards the Antelope Hills and headwaters of Red River. These columns were really beaters in, and were not expected to accomplish much. The main column, from Camp Supply, was expected to strike the Indians either on the headwaters of the Washita or still further south on the Sweetwater and other branches of the Red river.

When Major Eugene A. Carr reported his late October engagement on the Republican River had sent the Cheyennes and Arapahoes south, the final defensive movement had been completed. On November 1, 1868 General Sheridan issued final orders to his commanders and the offensive maneuvers began.¹⁵ During September and October Sheridan and Sherman had arranged for General William B. Hazen to accommodate all peaceful Kiowas, Comanches and Kiowa-Apaches at Fort Cobb.¹⁶ Those Indians remaining outside their reservations were considered hostile and in the ensuing expedition no quarter would be given.

¹⁵Report of Eugene A. Carr, Commanding Expedition from Fort Lyon of the operations of the Command during the Late Campaign against Hostile Indians, April 7, 1869, S-S Papers, 232-257. George F. Price (Comp.), Across the Continent with the Fifth Cavalry (New York, 1883), 132; Carr to Sheridan, November 1, 1868, AGO, Letters Received, OU.

¹⁶Leckie, Military Conquest, 90-91; Marvin E. Kroeker, "William B. Hazen: A Military Career in the Frontier West, 1855-1880" (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1966), 130-139.

The Nineteenth Kansas Volunteer Cavalry of 1,200 men, organized in late October, 1868 at Topeka, departed in two groups for the supply camp on the Beaver on November 5, 1868. Companies D and G proceeded by rail to Fort Hays and then joined Sully's supply trains enroute to Indian Territory via Fort Dodge. The remaining ten companies marched south of Topeka, through Camp Beecher, headed for the depot listed only as "100 miles south of the Arkansas River."¹⁷ Colonel Andrew W. Evans left Fort Bascom on November 18, and Major Carr moved from Fort Lyon on December 2.¹⁸

On November 12, the Seventh Cavalry departed its position six miles east of Dodge City on the Arkansas River, and marched five miles to Mulberry Creek to join General Sully, the infantry, and the supply train. Here, also, Sully, as commander of the District of the Upper Arkansas, assumed responsibility for the combined force of 1,100 men.¹⁹

¹⁷House Exec. Doc. No. 1, 41 Cong., 2 Sess., 44; Keim, Sheridan's Troopers, 101; The Nineteenth Kansas Volunteer Cavalry was authorized by Sheridan on October 9, 1868 and was ordered to be in the field November 1, 1868. Sheridan, Personal Memoirs, II, 308, 310; David L. Spotts, Campaigning with Custer (Los Angeles, 1928), 13.

¹⁸Andrew W. Evans to Assistant Adjutant General, District of New Mexico, Report of the Canadian River Expedition, January 23, 1869, S-S Papers, 165; Carr, Report, S-S Papers, 243.

¹⁹Gibson, Report, in Chandler, Of Garry Owen, 14;

Marching due south the command moved in four closely formed parallel columns. The usual order of march, as documented by Colonel George A. Custer of the Seventh Cavalry, directed:²⁰

. . . the four hundred wagons of the supply train and those belonging to the troops formed in equal columns; in advance of the wagons at a proper distance rode the advance guard of cavalry; a corresponding cavalry force formed the rear guard. The remainder of the cavalry was divided into two equal parts, and these parts again divided into three equal detachments; these six detachments were disposed of along the flanks of the column, three on a side, maintaining a distance between themselves and the train of from a quarter to half a mile, while each of them had flanking parties thrown out opposite the train.

The force maintained steady marches. It covered twenty miles on November 13 and eighteen miles the next day, crossing Cavalry Creek and camping on Bear Creek. On the 15th, snow and chilling winds slowed the column which advanced eleven miles to the Cimarron River. The day following, the command marched eight miles south, ten miles east of south, and then

Shirk, "Campaigning with Sheridan," 83-84; George A. Custer, My Life on the Plains (Norman, 1962), 193; Keim, Sheridan's Troopers, 101; Sheridan, Personal Memoirs, II, 308. Sully's combined command consisted of eleven troops of the Seventh Cavalry, three companies of the Third Infantry, one company of the Thirty-eighth Infantry and 400 wagons. He would be met in Indian Territory by twelve companies of the Kansas Volunteer Cavalry.

²⁰Custer, My Life on the Plains, 211-212.

completed nine more miles south southwest until Beaver River was reached. During the afternoon guides discovered the trail of an Indian party estimated at from 100 to 150 warriors. Custer requested permission to backtrack to the undefended village and strike while the warriors were absent, but Sully refused.²¹

Another path was struck on November 17, but it was found to be the Sully trail from the previous September. Sixteen miles were covered that day as the troops moved east of Beaver River. On November 18 a fifteen mile stretch brought the full command to Wolf Creek at its confluence with the Beaver. General Field Orders No. 8, Headquarters, District of the Upper Arkansas, named the spot Camp Supply.²²

The next few days were spent building a post. Stockades to check surprise raids were formed, and industrious soldiers under Lieutenant Joseph Hale constructed a block-

²¹Ibid.; Shirk, "Campaigning with Sheridan," 83; Record of Troop G, Seventh Cavalry for month of November, 1868 in Chandler, Of Garry Owen, 27.

²²Ibid.; Post Returns, Camp Supply, November, 1868, Records of the War Department, National Archives, Washington, D. C. The North Fork of the Canadian River is formed where Beaver River and Wolf Creek meet at the site of Camp Supply. Keim, Sheridan's Troopers, 120; New York Herald, December 12, 1868; Knight, Following the Indian Wars, 86.

house, storehouse, and dug wells.²³ Cavalry worked with infantry in erecting winter quarters "as comfortable as circumstances and appliances would permit," but for their part they were content "with the ordinary camp discomforts, for being but 'birds of passage'" they knew their stay would be short.²⁴ Building crews laughingly referred to the name Camp Supply as a "misnomer, for while there was a partial supply of everything, there was not an adequate supply of anything"²⁵ The "comfortable quarters," when completed, were pits, four and a half feet deep, walled with cottonwood logs arising above the ground about three feet, and covered with logs, straw and earth.²⁶

In the meantime, Sheridan left Fort Hays on November 15 to accompany the main column in the field. After a brief stop-over at Fort Dodge, Sheridan with his staff, escort, and New York Herald correspondent De B. Randolph Keim, departed on the 18th arriving at Camp Supply shortly after 3 p.m.,

²³House Exec. Doc. No. 1, 41 Cong., 2 Sess., 45; New York Herald, December 26, 1868.

²⁴Gibson, Report in Chandler, Of Garry Owen, 14.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 6.

November 21.²⁷ Sheridan later explained:²⁸

I deemed it best to go in person, as the campaign was an experimental one--campaigns at such a season having been deemed impractical and reckless by old and experienced frontiersmen, and I did not like to expose troops to great hazard without being present myself to judge of their hardships and privations.

The Department Commander found the site of Camp Supply to his liking. "There is plenty of wood, water and grass at the point, and it is in the very heart of Indian Country. The distance from Dodge is (105) one hundred and five miles and Fort Cobb about (100) one hundred, it is thirty-five miles from the Antelope Hills"29

While at Fort Dodge on November 17 Sheridan learned two companies of the Kansas Volunteers were just ahead of his party, and the next day they were added to the escort. When

²⁷Post Returns, Fort Dodge, Kansas, November, 1868, Records of the War Department, microfilm copy in the William H. Leckie Collection, Division of Manuscripts, University of Oklahoma Library. Keim, Sheridan's Troopers, 89-100; Sheridan to Sherman, November 23, 1868, S-S Papers, 57. Sheridan's escort consisted of Troop C, Tenth Cavalry, Forsyth's Scouts now under the command of Lieutenant Silas Pepoon, Seventh Cavalry, and two troops of the Nineteenth Kansas Volunteer Cavalry, added at Bluff Creek on November 18. Sheridan, Personal Memoirs, II, 310-312.

²⁸House Exec. Doc. No. 1, 41 Cong., 2 Sess., 45.

²⁹Sheridan to Sherman, November 23, 1868, AGO, Letters Received, OU; New York Herald, December 26, 1868. The actual distance from Dodge to Supply at this time was closer to 113 miles.

he arrived at Camp Supply, Sheridan felt confident the main command from Topeka would arrive presently. On the other hand, he had just braved five days of snow and sleet on the trail, and as the weather was turning colder he considered the immediate march of the invasion force.³⁰ Thus Sheridan ordered Colonel George A. Custer to move the next day and strike the encamped Indians where he might find them. Eleven troops of the Seventh Cavalry marched south from Camp Supply at daybreak on November 23, 1868. A foot of snow covered the ground.³¹

Concerned over the whereabouts of the Kansas Volunteers, Sheridan ordered a reconnaissance of the area the next afternoon. Scouts ranged as far as fourteen miles from camp, but found no sign. The following afternoon a lookout alerted the camp to the approaching party of volunteers led by Captain A. J. Piley. These men told of near starvation and freezing cold. They reported the remaining companies hopelessly lost on the

³⁰Harmony was threatened at the new post because Sully and Custer each claimed command of the troops in an entangled dispute involving army regulations, brevet ranks, dates of commission and the anticipated arrival of Volunteer Colonel Crawford. Sheridan settled the contest in favor of Custer and Sully returned to Fort Hays. Leckie, Military Conquest, 97.

³¹Sheridan, Personal Memoirs, II, 311-312; Keim, Sheridan's Troopers, 102-103; Shirk, "Campaigning with Sheridan," 84.

Cimarron.³² The next day able volunteers, scouts and a train of supply wagons began a search for the Kansas troops. A second party under Colonel Horace L. Moore reached Camp Supply on November 28, but the final group of 600, led by Colonel Samuel J. Crawford and Major R. W. Jenkins, did not complete their journey until December 1.³³

The departure of Custer and the nearly simultaneous appearance of the Kansas regiment allowed Sheridan to send wagons and messengers to Fort Dodge. A train of 250 wagons, commanded by Major Henry Inman, snaked its way north with orders to draw from the stockpile at Fort Dodge.³⁴ Guarded

³²Up to this time United States policy had been to keep all non-Indians out of the Indian Territory. In Crawford's entire command, including scouts Apache Bill Simmons and Jack Stillwell, not one man had ever crossed the boundaries of the Indian country. James Albert Hadley, "The Kansas Cavalry and the Conquest of the Plains Indians," Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society, X (1908), 435; "A. L. Runyon's Letters from the Nineteenth Kansas Regiment," Kansas Historical Quarterly, IX (February, 1940), 58-75; Mahon Bailey, "Medical Sketch of the Nineteenth Regiment of Kansas Cavalry Volunteers," Kansas Historical Quarterly, VI (November, 1937), 378-386; William E. Connelley, "John McBee's Account of the Expedition of the Nineteenth Kansas," Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society, XVII (1928), 361-374; Horace L. Moore, "The Nineteenth Kansas Cavalry," Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society, VI (1900), 35-52; Lonnie J. White, "Winter Campaigning with Sheridan and Custer," Journal of the West, VI (January, 1967), 73-76.

³³Ibid.; Leckie, Military Conquest, 106; Spotts, Campaigning with Custer, 64.

³⁴Henry Inman was an interesting figure. Born in New

by companies of the Nineteenth Kansas Volunteers the heavily loaded wagons returned to Supply on December 5, after twelve days on the trail. In addition to supplies Inman brought news. Correspondent Keim detailed the events for New York readers on December 6, 1868:³⁵

Arriving at Mulberry creek the Major Inman found a piece of pantaloons covered with blood, a coat filled with bullet holes and other signs of a fight. Reaching the ravine near by a pack of thirty wolves started up. A number of letters were now found strewn around, one of which was a dispatch from your correspondent, dated at Bluff Creek, November 18, 1868. On

York City in July, 1837, he enjoyed the advantage of private education as the son of one of the most noted portrait painters of the day. At the age of 20 he enlisted in the army and quickly rose through the ranks. Unfortunately, his business methods of disbursing accounts became hopelessly entangled and he was cashiered from the army in 1872. He thereafter engaged in the newspaper business in Larned, Kansas. Inman, Kansas, McPherson County, was named for him. Among his achievements are several books, one of which, The Old Santa Fe Trail (1895) was the standard of its day. John Murphy, "Reminiscences of the Washita Campaign and of the Darlington Indian Agency," Chronicles of Oklahoma, I (June, 1923), 260.

³⁵ Post Returns, Fort Dodge, November, 1868; New York Herald, December 26, 1868; R. M. Wright of Dodge City, Kansas had a completely different account. Nate Marshall and Bill Davis, he asserts, were returning from Camp Supply with dispatches and had ridden to within twenty miles of Fort Dodge when they spotted a band of Cheyennes and Arapahoes. Marshall was well known by the Indians and versed in their ways. He showed himself to them with signs of peace, but he and Davis were struck down. R. M. Wright, "Personal Reminiscences of Frontier Life in Southwest Kansas," Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society, VII (1902), 70-71.

the morning of November 19, 1868, before leaving Bluff Creek, General Sheridan sent two couriers to Fort Dodge with dispatches. It would appear these couriers fell into an ambush while crossing Mulberry Creek, which vicinity is much broken by ravines covered with underbrush. On his return Major Inman, after diligent search, found fragments of the bodies. One skull was broken as if struck by a tomahawk. The fight was evidently a desperate one. The route of the couriers could be traced for a mile by the empty cartridge shells. A tree was discovered with the head of a spear sticking in it and full of bullet holes. It is probable the couriers took position here after they had lost their horses. The remains of the men, such as could be found, were gathered together and buried. The names of the men were Bill Davis and Nate Marshall.

The loss of these scouts was sorely felt. Moreover, they were not the only casualties. Prior to Marshall and Davis, two young messengers were captured alive in the brush on Beaver River. Attackers cut their throats, then scalped and stripped them.³⁶ Indians were not frequently sighted, but these events indicated they were close to Camp Supply. Silent Indian eyes peered over nearby sandhills as soldiers transformed this campsite of a dozen buffalo hunts into a military base.

The snowstorm preceeding Custer's departure temporarily suspended work on the fort. Sun and a clear sky on November 25, however, enabled the troops to resume construction. Infantry woodchoppers felled cottonwood trees a mile distant, as

³⁶Wright, "Personal Reminiscences," 70.

mounted guards watched for Indians. Drag teams under strong cavalry guard pulled the logs to construction crews. Notched logs were put into position in the blockhouse and the outpost gained strength with each insertion of a timber.³⁷ Reporter Keim observed that the post in its finished condition on December 4, 1868 was:³⁸

. . . of sufficient strength to be defended by a small force against any number of warriors that may undertake to attack it. . . . The north and west fronts consist of a stockade; the east and south are made up of warehouses for stores. At the northeast and southwest angles are platforms sweeping all sides of the fort, and at the northwest and southeast angles are blockhouses with loopholes. From all points the rifles of the troops have . . . range of at least 800 yards.

Harper's Weekly artist William Waud visited Camp Supply and proclaimed it to be:³⁹

. . . without doubt, one of the most defensible works of its kind on the Plains. The store-houses and quarters of the soldiers are constructed of heavy timber, cut in the vicinity of the post, and are loopholed for musketry; the stockade is ten feet high, and the blockhouses are also ten feet in height, with a parapet of four feet, from which an additional fire can be brought to bear on all points of approach. The soldiers quarters are so constructed that they can fire over the roofs of the buildings (which form lunettes at the

³⁷Keim, Sheridan's Troopers, 105.

³⁸New York Herald, December 26, 1868.

³⁹Harper's Weekly Magazine, XLIII, February 27, 1869, 140.

angles), while an additional fire is delivered from the loopholes inside.

Garrison duty was performed by three companies of the Third Infantry, one company of the Thirty-eighth Infantry, and detachments of the Tenth Cavalry and Nineteenth Kansas Volunteer Cavalry. Because these regiments were encamped separately as far as one mile from headquarters, one day was spent concentrating the camp into a smaller compass. Troops moved toward the stockade and tents were winterized against icy blasts by fitting them with cottonwood frames. Construction parties then resumed the building of permanent infantry quarters. On December 1 a field hospital was established, consisting of four hospital tents arranged as two wards with a double chimney of stone between. The picture presented, wrote Keim, "reminded us more of the first steps to the establishment of a pioneer settlement, than the work of the less peaceful pursuit of war."⁴⁰

Daily life at the wilderness post began at 4 a.m. with roll call. Sheridan ordered an early reville to give the men time to arm and prepare for the possibility of a dawn attack by Indians. Breakfast was prepared after sun-up, with stable

⁴⁰Keim, Sheridan's Troopers, 104; Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 2.



CAMP SUPPLY, INDIAN TERRITORY.

Harper's Weekly Magazine, February 27, 1869.
Berthrong Collection, University of Oklahoma Library.

call or work report an hour later. While the infantry attended to garrison duties cavalry horses grazed under heavy guard. Dinner was served at noon, after which the infantry returned to post business and the cavalry once more grazed their animals. Retreat sounded at sunset and taps closed the day at 9 p.m. Lookouts were posted in daylight hours, and replaced at night by sentries ordered to fire upon any approaching object without waiting to challenge.⁴¹

The work was strenuous, the weather unseasonably mild and the food fresh and fit for hardy men. Game abounded near Camp Supply. The immediate vicinity yielded grouse, duck, wild turkey, elk, antelope, deer, bear, buffalo, rabbit and squirrel in addition to a wide assortment of wild fruits and berries. Hunters daily brought in enough meat to feed 1,000 men. Turkey hunting was particularly exciting to the enlisted man. The discovery of a roost was the signal for such promiscuous firing that life of man and beast was endangered. One old scout testified, "I've a bin a fitt'n Injuns an' other critters all my life, an' I never seed sich a time. I was a shootin of turkies one minit an a doggin bullets the other minit, an yit no blood spilt. All I got to say, it was lucky

⁴¹Ibid.; Spotts, Campaigning with Custer, 68.

for the men ef it wasn't for the turkies."⁴²

General Sheridan and his officers found jackrabbit hunting more to their favor. The General's stag hound Cynch, paired with the fleet Juno, chased many a hare across the plains, much to the delight of the pursuing horsemen.⁴³

Thursday, November 26, 1868, was the first holiday at Camp Supply. Thanksgiving was appropriately celebrated with a dinner almost entirely produced from the area. The bill of fare as taken down by Keim was:

Soup - Wild Turkey.
 Broiled - Wild Turkey, Buffalo Tongue.
 Roast - Buffalo Hump, Wild Turkey, Saddle of Venison,
 Red Deer, Common Deer, Antelope, Rabbit.
 Entrees - Rabbit Pies, Wings of Grouse, breaded, Turkey
 Giblets.
 Broiled - Quails, Pinnatted Grouse.
 Vegetables (imported) - Canned Tomatoes, Lima Beans,
 Dessicated Potatoes.
 Bread - "Hard Tack," plain and toasted, Army Biscuits.
 Desert (imported) - Rice Pudding, Pies, and Tarts.
 Wines and Liquors - Champagne, "Pinetop Whiskey," Ale.

"Camp life on the Canadian, isolated entirely from the world as we were, was found a happy episode, away from the noise and bustle of human strife, and full of interesting incidents and days of ease and amusement," commented the New Yorker.⁴⁴

⁴²Keim, Sheridan's Troopers, 106-107.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Ibid., 108-109.

About 10 on the morning of Saturday, November 29, California Joe, Chief scout for Custer, surprised the officers at Camp Supply by his hasty entrance. It had been thirty-six hours since he and Joe Corbin had left Custer on the night of November 27, when California Joe drew up at Sheridan's tent. After a few words with the scout Sheridan read aloud the dispatches sent from the Seventh Cavalry.⁴⁵

Word spread quickly through the post. Custer had destroyed Black Kettle's Cheyenne camp on the Washita River. The victory was complete, but grim signs indicated Major Elliott and fifteen troopers had been trapped, for they did not rejoin the main command. Sheridan immediately sent a telegram relating known details of the event to Major General W. A. Nichols, Assistant Adjutant General, Military Division of the Missouri, at St. Louis. A congratulatory order to Custer and his men was issued that same day.⁴⁶

Two hours after breakfast on December 1, word circulated that the Seventh Cavalry was only about ten miles out and would arrive the post early that morning. General Sheridan,

⁴⁵Ibid.; Custer, My Life on the Plains, 260-263; Sheridan, Personal Memoirs, II, 312, 320.

⁴⁶Sheridan to Nichols, November 29, 1868, S-S Papers, 69; General Field Orders No. 6, Headquarters, Department of the Missouri, November 29, 1868, S-S Papers, 67.

his staff, officers and the garrison of Camp Supply formed outside the camp to review the heroes. The Kansas Volunteers were given no place in the review, but were allowed to witness the parade.⁴⁷

About 10 a.m. the Osage scouts under Hard Rope and Little Beaver broke into view from the southwest hills. Gaudily dressed in warpaint and barbaric finery they rode in circles, fired their weapons, and loudly chanted war songs. They were closely followed by California Joe, pipe in mouth on his familiar mule, heading Lieutenant Silas Pepoon's silent sharpshooters. Next came the Seventh Cavalry band, playing, as might be expected, "Garry Owen" the regimental song. Huddled between the band and the first company of sharpshooters were the widows and orphans of the Black Kettle band, many riding their own ponies. David Spotts, an observer from the Kansas Volunteers, felt they were the best dressed in the entire parade. At the head of his troops rode Colonel Custer, dressed in fringed buckskin shirt and leggings. Troop after troop followed the Colonel in precision marching. The train and guard brought up the rear.⁴⁸

⁴⁷Spotts, Campaigning with Custer, 65-66.

⁴⁸Ibid.; Keim, Sheridan's Troopers, 122; Custer, My Life on the Plains, 268; Sheridan to Nichols, December 23,

The conquerors moved across the parade grounds and up the Beaver about half a mile and there went into camp. Among his trophies Custer had a white Indian style lodge, which was unloaded and erected by several of the captive squaws.⁴⁹ At this point the weary troopers rested while the Kansas cavalry reassembled their equipment and command for a new expedition.

That evening Camp Supply was treated to an Osage scalp dance in honor of the victory. Displaying the scalps of Black Kettle and others, the young men jumped and danced while companions chanted a song of triumph. Keim remembered that "During almost the entire night, long after the officers and men, assembled to witness the occasion had departed, the Indian drum and the shout of warriors could be heard, borne upon the still air."⁵⁰

December 3 was a day of great sadness at the post. Captain Louis M. Hamilton, grandson of Alexander Hamilton, a casualty at the Washita, was buried at Camp Supply. With two other fallen comrades, the Seventh Cavalry, aided by the Camp

1868, S-S Papers, 71-73; Shirk, "Campaigning with Sheridan," 86-87; Hadley, "The Kansas Cavalry," 442.

⁴⁹New York Herald, December 26, 1868.

⁵⁰Keim, Sheridan's Troopers, 123-124.

Supply garrison, mourned the flag draped caskets as they were placed in graves on a little knoll. General Sheridan and Colonel Custer assisted as pallbearers to their fellow officer.⁵¹

Intense questioning of the Indian captives revealed the possibility of other villages below the Black Kettle camp. Sheridan used the days of rest by the Seventh Cavalry to plan a return to the Washita battlefield and other points south, striking, if possible, another blow at the hostiles.

Three hundred wagons and about 1,600 men departed Camp Supply on December 7, 1868 bound for southwestern Indian Territory. Loaded with thirty days supplies, tents, cooking utensils and baggage, the train moved slowly down Wolf Creek. While Sheridan accompanied the expedition, Custer was in command of the task force. Severe storms the previous two days did not dampen the spirit of the troops.⁵²

Two hundred men of the infantry and cavalry remained

⁵¹Ibid.; Custer, My Life on the Plains, 269-270; Shirk, "Campaigning with Sheridan," 87.

⁵²Keim, Sheridan's Troopers, 128; Spotts, Campaigning with Custer, 72; Post Returns, Camp Supply, December, 1868; Sherman to Sheridan, December 7, 9, 1868, AGO, Letters Received, OU; Custer to J. S. Crosby, December 22, 1868, S-S Papers, 94; Sheridan, Personal Memoirs, II, 324; Custer, My Life on the Plains, 247.

behind to garrison Camp Supply.⁵³ Although the main force had gone, the necessity for the supply depot was undiminished. Actually the importance of the post increased as the line of supply and communication extended another 100 miles south. The duty to supply the troops remained, but the degree of difficulty grew with each mile that separated the troopers from their provisions.

General Sheridan decided as early as November 22, 1868 that a small force would remain at Camp Supply even after the present struggle ceased. The fine natural resources of the post for water, game and winter forage were high recommendations for the accommodation of troops. Moreover, its strategic position as a base to oversee the Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation, and its proximity to the favorite resorts of the Indian during the winter months was uncontested.⁵⁴

Captain John H. Page, Third Infantry, assumed command of the post and quickly went about the business of securing

⁵³On December 6, 1868 General Sheridan designated Companies B, E, F, Third Infantry, Company K, Fifth Infantry, and Company G, Thirty-eighth Infantry as the post garrison. Troop C, Tenth Cavalry and Companies M and E, Nineteenth Kansas Volunteer Cavalry were attached as escort for supply trains to Fort Dodge. Keim, Sheridan's Troopers, 127; Post Returns, Camp Supply, December, 1868.

⁵⁴New York Herald, December 12, 1868, Keim pronounced Camp Supply "the most important centre of operations in the present war," on December 4, 1868.

additional commissary supplies. Major Inman, escorted by a detachment of the Nineteenth Kansas regiment and a company of the Fifth Infantry, left Supply December 8 with 180 empty wagons, fifty-three Indian captives from the Washita, and 115 sick and wounded of the Seventh Cavalry bound for Fort Dodge. Travel was necessarily slow as the captives and sick slowed progress. Two days out of Supply a blinding snowstorm struck the convoy, causing injuries to the animals. A. L. Runyon, a member of the Kansas Volunteer Cavalry wrote that "Uncle Sam must have lost several thousand dollars in horse and mule flesh alone, that day as there were between 20 and 30 killed. Indian hunting is a very expensive business" ⁵⁵ Fort Dodge was reached December 14 and it took four days to load 250 wagons before the return trip to Supply. A final trip in December to fill 270 empty wagons at Fort Dodge was necessary before the required amount of subsistence was on hand. ⁵⁶

The main column, now assembled near Fort Cobb, however, relied upon stores already brought to that post from Fort Gibson. Camp Supply was well stocked with equipment and supplies,

⁵⁵A. L. Runyon to Editor of Manhattan (Kansas) Standard, dated Fort Dodge, Kansas, December 19, 1868, published January 2, 1869, "A. L. Runyon's Letters," 68-69; Post Returns, Fort Dodge, December, 1868.

⁵⁶Ibid.; Post Returns, Camp Supply, December, 1868.

but as the campaign drew to a close the need for these provisions declined. The trips to Fort Dodge gradually diminished in number, and, by January, 1869, only eleven wagons forded the Arkansas moving south to Indian Territory.⁵⁷

Custer's command, meanwhile, proceeded south of Supply to the Washita, near the battleground of November 27. Here the bodies of Major Joel Elliott and his squadron were recovered, and the abandoned Indian villages examined. An encampment of Kiowas was found on December 17, but they were immune to attack through intercession of General Hazen. After much discussion and coercion of chiefs Satanta and Lone Wolf the Kiowas reluctantly joined the Comanches, in late December, at Fort Cobb. The following month the Kiowas, Kiowa-Apaches and Comanches moved to their Medicine Lodge reservation near the newly established Camp Wichita, soon to be Fort Sill.⁵⁸

At the same time Lieutenant Colonel Andrew W. Evans had moved up the Canadian from Fort Bascom to Monument Creek where he established a depot. Turning south he attacked a

⁵⁷Post Returns, Fort Dodge, January, 1869; Medical History of Fort Dodge, Record for January, 1869, Records of the War Department in W. S. Campbell Collection, Division of Manuscripts, University of Oklahoma Library.

⁵⁸This story may be fully explored in Leckie, Military Conquest, 112-113; Sheridan, Personal Memoirs, II, 338-339; Custer, My Life on the Plains, 344-345; and the part played by Hazen is best told in Kroeker, "William B. Hazen," 130-147.

party of hostile Comanches on Christmas Day, 1868, killing as many as twenty-five. On December 30 scouts from Evans' column made contact with Sheridan at Fort Cobb, and upon his instructions, the command started their return to Fort Bascom on January 3, 1869.⁵⁹

Major Eugene A. Carr, after leaving Fort Lyon on December 2, spent three weeks attempting to engage the hostiles before linking up with an expedition under General William H. Penrose. Cold weather and the long march took their toll of men and horses and "Wild Bill" Cody, one of the Penrose scouts, was dispatched to Camp Supply on December 29 in the hope of learning the direction of the winter campaign.⁶⁰ Cody's efforts were of no help, for although Captain Page gave him a sealed letter for Carr, a statement of supplies on hand, a map, and other information as well as thirty private letters, all were lost before he returned to the camp

⁵⁹Leckie, Military Conquest, 114-117; Rister, "Colonel A. W. Evans' Fight," 275-286; Evans, Report, S-S Papers, 154-193.

⁶⁰Major Carr, his staff and scouts, plus the officers of General Penrose, did not believe Indians to be near. Carr remarks, however, "'Wild Bill' showed considerable reluctance to making the trip, and it was here I first learned that he thought there were Indians between us and Camp Supply." Four subsequent scouts to Camp Supply and back failed to turn up anything more than a few Indian trails. Carr, Report, S-S Papers, 253-255.

on January 12, 1869.⁶¹ Carr decided to give up the struggle and headed back to Fort Lyon on January 8.⁶²

The movements of Evans and Carr helped force the Comanches into surrender, leaving the Cheyennes and Arapahoes on the eastern edge of the Staked Plains where there was no game. Starvation and the loss of supplies at the Washita finally turned them to peace. The Arapahoes under Little Raven surrendered at Fort Sill in January, 1869.⁶³

The Cheyennes were more reluctant to come in, so Colonel Custer was ordered to move against them. Sheridan sent Custer and the combined forces of the Seventh Cavalry and the Kansas Volunteer Cavalry to the mouth of Salt Creek on the North Fork of Red River. At this junction Sheridan proposed a new supply depot as trains from Camp Supply could more easily reach this point than Fort Arbuckle. Desiring to make arrangements with Camp Supply for this field depot, Sheridan journeyed from Fort Sill to Camp Supply in seven days, arriving unexpectedly at 2 on the afternoon of March 1.⁶⁴

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²Record of Engagements, 17; Leckie, Military Conquest, 118-119; Carr, Report, 232-257.

⁶³Record of Engagements, 17.

⁶⁴Sheridan, Personal Memoirs, II, 344-345; Keim, Sheri-

Sheridan intended to meet Custer on Red River with the supplies, but a dispatch from General U. S. Grant changed these plans. At Camp Supply on March 2 Sheridan received a telegram from the President-elect to visit Washington at his earliest convenience. Arrangements were made for wagons to join Custer at the meeting spot, and Sheridan departed the post on March 3, headed for Washington via Fort Dodge.⁶⁵

Custer cornered the Cheyennes on March 15, 1869, recovered two white women captives and satisfied himself with a renewal of Little Robe's promise to go into reservation at Camp Supply. Apparently the Indians had been confused as to their reservation. They understood their reporting station to be Fort Cobb. Actually General Sheridan had told them to go to Fort Cobb, but only until a certain time, when they must then go to Camp Supply. General Hazen, caring for the peaceful Indians, intended on gathering about 1,000 Cheyennes and Arapahoes and then directing them to the Medicine Lodge reservation near Camp Supply.⁶⁶ The Custer expedition forced the Cheyennes

dan's Troopers, 304; Shirk, "Campaigning with Sheridan," 100; Berthrong, Southern Cheyennes, 335-338.

⁶⁵Keim, Sheridan's Troopers, 304, 305; Sheridan, Personal Memoirs, II, 346.

⁶⁶Sheridan, Personal Memoirs, II, 345; Berthrong, Southern Cheyennes, 339.

to report to Camp Supply.

Custer's victorious troopers returned to Camp Supply, arriving at 5 p.m. March 28, 1869. Remaining only until March 30 the men proceeded to Fort Hays via Fort Dodge with three Indian prisoners from the March 15 meeting.⁶⁷ The Winter Campaign of 1868 ended April 1, 1869 when Colonel Custer and his men crossed from Indian Territory into Kansas.

⁶⁷Spotts, Campaigning with Custer, 172-173; Custer, My Life on the Plains, 376.

CHAPTER III

INDIAN UNREST AT CAMP SUPPLY, 1869-1870

Following their capitulation to Colonel Custer on March 15, 1869, the Cheyennes retreated south, reaching Fort Sill on April 7. Here they joined the Arapahoes who had arrived five days earlier. From Fort Sill General Hazen hoped to collect the Cheyennes and Arapahoes and send them to Camp Supply where they would begin reservation life.¹ On April 19, however, Red Moon broke from the Cheyenne camp with thirty lodges, leaving only forty-six lodges under Little Robe and Minimic to move north on April 26. One hundred and seventy Arapaho lodges plus the remaining Cheyennes were expected at Camp Supply between May 5 and May 15, 1869.²

¹Berthrong, Southern Cheyennes, 339; B. H. Grierson to Assistant Adjutant General, Department of the Missouri, April 7, 1869, S-S Papers, 273-274. Hereafter Assistant Adjutant General will be abbreviated AAG.

²Henry Alvord to AAG, Dept. of Mo., April 24, 1869, S-S Papers, 262; Post Returns, Camp Supply, May, 1869; S. L. Woodward to AAG, Dept. of Mo., April 26, 1869, Upper Arkansas Agency, Letters Received, Records of The Office of Indian Af-

Few Cheyennes followed the Arapahoes to Camp Supply. Hunting parties crossed the Texas boundary between the Washita and Canadian rivers, and there the Dog Soldiers of Tall Bull and White Horse withdrew their lodges to go north and join the Sioux. The decision was a bad one, for Tall Bull and his band were methodically tracked down and defeated by Major Eugene A. Carr on the Republican River in May, 1869. The survivors eventually surrendered at Camp Supply in mid September, 1869.³

Caring for recently defeated Indians was a challenge to any officer. On April 24, 1869 Lieutenant Colonel Anderson D. Nelson was ordered to Camp Supply with six troops of the Tenth Cavalry. He was to provide for Indians already present and when the Cheyennes and Arapahoes reached full strength he was to conduct them to the Medicine Lodge reservation. Colonel Nelson reached Camp Supply May 26 and went into camp with his detachment 600 yards from the infantry quarters.⁴

fairs, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

³Berthrong, Southern Cheyennes, 340-344; Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 5; House Exec. Doc. No. 1, 41 Cong., 2 Sess., 50; Sheridan to Schofield, September 7, 1869, S-S Papers, 63; M. H. Kidd to AAG, Dept. of Mo., September 18, 1869, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 25, Records of The War Department, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

⁴Schofield to Sheridan, April 24, 1869, S-S Papers, 268; Schofield to AAG, Military Division of the Missouri, May 19, 1869, Military Division of the Missouri, Letters Received,

By May 19, there were 1,300 Arapahoes in 257 lodges within one mile of Camp Supply. Ten lodges of fifty Cheyennes, faithful to the promise of Little Robe to come in to Camp Supply, reached the post before the end of May.⁵ Eighty more Cheyennes under Lean Bear straggled in on June 2 with still more lodges three days out from the post. Medicine Arrow and twenty-nine others visited Camp Supply on June 20 to view the treatment of the Indians already near the post. The following day Medicine Arrow was allowed to return to his band, Nelson hoping he would come back with his sixty-five lodges. In a gesture of good faith to this committee Colonel Nelson sent the recently arrived captives of the Washita battle to Little Robe's camp.⁶

As temporary superintendent of the Cheyennes and Arapahoes, Colonel Nelson issued rations, held council with the Arapahoes, and guarded against any renewal of hostilities by

Records of the War Department in Donald J. Berthrong Collection, Division of Manuscripts, University of Oklahoma Library. Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 29, 1869, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 25.

⁵John H. Page to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 19, 1869, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 24; Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 29, 1869, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 25.

⁶Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., June 2, 22, 1869, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 25; Post Returns, Fort Dodge, June, 1869.

the Cheyennes. When Brinton Darlington arrived at Camp Supply in July as agent for the Upper Arkansas Agency,⁷ Nelson relinquished his authority over the Indians.⁸ Darlington built two log cabins and dug a well at Pond Creek, a tributary of the Salt Fork of the Arkansas, but the Indians would not recognize these headquarters and refused his invitations.⁹

⁷The Upper Arkansas Agency was created in 1855, and after 1861 was responsible to the Colorado Superintendency. In 1866 the agency was assigned to the Central Superintendency, which, by the time Darlington arrived Camp Supply, was headquartered at Lawrence, Kansas. Upper Arkansas Agency was officially renamed the Cheyenne and Arapaho Agency in 1874. Edward E. Hill, Preliminary Inventory of the Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (Washington, 1965), II, 298-301.

⁸Nelson in his capacity as temporary superintendent of the Cheyennes and Arapahoes turned the care of these Indians over to Darlington. In October, however, Nelson, as commander of Camp Supply, claimed the entire control of the Indians until placed on their reservation, and the day following withdrew that claim, acknowledging that duty properly belonged to the agent. This is just one instance of the conflict between Nelson and Darlington. Brinton Darlington to A. G. Farnham, September 6, 1869, Darlington to Enoch Hoag, October 11, 1869, Central Superintendency, Field Office Files, Letters Received, Records of The Office of Indian Affairs, National Archives, Washington, D. C.; Darlington to Hoag, October 17, 1869, Central Superintendency, Field Office Files, Letters Sent, Records of The Office of Indian Affairs, National Archives, Washington, D. C. Hereafter Field Office Files will be abbreviated FOF.

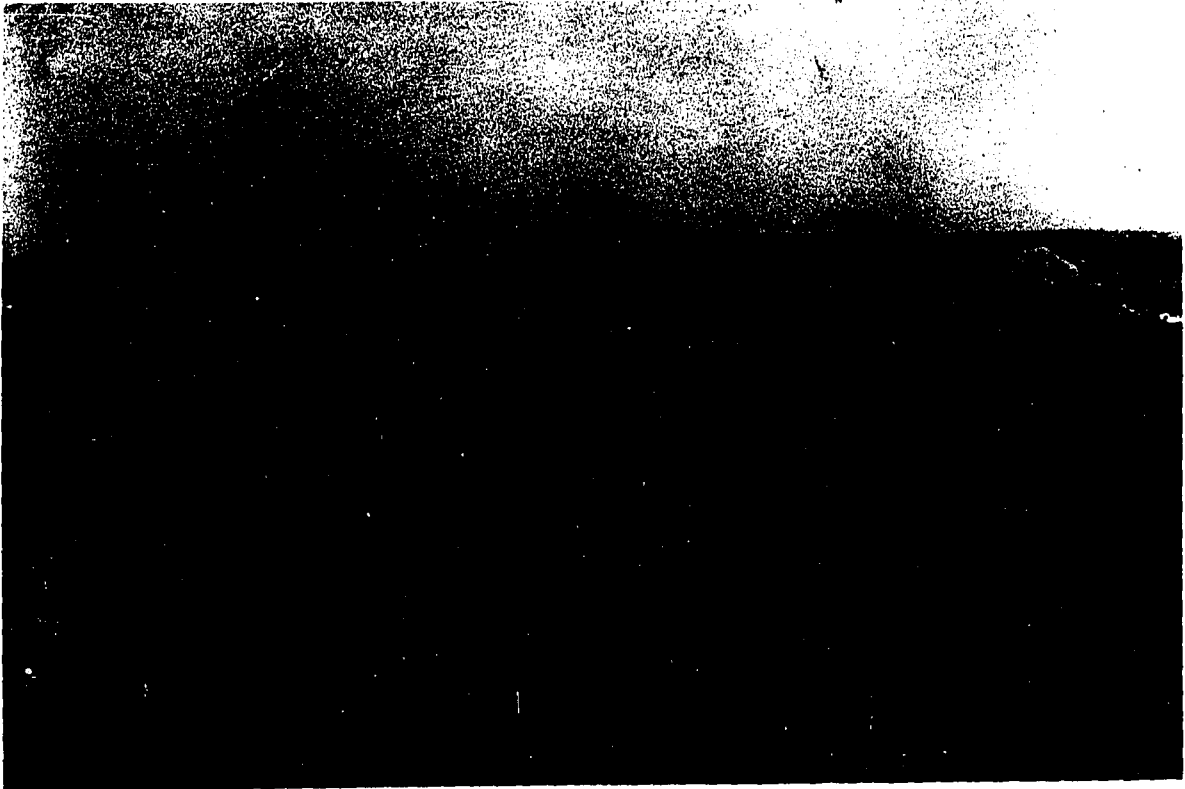
⁹Berthrong, Southern Cheyennes, 346; Seth Bonney to W. A. Elderkin, August 7, 1869, Camp Supply Letter Book, 16, Camp Supply Collection, Division of Manuscripts, University of Oklahoma Library.

Nelson was bound by an agreement with the Indians to issue rations every five days at Camp Supply, and he faithfully carried out his promise although Darlington had set up quarters well away from his charges camp. Feeding over 1,500 Indians was a trying task for a post whose garrison did not exceed 200 men. The magnitude of the assignment caused the Army Commissary Department to aid Camp Supply by appointing Captain Seth Bonney to issue rations to all Indians within the temporary reservation.¹⁰

The ration offered the tribes was one pound of beef each person, except twice each month a ration of twelve ounces of pork or bacon was substituted for the beef, plus eight ounces each of flour and ground corn, with four pounds of salt to each 100 rations.¹¹ The first time live Texas steers were returned over to the Indians, a melee resulted. Several hundred wild beeves were slaughtered in the manner of hunting buffalo. Indians charged the steers on horseback, lanced them with spears, or shot them with arrows. Dead steers littered the trail from Supply to the Indian camp, but scarcely

¹⁰Memorandum of M. R. Morgan, Office Chief Commissary of Subsistence, Department of the Missouri, June 14, 15, 1869, Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 1, Records of The War Department, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

¹¹Ibid.



Issue of rations to Indians at Camp Supply in the spring of 1870. Shown are Mrs. Ezra Kirk, Captain H. I. Ripley, Mrs. Ripley and Miss Scott.

William S. Soule photograph in W. S. Campbell Collection, University of Oklahoma Library.

one of them was touched for food because the plentiful buffalo was more to their taste.¹²

Captain Bonney began his duty at Camp Supply on July 16, 1869. Issuing 1,500 rations every ten days he was faced with a shortage of supplies almost from the first day. Supplies remained short and even the anticipated arrival of Medicine Arrow's lodges did not particularly concern General M. R. Morgan, Bonney's superior. In a short time the Army Commissary Department was heavily indebted to the Quartermaster of Camp Supply, the result of heavy borrowing.¹³

Storehouses were desperately needed, but Bonney received no aid. Military work details were unavailable to him and the Indians refused to do manual labor. To add to his troubles, the Indians would not come to Supply for the rations, so Bonney had to haul the provisions three to seven miles to deposit them. When at last storehouses were built and filled, and the cattle deliveries regularized, the responsibilities became somewhat lighter. Perhaps the strain had already been too much, for on January 7, 1870, Bonney was relieved of his post following a touch of "lunacy," involving an assault on one of

¹²Wright, "Personal Reminiscences," 71.

¹³Bonney to Morgan, July 20, 30, 1869, Camp Supply Letter Book, 2-3, 6.

the commissary employees and his attempted suicide by strychnine.¹⁴ Lieutenant Silas Pepoon performed the subsistence chores until he, in turn, was relieved by Captain H. I. Ripley. Rationing the Cheyennes and Arapahoes at Camp Supply continued until the commissary duty was assumed by Agent Darlington on July 1, 1870.¹⁵

The orders of Colonel Nelson made it explicit that Camp Supply would not remain an Upper Arkansas Agency. Nelson therefore informed the Cheyennes and Arapahoes they would soon be moved to the Medicine Lodge reservation. Indians at the post, however, refused to leave Camp Supply and in the protests the Arapahoes took the leadership. In council with the Arapaho chiefs, Nelson determined that the Indians had never understood the Medicine Lodge boundaries. They envisioned a reservation of twenty to thirty miles surrounding Camp Supply, running up Beaver River and Wolf Creek, and down the North Canadian River for possibly 100 miles.¹⁶

¹⁴Bonney to Morgan, July 20, August 14, September 1, 1869, Camp Supply Letter Book, 3, 21, 36; Nelson to AAG, Dept. of the Mo., January 8, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 24.

¹⁵Martha Buntin, "Difficulties Encountered in Issuing Cheyenne and Arapaho Subsistence, 1861-1870," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XIII (March, 1935), 45.

¹⁶Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 29, 1869, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 25. The actual Medicine Lodge reservation as noted in footnote 6, Chapter I, was almost totally within

Having many times traveled the country in which the government intended to settle them, the Indians knew the streams to be salty and the ground, in some spots, seemed to take on a snow-like character. Moreover, the Arapahoes feared their Osage neighbors. Guide Ben Clark and even Colonel Nelson agreed that their Medicine Lodge reservation did have some serious drawbacks. The conflict was a serious one, as Nelson felt a contented and happy Arapaho tribe was the key to success with the surrounding bands.¹⁷

Nelson favored keeping the Cheyenne and Arapaho agency at Camp Supply. Darlington's Pond Creek establishment he found totally unacceptable, and in this view he was supported by Bonney. "The Indians are all quite well satisfied with the arrangement at Camp Supply," wrote Bonney, "but all the Cavalry in the Department cannot drive them to where Agent Darlington is (at Pond Creek) in my opinion, for they would scatter to the four winds, . . ."¹⁸

In an effort to obtain more information on the area in dispute Nelson ordered Lieutenant Silas Pepoon, on July 2,

the Cherokee Outlet, bounded by the thirty-seventh parallel and the Cimarron and Arkansas rivers.

¹⁷Ibid.; Nelson to Schofield, June 11, 1869, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 25.

¹⁸Bonney to Elderkin, August 7, 1869, Camp Supply Letter Book, 16.

1869, to reconnoiter the Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation. Accompanied by twenty-six enlisted men of the Tenth Cavalry and five Arapaho guides, Pepoon's mission was to select a suitable surrounding for the possible location of a military post and Indian agency. During his eighteen day 400 mile scout the Lieutenant inspected several sites.

At a point on the North Canadian River, 105 miles southeast of Camp Supply, and twenty miles from the crossing of the Fort sill to Fort Harker Road, Pepoon found a good location for a post. Level bottomland, plenty of timber, and a pure spring were high recommendations. The junction of the Hackberry and Skeleton creeks in the Black Bear River vicinity was also noted as an excellent location for a post. Rich soil, nearby stone for a quarry, and salt free creeks promised adequate accommodations for a large body of troops.

Pond Creek, the temporary residence of Agent Darlington, was also inspected, but a careful examination of this point showed the grass was drying up and the soil to be of a sandy and alluvial character. Twenty-four miles north of Pond Creek, at the juncture of Bluff Creek and Fall Creek a fourth possible site was found. A vast area of at least 4,000 fertile acres was complemented by a variety of timber with good water resources. Several potential mill sites on Fall Creek

were made possible by the small waterfalls.

Lieutenant Pepoon felt the Bluff Creek site was his first choice for a post and Indian agency. If, however, this position was too far to one side of the reservation, the Black Bear country or the area about the North Fork of the Canadian would be acceptable.¹⁹

Nelson submitted this scouting report to General John M. Schofield, his superior, with some comments of his own.

"I am yet of the opinion that Camp Supply is the place for the new Post, and the next point is the one mentioned by Lieut. Pepoon, on the North Fork of the Canadian." Even so, he concluded, the Indians were very reluctant to move east of Supply, and it would be much against their will to remove them entirely from the area. Captain Bonney's opinion concurred that "if the Post is to be far removed from here . . . it will require all the Cavalry force in the Department to induce them to 'go in' for rations."²⁰

When a Special Indian Commission arrived at Camp Supply and met Cheyenne and Arapaho chiefs in council on August 10,

¹⁹Silas Pepoon to L. H. Orleman, July 22, 1869, S-S Papers, 338-342.

²⁰Nelson to Schofield, July 24, 1869, S-S Papers, 337; Bonney to Morgan, August 6, 1869, Camp Supply Letter Book, 17.

1869, a compromise was attempted. The result was that an agency would be located away from Camp Supply, but not at Pond Creek. The tribes were to stay at Camp Supply the remainder of 1869 and move to the yet unselected site of the new agency in the spring of 1870.²¹

Thousands of miles away, President U. S. Grant, on the same day as the Camp Supply conference, acted on recommendations by Eli S. Parker, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and proclaimed a New Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation. The reservation was bounded on the north by the Cherokee Outlet, on the east by the Cimarron River and ninety-eighth meridian, the Kiowa-Comanche Medicine Lodge reservation on the south, and by the 100th meridian on the west.²² On August 10, 1869, then, the Cheyennes and Arapahoes received title to a new reservation by Executive order, and a new agency location by agreement with the Indian Commission.

The decision to move the agency away from the military post was not without its critics. General Sheridan joined

²¹Felix R. Brunot to Eli S. Parker, August 10, 1869, Report of Council Held with Cheyenne and Arapaho, August 10, 1869, Central Superintendency, Letters Received, Records of The Office of Indian Affairs, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

²²Kappler, Indian Affairs, I, 839-841; Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for The Year 1882, 269-270.

with Colonel Nelson in defense of Camp Supply:²³

The Indians evidently want to remain at Camp Supply or vicinity. It is a most excellent place for them, also a good place for the troops, . . . The point selected by the Agent /at Pond Creek/ is too far East, and will never be satisfactory to the Indians. The second point on the North Canadian, selected by Lieutenant Pepoon, is off the reservation, and not half as good as that of Camp Supply.

The removal of the tribes from Camp Supply, Nelson believed, might only precipitate a general uprising. Medicine Arrow had seemed peaceable enough at the conference with the Indian Commission but Nelson suspected his band lingered on the nearby plains only watching for an opportune moment to strike the post.²⁴

The younger men of the Cheyenne exhibit occasionally little impertinencies and insolence which indicates anything rather than a friendly footing and the elders of the tribe convey they have great difficulty in managing them.

I am prepared to see their young men set the whole tribe by the ears and force them on the war path before the setting in of winter and in connection with this I believe that the presence of five hundred Cavalry here kept in readiness for the field is almost an absolute necessity, . . . I am now constantly on the alert for the uneasiness manifested in the Cheyenne camp and a mere spark may at any time set this whole region ablaze.

²³Sheridan to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, August 22, 1869, S-S Papers, 343.

²⁴Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., August 14, 1869, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 25.

General Schofield did not share Colonel Nelson's apprehension of an outbreak. He advised him that three more companies of infantry could be made available from Forts Dodge and Larned, but for the present the 350 man force at Camp Supply appeared to be effective.²⁵

Darlington left Supply on August 22, bound for his Pond Creek camp under escort of Lieutenant Myron J. Amick and twenty men of the Tenth Cavalry. General Schofield ordered the military to protect the five ox drawn wagons of stores with Darlington and once at the temporary agency to take charge of all public property until it could be transferred in the spring. Much to the satisfaction of the Arapaho chiefs, Darlington's quarters were exposed to plunder by Osage hunting parties and Lieutenant Amick was forced to remain at Pond Creek throughout October.²⁶

In early September, 1869 Agent Darlington tramped the new Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation in search of a suitable location for his agency. Accompanied by W. A. Rankin, a trader of sorts, a spot was found about 125 miles southeast

²⁵Schofield to AAG, Dept. of Mo., August 24, 1869, S-S Papers, 344-345.

²⁶Hazen to AAG, Dept. of Mo., August 9, 1869 (COPY), Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 1; Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., October 8, 1869, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 24.

of Camp Supply on the North Fork of the Canadian.²⁷

His selection made, Darlington now insisted the agency be moved immediately. The agent knew that his nemesis, Colonel Nelson, had assumed command of Camp Supply on August 21, 1869, but because of urgent duty in Nevada, returned command of the post to Captain John H. Page, who held it until Major Milo H. Kidd, Tenth Cavalry, arrived from Fort Sill on September 13. Prompt action on the new agency was imperative, Darlington explained to his superior, because "I have learned that Col. A. D. Nelson will supercede Major Kidd in a short time, and I cannot anticipate so hearty a cooperation with his administration as I can of Major Kidd."²⁸ The request for immediate removal of the agency was denied and Darlington could only wait for spring.

Much of the fall of 1869 at Camp Supply was spent constructing post buildings. New recruits boosted the garrison to nearly 600 men, now housed in five newly built barracks. Each set of quarters consisted of rough logs placed upright

²⁷Darlington to Hoag, September 17, 1869 (COPY), Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received; Bonney to Elderkin, September 18, 1869, Camp Supply Letter Book, 58.

²⁸Darlington to Hoag, September 24, 1869, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received; Post Returns, Camp Supply, August-October, 1869; Kidd to AAG, Dept. of Mo., September 17, 1869, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 25. Colonel Nelson resumed command of Camp Supply on October 3, 1869.

to form a stockade nine feet high, ninety feet long and eighteen feet wide, which was covered with logs and a layer of earth one foot thick. The space between the logs was chinked with timber or daubed with mud to insulate against the ever present winds.²⁹ Married soldiers and officers were given similar quarters of smaller construction with kitchens attached. Earth roofs and floors made the quarters damp and toadstools and mushrooms sprang up each night, to be cut down each day.³⁰

The location of Camp Supply was conducive to rapid construction. Beaver River and Wolf Creek virtually surrounded the sandy bottom on which the post was planted. Although these streams flooded the post more than once, the waterways held many natural resources. Good brick clay and sand could be found along the banks of Wolf Creek and several tributaries held an excellent quality of gypsum for plaster. Limestone fit for building purposes was not far and game abounded close to the camp.³¹ A post hospital, stables, corrals and storehouses arose and it was not long before the camp assumed an air of permanency.

²⁹Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 6.

³⁰Ibid., 7.

³¹Ibid.

The Arapahoes, numbering about 1,300, remained about Camp Supply. The peaceful and friendly nature of these Indians caused them to come almost daily to the post. Efforts were made to discourage this intercourse as it could become a potential trouble spot. A post order of September 23, 1869 directed that all bartering with the Indians cease and Indians were prohibited from visiting camp quarters. When the trading moved to the Indians' camps the next month it was further ordered that no enlisted men or citizens would be allowed to enter the Indian district without permission. It was not easy to halt the fraternization and an order of November 10, 1869 read, "All persons under military control are hereby prohibited from horse or mule racing with Indians."³²

Cheyennes were contemptuous of the unrestrained Arapaho attitude and drew their rations only in small bands, then quickly returned to camp. In September, 1869, 130 survivors of Tall Bull's band came near Camp Supply, and, followed by Medicine Arrow's band, quietly slipped onto the reservation. Later even the Dog Soldiers under Bull Bear encamped within sight of the post.³³

³²Ibid., 4-5.

³³Berthrong, Southern Cheyennes, 349, 351.

Winter months at Camp Supply were no less active than those of the milder seasons. One project of great interest to the post was standardizing ~~Fort~~ Dodge to Camp Supply trail. As early as mid May, 1869, Lieutenant I. Wallace and ten men of the Third Infantry traveled the road taking odometer readings and making itinerary reports of the terrain.³⁴ Acting on their reports, Ben Clark, post guide, selected a more direct wagon road from Supply to Dodge than either the old "Custer Trail" or "Sully Trail." On November 7, 1869 officers at Camp Supply reported the old trail had been shortened some twenty miles.³⁵

A new threat to peace on the frontier appeared in early 1870. On the night of January 8, Cheyenne and Arapaho camps within fifty miles of the post were struck by horsethieves who took 269 head of stock. The Cheyennes sent a party of young warriors in pursuit, but they were forced, by their promise to Little Robe, to halt the undertaking at the Arkansas River.³⁶ Arapaho scouts continued to search for the thieves,

³⁴Post Returns, Fort Dodge, May, 1869.

³⁵Special Orders No. 142, Headquarters, Camp Supply, October 14, 1869 (COPY), Ben Clark Collection, OU; Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., November 7, 1869, Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 1; Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 6.

³⁶Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., January 10, 15, 1870,

once traveling as far north as Fort Hays, Kansas. At last, in mid February, 1870, a company of cavalry from Camp Supply persuaded the scouts to return to their winter campgrounds. Subsequent Cheyenne bands discovered the rustlers to be Kaw raiders who peddled the stolen stock to whites at Council Grove, Kansas.³⁷

Kiowa braves, recently returned from raids through Texas in 1869, suddenly appeared at Camp Supply. Satanta, leader of the Kiowa war party, was no stranger to Camp Supply, for he had visited the post in May, 1869 before launching the Texas forays.³⁸ Kickingbird, another Kiowa chief, boldly visited Camp Supply in early January, 1870 and was promptly thrown into the guardhouse for several hours. On January 14, 1870 Satanta endeavored to create bad relations between the reservation Cheyennes and the whites when he attacked the agency cattle herd enroute from Texas. Three hundred Kiowas and Comanches sur-

C. Van Horn to Nelson, January 15, 1870 (COPY) in Nelson to Commanding Officer, Fort Dodge, Kansas, January 16, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 24; Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 7.

³⁷Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., January 29, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 24; AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Nelson, January 17, 1870, Commanding Officer, Fort Hays, Kansas to Nelson, February 13, 1870, Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 1.

³⁸William Asbury to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 8, 29, 1869, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 25.

rounded the herd of Jacob Hershfield about forty miles south of Camp Supply and held his sixteen riders at bay. After robbing the men and wagons of coffee, tobacco, sugar, knives, ammunition and money, Satanta planned to kill the whites. In tense arguments the lives of the men were saved through the intercession of Kickingbird and a Caddo Indian with Hershfield's crew. Satanta at length relented, but said that in the future he would kill every white man and soldier he could, "as he was no more the friend of the white men." After five hours Hershfield and his men were permitted to leave. Before they could gather their herd, though, Satanta's warriors stampeded the beeves and slaughtered 271 head. The crew reached Camp Supply the next day richer in experience, but poorer by \$6,910.50 worth of stock.³⁹

Major Milo H. Kidd and four troops of the Tenth Cavalry were immediately sent after the raiders, and chased the Kiowas south after a surprise attack. Colonel Nelson feared this raid to be the beginning of hostilities. Wishing to whip Satanta's Kiowas in the winter months as the Cheyennes had been the year before, Nelson pressed his superiors to authorize

³⁹Affidavit of Jacob Hershfield in Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., January 15, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 24; Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 7.

an eight week campaign. A force able to encounter up to 1,500 warriors was recommended.⁴⁰ Kiowas in full war costume were reported seen from the Camp Supply gates, but later, more reliable intelligence informed Nelson that Major Kidd's expedition had successfully cleared the area of hostiles and there was no longer a threat against the post.⁴¹

Nelson reported that the most pleasing aspects in the entire episode were the offer by Cheyenne and Arapaho chiefs to fight with the military against the Kiowas and Comanches--an offer refused by higher authority--and the refusal of Bull Bear's Dog Soldiers to accept the invitation of Satanta to join in the raids.⁴²

One direct result of this confrontation with the Kiowas was the establishment of a mail station on Bear Creek in Kansas above Camp Supply on the Dodge-Supply road. Mail and freight details found the campsite at this creek particularly favorable, and a force under Captain George F. Raulston left

⁴⁰Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., January 15, 16, 22, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 24; John Pope to Nelson, January 17, 1870, Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 1.

⁴¹Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., January 22, 28, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 24.

⁴²Ibid.; Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 8; Nelson to AAG, Department of Mo., January 23, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 24.

Camp Supply on February 3, 1870 to repair the road and build a station at Bear Creek. After completion, a small detachment was retained at the redoubt to protect the increasing traffic on the Dodge-Supply road.⁴³

Whiskey in the Indian camps became a problem for the troops at Fort Supply. In September, 1869 Samuel Parker, post hay contractor, was discovered doubling as a whiskey runner, trading his potent wares in Indian camps for horses.⁴⁴ The following month, at the request of officers at Camp Supply, a whiskey "ranche" on Bluff Creek in Kansas was raided and destroyed by troops from Fort Dodge.⁴⁵ A whiskey ranche was the contemporary term for an inn that bootlegged liquor or ran games and in some areas was nearly as numerous as the cattleman's ranch. In a final effort to curtail the liquor traffic all public and private wagon trains were ordered stopped and inspected at Bear Creek Mail Station. Individual "loafers and vagabonds" were also restrained unless they held written permission to enter the Indian Territory from either

⁴³AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Nelson, January 16, 1870, Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 1; Post Returns, Camp Supply, February, 1870.

⁴⁴Commanding Officer, Fort Larned, Kansas to AAG, Dept. of Mo., September 9, 1870 (COPY), Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 1.

⁴⁵Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 5.

the commanding officer of Fort Dodge or Fort Hays.⁴⁶

Another problem was sale of arms and ammunition to the Indians. W. A. Rankin, a licensed trader in the Indian country, brought gunpowder, lead and percussion caps to Medicine Arrow's band. In spite of his alleged support by Kansas Congressman Sidney Clark, Agent Darlington ordered Rankin off the reservation. Colonel Nelson fully supported this action, but it was not until the spring of 1870 that the scoundrel was removed.⁴⁷

Spring 1870 was a busy time at Camp Supply. In March, Enoch Hoag, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, came to Camp Supply to counsel with the Cheyennes and Arapahoes. Meeting the Indians on March 21, he encouraged the Indians to accept their new agency. Very little was accomplished, but an earnest plea for the release of prisoners taken by Major Carr during the Republican River campaign of May, 1869 did meet with some sympathy.⁴⁸

⁴⁶Nelson to George F. Raulston, February 10, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 24.

⁴⁷Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., January 22, 28, April 23, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 24; Berthrong, Southern Cheyennes, 352-353.

⁴⁸Hoag to Parker, October 8, 1870, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for The Year 1870, 254.

As the time grew near to shift the Cheyenne and Arapaho agency south, the Cheyennes became more reluctant to leave. On April 23, 1870 Nelson alerted the Commanding Officer at Fort Dodge that the bands under Medicine Arrow and Bull Bear might make a break for the north and if so they would probably cross the Arkansas somewhere above his post.⁴⁹ That same day, Company E, Third Infantry, Lieutenant Joseph Hale commanding, left Camp Supply enroute to the new Cheyenne and Arapaho agency under orders to protect supplies being shipped to the new headquarters. Hale expected to remain only until June 1, but warlike activity in the region delayed his return. Colonel Nelson, in turn, encouraged the Department of the Missouri to increase the number of troops at the agency for its remoteness made protection difficult from Camp Supply.⁵⁰

On May 3, 1870 Agent Darlington began his journey down the North Fork of the Canadian to the site of the new agency. He was followed the next day by nearly all the Arapaho lodges, and as many Cheyennes as were at Camp Supply.⁵¹ The uninviting

⁴⁹Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 7, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 24; Nelson to Commanding Officer, Fort Dodge, Kansas, April 23, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 25.

⁵⁰Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., April 23, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 24; Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 8.

⁵¹Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 7, 1870, Fort Supply,

location of the area, however, caused these Indians to camp some distance from the agency. In late May it was reported that only twelve to fifteen lodges of both tribes remained with Darlington. Nelson wrote to General John Pope, "It was a mistake, I think, to move the agency at this time, very few if any of the Indians of either tribe were in favor of the moving it to its present location, . . . that they were opposed to it, it might be said, to a man."⁵²

Relocating the agency complicated the responsibilities of Colonel Nelson. A shortage of wagons at the post doubled the necessary delivery trips to the new agency, and the Indian wards, once comfortably camped under the watchful eye of Camp Supply troops, were now widely separated. Arapahoes camped in the vicinity of the new agency, but the Cheyennes steadfastly refused to join them. Bull Bear and Medicine Arrow's bands maintained camps eighty miles up the Beaver, slowly moving north, while the remaining Cheyenne lodges clustered near the Washita, at the Kiowa and Comanche Sun Dance.⁵³

Letters⁵² Sent, Vol. 24; Post Returns, Camp Supply, May, 1870.

⁵²Nelson to Pope, May 28, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 24.

⁵³Ibid.; Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 7, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 24.

The Kiowa Medicine Lodge lasted ten days in May, 1870. Delegations of Kiowas, Apaches, Comanches and Cheyennes freely discussed the question of war or peace. When the war pipe was passed only one Cheyenne chief, Whirlwind, a man without influence, accepted it. The grand council then broke up and the warriors spread out. Little Heart with a party of Kiowas and Kiowa-Apaches headed for Camp Supply. White Horse and his gathering of Kiowas and Comanches went to Fort Sill. Satanta and Kickingbird took their bands into Texas. Cheyennes under Little Robe and Big Horse peacefully came to the new agency, but the uncommitted main band crossed to the headwaters of the Washita to hunt buffalo.⁵⁴

Little Robe warned Colonel Nelson of the impending outburst with secret messages from the Sun Dance. Preparations were quickly mounted to hold the post in readiness. In case of an attack it was ordered that all the cavalry would be sent to the field, and an infantry company would move in to hold the exposed cavalry camp against a frontal assault.⁵⁵ Horses were grazed at the post from 8 a.m. to noon and from 4:30 p.m. to near sunset, with each armed trooper responsible for his

⁵⁴J. A. Covington, Report, n.d., Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received.

⁵⁵Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 6, 7, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 24.

own mount. Four horses of each troop were held in stable, saddled and ready to move. Because the infantry quarters were some 600 yards distant from the cavalry camp, the commanding officer of the cavalry battalion was allowed the discretion of calling his troops into the field.⁵⁶

Kiowa forces soon appeared near Camp Supply. During a fierce electrical storm on the night of May 28, Little Heart fatally shot a Mexican servant named Monroe while he slept in his tent. One of the clerks of the Indian commissary building reported glimpsing, by a flash of lightening, a huddled, blanketed figure, peering through his window, only to have it disappear in a moment.⁵⁷

At daybreak, Post Interpreter Dick Curtis, living about five miles from the post, reported two of his horses stolen during the night. Ben Clark and a companion followed the trail one mile beyond Curtis' garden, and found several unshod pony tracks joined in crossing the Beaver. Mocassin tracks on the banks were unmistakable signs. Three miles farther Clark spotted two mounted Indians but declined their taunts and returned to post where he reported to Colonel

⁵⁶Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., June 12, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 26.

⁵⁷Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 29, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 24.

Nelson. That evening Captain Nicholas Nolan and fifty men of the Tenth Cavalry proceeded thirty miles up Beaver River to seek out the Indians. "I apprehend we may consider the Indian war opened in this region," wrote Colonel Nelson.⁵⁸

As Captain Nolan and his troops proceeded north in a futile effort to track the thieves, the Kiowas and Kiowa-Apaches wandered southeast of the post. Forty miles from Camp Supply, on May 29, these warriors attacked a train of thirteen wagons loaded with Indian subsistence stores for the new agency. Charles F. Tracy lost fifty-eight mules and one teamster - killed in the engagement. It was not until early morning of May 30 that two men were able to slip from the besieged train and bring news of the ambush to Supply. Colonel Nelson dispatched two troops of the Tenth Cavalry under Captain Louis H. Carpenter.⁵⁹

Captain Carpenter set out under orders to rescue the wagons, send one troop to escort it back to Supply, and with the other troop locate Lieutenant Mason M. Maxon, still on the

⁵⁸Captain Nolan returned to Post on May 30, 1870 having failed to catch the Indians. Ibid.; Post Returns, Camp Supply, May, 1870; Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 8; Record of Engagements, 27; Nelson to Hoag, June 18, 1870, Nelson to Pope, July 2, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 26.

⁵⁹Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 29, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 24; Darlington to Hoag, September 1, 1870, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1870, 255.

road with an escort and four wagons from the Cheyenne and Arapahoe agency. Upon reaching the corraled teamsters, Captain Carpenter found Lieutenant Maxon had beaten him by a few hours. Conditions were critical for Maxon, wrote Nelson, as "It was clear that the Indians intended to attack them, and it does not appear that they were deterred from this intention by the reinforcement of the Lieut. and his party." The timely arrival of Captain Carpenter dispersed nearly 300 warriors. Two days later the combined train reached Camp Supply.⁶⁰

On May 30 marauding Kiowa braves slew a lone teamster barely three miles from Camp Supply. A sergeant and ten men found the arrow-riddled, scalped, mutilated body stripped of everything but a shirt.⁶¹ Later that day Captain George W. Armes arrived at the post, followed five hours later by the Army Paymaster and his escort, commanded by Lieutenant Myron Amick. Both parties had sighted a band of Indians on the Dodge-Supply road within sixty miles of the post. In each case the Indians approached peacefully, shook hands and asked

⁶⁰Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., June 4, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 26; Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 8.

⁶¹Nelson to Hoag, June 18, 1870, Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., June 4, September 23, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 26.

for tobacco, backing away only when the escorts drew close. The Indians, it was said, held the mule of the dead teamster plus two horses of Dick Curtis. They also carried two fresh scalp locks.⁶²

Later that evening Major Milo H. Kidd, with Lieutenant L. H. Coleman and fifty enlisted men of the Tenth Cavalry, left Camp Supply to patrol the Dodge-Supply road. Still later Lieutenant Robert G. Smithers with twenty-five men of the Tenth Cavalry took the field to meet a wagon train reported south of Fort Dodge without a sufficient escort. Lieutenant Smithers passed Major Kidd's patrol on the road north and met the train on the morning of May 31 near the Cimarron. These reinforcements arrived just three hours after a band of Indians began observation of the small train and escort. Smithers directed the convoy safely into Camp Supply on June 1.⁶³

The Indians turned away from the wagon train by Lieutenant Smithers angrily proceeded to Bear Creek Mail Station, forty-five miles south of Fort Dodge. Calling themselves Arapahoes, forty or fifty Kiowas approached the station guarded by Sergeant James Murray and four privates of the Third

⁶²Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., June 4, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 26.

⁶³Ibid.; Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 8.

Infantry out of Camp Supply. Here they received some food, and at length all but seven drifted away. Sergeant Murray placed two men as guards over the arms of his party, and two others watched the stock in the stable. Suddenly shots echoed from the house and when Murray rushed in he found two of his men dead, one shot in the heart, the other through the head. Quickly turning on Murray who was armed with an ax, the Indians fired on him with their bows, hitting him six times in the arms and once in the forehead. Dashing outside the Indians were confronted by the last two soldiers, armed with pitchforks. The uneven contest would have ended quickly but for the appearance of Major Kidd and his command bearing down on the station. The Indians, just as speedily, mounted their ponies and escaped. Several men were left by Major Kidd to hold the station, and the rest of the column proceeded with the injured Sergeant Murray to Fort Dodge.⁶⁴

After numerous raids on civilian and mail station herds, Indians made an attempt on Camp Supply stock on the morning of June 1. Darting from the cover of nearby sandhills, the Indians seized two government horses and a mule and horse belonging to

⁶⁴Ibid.; Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., July 18, September 23, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 26; Nelson to Pope, June 6, 1870 (COPY), Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 6, Records of the War Department, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

a citizen as they grazed 500 yards from the post. Passing within 100 yards of the citizen and his companions, however, the raiders were so heavily fired upon that they released the stock. Lieutenant Amick and twenty men followed the warriors for fifteen miles before the swift Indian ponies outran their pursuers.⁶⁵

When Lieutenant Smithers arrived at Camp Supply on June 1 with the rescued supply train, he also brought word of a thirty-two wagon train south of the Arkansas without proper protection. Accordingly, Lieutenant John A. Bodamer with twenty-five men left Camp Supply June 2 to meet and escort that train. Two days later Lieutenant William Davis and twenty enlisted men escorted the train Lieutenant Smithers had brought in, on its return to Dodge.⁶⁶

For these raids Colonel Nelson blamed the Cheyennes. Suspecting Big Mouth to be a part of the hostiles encamped in seventy lodges some forty miles east of Supply, Nelson ordered his detachment at the agency, under Lieutenant Joseph Hale, to inform the Indians that none of them would be permitted to visit Camp Supply as sentries were ordered to fire

⁶⁵Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., June 4, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 26.

⁶⁶Ibid.; Post Returns, Camp Supply, May, June, 1870.

at Indians on sight. Further, all friendly Indians must report to the agency where a count would be made every day or two, and any individuals known or even thought to have been on the warpath would be arrested. Nelson concluded, "All such /arrested/ Indians should be executed as there can be little doubt of their participation in the outrages recently committed in this region."⁶⁷

Rebuffed in their prior efforts to capture government stock at Camp Supply, Cheyennes made dashes for post animals on the afternoon of June 6; at midnight the same day; and finally at 3:30 a.m. No government stock was captured, but two citizens lost thirteen head of mules and one horse. Each attempt brought the Indians closer to the post.⁶⁸

On June 9 Cheyenne parties were located on the north end of the Dodge-Supply road. In three separate encounters, a party of officers, the mail detachment, and Lieutenant Bodamer escorting a train from Dodge were attacked. The officers, led by Captain John H. Page, succeeded in beating the attackers off, as did the mail party, and two Indians were killed.

⁶⁷Nelson to Joseph Hale, June 7, 1870, Nelson to Pope, June 18, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 26.

⁶⁸Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., June 12, September 23, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 26.

The long ox train with Lieutenant Bodamer, however, was forced to corral to protect himself from flanking movements. When the Indians withdrew their siege at nightfall, Lieutenant Bodamer dispatched Private Will Edmonson of the Tenth Cavalry to Camp Supply for relief. Edmonson narrowly escaped capture by the Indians in his break through their lines, but managed to reach Supply at 11 p.m. The next morning Captain Nolan went to Bodamer's relief and the train returned to the post at noon, June 11. Lieutenant Bodamer reported three Indians killed and ten more wounded.⁶⁹

More than once in June, 1870 Indians sent word to Colonel Nelson of their determination to destroy Camp Supply. On June 11 the Kiowas, reinforced by several bands of Comanches, launched a full scale attack on the post. Two hundred Indians charged across the west side of the Tenth Cavalry camp at 3:30 p.m., gathering in two diseased horses and a pony belonging to Lieutenant Maxon. Captain Nolan, commanding the Tenth Cavalry troops, quickly ordered his command to counter-attack. The chase proceeded five miles up the Beaver when Lieutenant Myron Amick withdrew Troop I from Nolan's body to support a small picket party stranded at Dick Curtis' place.

⁶⁹Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., June 12, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 26; Record of Engagements, 28.

A reserve band of Indians saw this move and cut off Lieutenant Amick's group, engaging them in combat. The Indians' superior numbers temporarily placed Troop I at a severe disadvantage but in a moment Captain George Raulston with Troop A moved in and the Indians backed away.⁷⁰

Colonel Nelson, meanwhile, took a position atop a hill about a half mile from the cavalry camp from which he could direct his entire command. Through spyglasses he saw great numbers of Indians on the Beaver River slopes directly ahead of Captain Nolan. Lieutenant Maxon and eighteen men were ordered to rapidly march along the ridge above the Beaver to the highest point, about two miles off, and then turn right to aid Nolan. Lieutenant Maxon had gone only 1,000 yards when his detachment was itself met by a large body of dismounted Indians, and brisk fight commenced. Lieutenant Smithers and the reserve cavalry, followed closely by Lieutenant J. P. Davis and a Third Infantry howitzer crew, were then directed to join Lieutenant Maxon. Before they arrived, however, Amick and Maxon put the Indians to flight in sharp encounters, at a cost to the Indians of six dead and many more wounded. The

⁷⁰Nicholas Nolan to Post Adjutant, Camp Supply, June 11, 1870, Department of the Missouri, Letters Received, Records of the War Department, National Archives, Washington, D. C.; Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., June 12, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 26.

cavalry loss for the entire engagement consisted of two wounded horses.⁷¹

The country surrounding Camp Supply was literally alive with Indians. Yet, even the gallant conduct of the Camp Supply garrison against a direct siege did not deter raids. On June 13 a herder employed by the beef contractor was rushed upon by ten Indians, the man barely escaping with his life, if not his horse. The following night Indians took positions in the sandhills and fired shots into the post, but without damage.⁷² Farther north the bodies of three woodchoppers were discovered. Captain Nolan warned four men on June 16 of their danger as he proceeded with an empty wagon train to Dodge, and when he returned two days later he found three of the woodsmen murdered.⁷³

Then, as suddenly as the raids began, they ended. Lieutenant Hale, who had remained at the Cheyenne and Arapaho agency through these events, reported all the Arapahoes, and

⁷¹Ibid.; J. A. Covington, Cheyenne and Arapaho sub-agent in 1870, feels the expedition to destroy Camp Supply failed not because of the courage of the Tenth Cavalry, but because of the cowardice of the Comanches. Covington, Report, n.d., Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received.

⁷²Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 9.

⁷³Nelson to Pope, June 25, 1870, Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., September 23, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 26; Post Returns, Fort Dodge, Kansas, June, 1870.

thirty odd lodges of Cheyennes, were at the agency. It was his opinion that the Cheyennes and Arapahoes had, for the most part, refrained from violence the past month. He believed the Kiowa chief, Little Heart, was most likely the leader of the hostiles.⁷⁴

During September, trains of from one to twelve wagons cautiously made the journey to the agency on the North Fork of the Canadian without incident. In all 700,000 rations, originally sent to Camp Supply when it had been the agency, were transferred. Beef continued to be unacceptable food for the Indians, and the winter buffalo hunts annually brought the Cheyennes and Arapahoes back to the vicinity of Camp Supply. Nelson approved the winter campsites near his post for this saved him from transporting rations to the agency. Besides, the commander announced, "I have always maintained that the present location of the agency was a wanton piece of cruelty to the Indians, and every day strengthens the conclusion."⁷⁵

Meeting with the Arapahoes in September, while on their hunt, Colonel Nelson listened to complaints that involved more

⁷⁴Nelson to Pope, July 2, 30, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 26.

⁷⁵Nelson to Pope, September 2, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 26; Post Returns, Fort Supply, July-October, 1870.

than just the agency location. Arapaho chiefs were angry that they were treated not better, but probably worse, than the tribes who had depredated all summer. The case of Little Heart was particularly annoying. His boasts of killing the Mexican servant Monroe at Camp Supply, the teamster on May 30, plus the two soldiers at Bear Creek Mail Station were common knowledge. Yet he was well received at Fort Sill and drew regular winter rations. Moreover, those Cheyennes who had been on the warpath were rationed at their agency with as little hesitation as the Arapahoes.⁷⁶

The agency site, general treatment of the Arapahoes, and the usual dissatisfaction over the quality of rations were not the total complaints of the Indians. Doctor William Nicholas, on a tour of Indian agencies in November, 1870 for the Associated Executive Committee of the Society of Friends listed four additional annoyances to these tribes: that the government disarmed them and made them weak; they did not want to be confined to a small reservation; they did not like to be prohibited from going to Camp Supply; and finally they did not want railroads through their country.⁷⁷

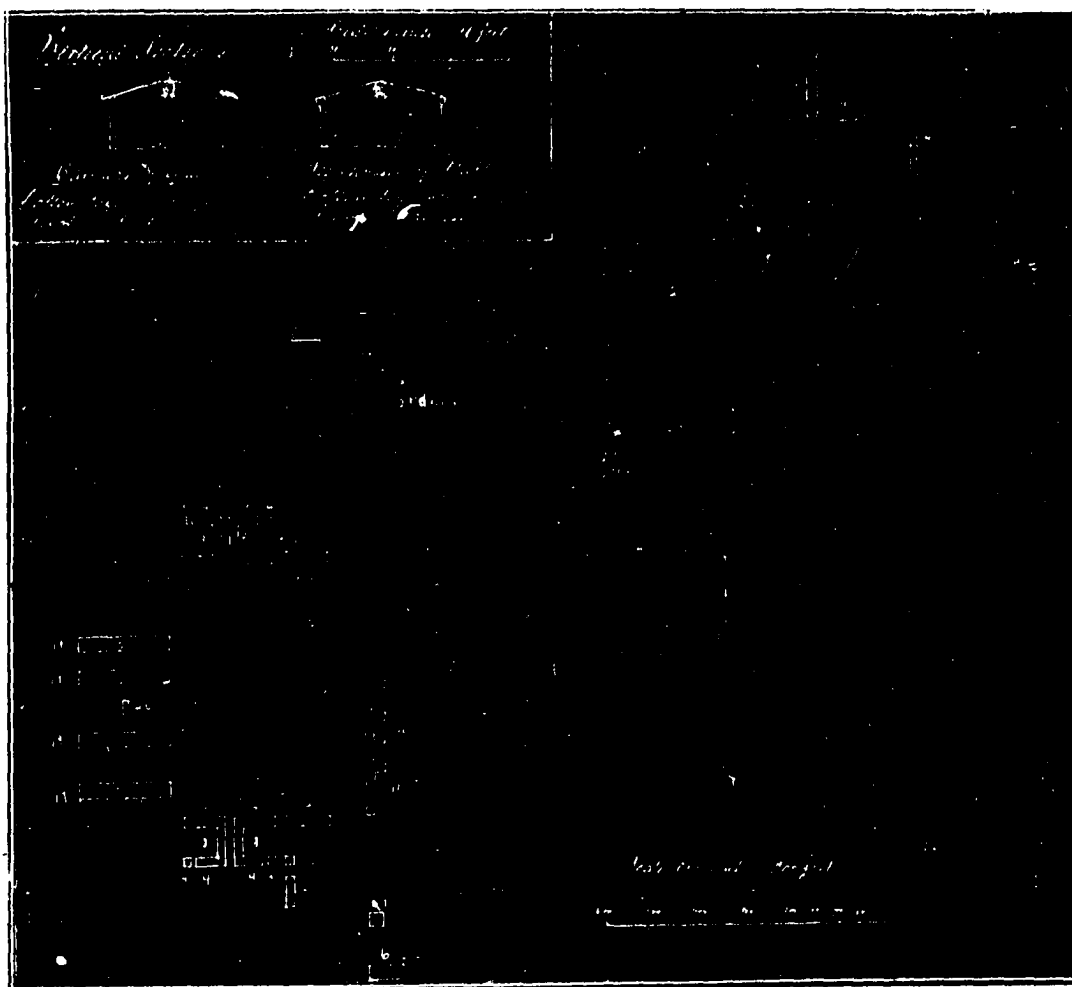
⁷⁶Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., September 16, 23, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 26.

⁷⁷Ibid.; William Nicholson, "A Tour of Indian Agencies

Camp Supply finished the year 1870 as a temporary cantonment of rude structures in a land teeming with Indian discontent. As the winter snows fell on the post for the third year the topic of conversation centered on the threat of Big Jake, principal Cheyenne chief in that region, to go on the warpath in the spring. It would be war, he promised, "the likes of which has not been seen on this frontier for some years."⁷⁸

in Kansas and the Indian Territory in 1870," Kansas Historical Quarterly, III (November, 1934), 346-348.

⁷⁸Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., November 18, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 26.



Ground plan of Camp Supply, December, 1870

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Infantry Barracks | 12. Post Bakery |
| 2. Cavalry Barracks | 13. Butcher Shop |
| 3. Company Messhouses | 14. Post Hospital |
| 4. Laundress' Quarters | 15. Quartermaster Corral |
| 5. Ordnance Storehouse | 16. Carpenter and Saddle Shops |
| 6. Commissary Storehouse | 17. Blacksmith Shop |
| 7. Quartermaster Storehouse | 18. Meeting House |
| 8. Commissary Office | 19. Cavalry Stables |
| 9. Infantry Guardhouse | 20. Cavalry Guardhouse |
| 10. Adjutants Office | 21. Post Trader |
| 11. Officers Quarters | |

CHAPTER IV

INDIANS, WHITES AND WHISKEY, 1871-1873

During the winter of 1870-1871 many officers at Camp Supply feared an Indian outbreak in the spring. Colonel Nelson dutifully informed his superior, General John H. Pope, of Big Jake's promise to raid in the spring, and what he felt was mismanagement at the Cheyenne and Arapaho agency. Pope recorded these complaints and explained to Eli S. Parker, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, that military authorities could not correct agency abuses, only disperse troops along lines of transportation and protect exposed frontier settlements when hostilities began. Hopefully, the Indian officials would check this Indian uneasiness before April 1.¹

The interest of Nelson and Pope was not welcomed by Central Superintendency officials. Brinton Darlington refuted the charges of Nelson, insisting they were based on incomplete

¹Pope to Parker, January 4, 1871, Central Superintendency, Letters Received.

knowledge. As to the threat of an outbreak, the agent stated that he regarded Big Jake as a reliable and influential leader of peace among the Cheyennes, not a warmonger. Warfare was not imminent, in his opinion, when the grass grew green.²

Nevertheless, as the winter months turned into spring, military observers feared the worst. Lieutenant Colonel John W. Davidson, Tenth Cavalry, replaced Colonel Anderson D. Nelson as commanding officer at Camp Supply on February 5, 1871, and continued to foresee trouble brewing in winter camps on the Washita where Cheyenne chiefs conferred with the Kiowas, Comanches, and Kiowa-Apaches. Reports by officers, traders and scouts throughout February and into March noted these bands more interested in fattening war ponies than killing buffalo.³ Little Raven and the Arapahoes, camped on the Cimarron half way between Camp Supply and the agency, were thought not to be inclined to join the hostiles when the outbreak came. As to the other bands, Captain William B. Kennedy said, "I would state that I know of no officer or citizen at Camp

²Hoag to Parker, January 9, 1871, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Sent; Darlington to Hoag, February 11, 1871, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received.

³John Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., February 11, 1871, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 26; T. R. Curtis to E. W. Wynkoop, March 4, 1871 (COPY), Upper Arkansas Agency, Letters Received.

Supply, I.T., at the time of my leaving there /February 19, 1871/ who was not fully convinced of the hostile intent of the Indians mentioned."⁴

With Indian unrest apparent to the military if not the Indian officials, Colonel Davidson took measures to reinforce the line of communication with Fort Dodge, ninety-three miles distant. On his journey down the Dodge-Supply road to take command of Camp Supply, Davidson, at a point on Upper Bear Creek, thirty-three miles south of Dodge, erected a new defensive earthworks. Farther down the road, approximately half way between Fort Dodge and Camp Supply, Bear Creek Mail Station, founded in February, 1870, was inspected and found to be in a not very defensible condition, but was retained for the time being.⁵

After reaching Camp Supply, Colonel Davidson decided that for the safety of the mail and supply trains on the Dodge-Supply road, more than the small station at Bear Creek and the new redoubt north of it was required. Captain John H. Page was therefore dispatched on February 12, 1871 with one company of the Third Infantry to build Cimarron Redoubt, thirty-eight

⁴W. B. Kennedy to AAG, Dept. of Mo., March 2, 1871 (COPY), Central Superintendency, Letters Received.

⁵Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., September 20, 1871, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 27.

miles north of Camp Supply. A week later Captain Robert P. Hughes took two additional companies of infantry to complete the job. Located on the banks of the Cimarron River the third station on the Dodge-Supply road consisted of Sibley tents and a sod breastworks supporting gunny sacks filled with sand. The redoubt was built on the principle of a permanent "fortification in miniature, with bastions, flanks, curtains, and ditch." A detachment of one officer and twenty-five men, relieved each month, were stationed here to aid the passing wagons through five miles of nearly impassible bottom on the Cimarron River.⁶

Captain Joseph B. Rife and a company of the Sixth Infantry moved out of Camp Supply on February 25, 1871 to reinforce the construction of Upper Bear Creek Station, begun by Davidson on his trip south to Camp Supply. Located higher up on a stream this cantonment formed into a stockade fifty feet square, built of burlap bags filled with earth. Walls ten feet thick at the base held bastions at diagonally opposite corners. The western wall served as one side of the enclosed

⁶Ibid.; Frances M. A. Roe, Army Letters From an Officer's Wife, 1871-1888 (New York, 1909), 86; Post Returns, Camp Supply, September, 1871; Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 11; Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., February 10, 1871, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 26. Page and Hughes completed their work and returned to Camp Supply on March 3, 1871.

mule corral while the eastern side contained quarters for the men. Defensively the earth-covered roofs were a few feet lower than the walls, thus forming a good position in case of attack.⁷

With the road to Dodge secure, Davidson turned his attention to other matters. Numerous four-day scouts near Beaver River and Wolf Creek in early March served to acquaint the post garrison with the region, keep the commanding officer informed of the location of potentially hostile tribes, and at the same time allow troops to investigate the haunts of renegade traders.

Based on creditable information of the anticipated outbreak, a more extensive scout left Camp Supply March 26, 1871. The primary duty of Captain Nicholas Nolan and his squadron of the Tenth Cavalry was to carefully patrol the line of Beaver River between Camp Supply and the crossing of the Santa Fe Trail near Round Mound, in order to prevent the Kiowas, Comanches, Cheyennes and Arapahoes from leaving their reservations and going north. Captain Nolan was directed to pursue the northward trails of any Indians and force them

⁷Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., February 10, 1871, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 26; Richard T. Jacobs, "Military Reminiscences of Captain Richard T. Jacobs," Chronicles of Oklahoma, II (March, 1924), 30-31. The building party under Rife returned to Camp Supply on March 23.

back to their reservations. He was to work in conjunction with three cavalry troops from Fort Union, New Mexico Territory, patrolling between that post and Fort Sumner, New Mexico Territory.⁸

Commanding four officers and 120 men, Captain Nolan proceeded north and west 235 miles to the crossing of the Santa Fe road in a march of seventeen days. During the several weeks on the trail the troops encountered severe rains, heavy snows and cold north winds. Horses and men suffered from the inclement weather, the grass had been eaten off by buffalo, and no wood was obtainable for a seventy-mile burned-off stretch preceding Round Mound. Water was so poor as to be injurious to men and animals and ponds marked on the maps were found to be dry or non-existent. After an equally arduous return journey, the party reached Camp Supply on May 3. No trails, camps or signs of Indians were discovered during the entire patrol.⁹

Captain Nolan's reconnaissance was the first extensive patrol into the area of the present Panhandle of Oklahoma.

⁸Davidson to Nolan, March 25, 1871, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 27; Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 12.

⁹Davidson to Nolan, April 15, 28, May 2, 1871, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 27; Nolan to Post Adjutant, Camp Supply, May 4, 1871, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 2.

Nolan made his own trail from the Beaver to the Santa Fe Trail and reported on the nature of the country, using the itinerary of his march to sketch a more realistic map of wood, water, grass and buffalo conditions to be expected west of the 100th meridian. Further, the Nolan scout determined that whiskey traders, alleged to be infiltrating the area, were not following the Beaver River to Indian bands near Camp Supply.

As spring turned into summer rumors were heard of increased whiskey traffic with the Indians, a serious problem to Camp Supply since October, 1869. Lee and Reynolds Company, official post traders at Camp Supply and frequent visitors to the Indian camps, reported trade irregularities early in February, 1871.¹⁰ In May, violations became so frequent that liquor inspection details were placed on the Dodge-Supply road. Only moderate success was experienced against smugglers, yet the military kept after the traders, most of them from Kansas. In spite of their best efforts to halt whiskey runners, patrols were hampered by legal technicalities. Until June, 1871, officers were under orders not to pursue or arrest Indians with illegal trade goods. Moreover, United States

¹⁰Lee and Reynolds Co. to Joseph B. Rife, February, 14, 1871, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 2.

marshalls were virtually nonexistent in Indian Territory. It was suspected that travelers, and even government guides and interpreters secreted small amounts of liquor for sale to Indians. The ultimate complication was that Indians refused to expose the culprits in or out of court.¹¹

Spring, 1871 appeared, but without the expected outburst, much to everyone's relief. Captain Jeremiah S. Schindel at the Cheyenne and Arapaho agency was unconvinced trouble could not begin and indicated an attack was being contemplated on approaching Atlantic and Pacific Railroad surveyors. Prevailing opinion was that Cheyenne and Kiowa warriors would go for the party before the end of March. Captain Charles D. Viele and a company of the Tenth Cavalry escorting the surveyors was alerted, but the anticipated attack did not materialize.¹² Colonel Davidson considered the April 6, 1871 announcement to Little Raven and Little Robe that they and five

¹¹Davidson to Commanding Officer, Fort Hays, Kansas, May 1, 1871, Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., October 2, 1871, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 27; Parker to W. W. Belknap, June 21, 1871, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Letters Sent, Vol. 102, Records of The Department of the Interior, National Archives, Washington, D. C.; Darlington to Hoag, June 23, August 7, 1871, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received.

¹²Jeremiah S. Schindel to Davidson, March 22, 1871, Central Superintendency, Letters Received; Davidson to Charles D. Viele, March 30, 1871, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 27.

or six other chiefs would visit the Great Father in Washington had produced a tranquilizing effect on the two tribes.¹³

With the Cheyenne and Arapaho chiefs headed for Washington, Davidson relaxed his vigil. Yet, not all tribesmen, it turned out, felt peaceably inclined that summer. The desire of the Cheyennes and Arapahoes to raid their historic enemy the Utes remained strong. Left Hand, a war chief of the Arapahoes had petitioned Agent Darlington in early February, 1871 for permission to go on a raid against the Utes of Colorado. Because the agent did not want to offend the chief with a direct refusal, a promise was made to refer the request to higher authority. Left Hand waited a reasonable length of time and then left the reservation with fifty braves.¹⁴ He was brought back only by the temperate intercession of Yellow Bear, and the peace was not broken.¹⁵ Cheyennes, however, had not had their try for the Utes, and a band of 300 Dog Soldiers under Grey Beard attempted an expedition in May, 1871.

¹³Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., September 20, April 28, 1871, Davidson to Ed Guerrie, April 6, 1871, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 27; Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 12.

¹⁴Murphy, "Reminiscences of the Washita Campaign and of the Darlington Agency," 271.

¹⁵Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., September 20, 1871, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 27; Darlington to Hoag, February 9, 1871, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received.

Captain William B. Kennedy and a troop of the Tenth Cavalry left Camp Supply May 4, 1871 on a routine scout up Beaver River to Round Mound. When near San Francisco Creek, about 125 miles west of the post, Kennedy sighted a large band of Indians moving north. Upon confrontation it turned out to be Grey Beard's band, and a promise was extracted from the Indians to peacefully return to their camps on the Canadian and Washita. Colonel Davidson was advised of these events and Captain Nolan with two additional troops were sent to the assistance of Kennedy. At their arrival, though, the Indian word was found to be honored, and Nolan returned to post, satisfied that the Cheyennes were not headed for the Colorado frontier.¹⁶

Even as this band of Cheyennes drew near Camp Supply, the Kiowas were moving north to locate in the same area. Agent Darlington, concerned over the effect this warlike tribe might have on the Cheyennes, appealed for military help to force the Kiowas back to their reservation.¹⁷ Available scout-

¹⁶Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 12; Darlington to Hoag, August 26, 1871, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Year 1871, 472; Davidson to Nolan, May 15, 1871, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 27.

¹⁷Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., July 10, 1871, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 27; Darlington to Davidson, July 7, 1871, Central Superintendency, Letters Received; Darlington to Hoag, July 15, 1871, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received.

ing reports through mid July, located the Arapahoes fourteen miles south of Camp Supply on the North Fork of the Canadian, and the combined camp of the Cheyennes and Kiowa-Apaches eight miles north of the post on Wolf Creek. The Kiowas, Comanches and some displaced Mescalero Apaches were thought to be eighty miles south of Camp Supply on tributaries of the Washita. From that point these tribes were sending such large numbers into the Cheyenne camp as to exercise a bad influence on them.¹⁸

Reinforcements were necessary before Camp Supply could move against the Kiowas and a call was made to the commanding officer at Fort Dodge for another of cavalry. Captain Tullius C. Tupper's troop of the Sixth Cavalry arrived on July 25 and was joined with Captain Nolan and the Tenth Cavalry from Camp Supply. Together they would go to the Cheyennes' camp, from there crossing to the southern line of the Cheyenne Reservation, then marching west along the Canadian until they reached the headwaters of the Washita. All Kiowas in the vicinity were to be driven off. Marching on July 28, Nolan followed his plan, causing the Kiowas to retreat south.¹⁹

¹⁸Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., July 21, 1871, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 27.

¹⁹Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., July 26, 1871, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 27.

There was no bloodshed, and Colonel Davidson later admitted, "the moral effect of the promptness with which troops were sent for and appeared had saved a campaign." Within two days the Kiowas and their cohorts had completely withdrawn, and the Cheyennes moved across the Canadian and camped south of Camp Supply.²⁰

The remaining summer weeks of 1871 were spent patrolling the Dodge-Supply road against illegal traders and escorting railroad survey crews. Captain Charles Viele protected one survey crew into September, and Captain Nolan escorted another from August 24 to September 29, from 100 miles east of Camp Supply, through the Antelope Hills, and on to Fort Bascom, New Mexico Territory.²¹

September and October brought the Cheyennes and Arapahoes closer to Camp Supply, and all remained quiet near the post. Sixty Arapahoes under Heaps of Birds made another attempt to strike the Utes, but they were dissuaded by Colonel Davidson.²² Only the rumor of Kiowas in the area upset the

²⁰Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 13; Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., July 31, 1871, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 27.

²¹Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., August 24, 28, September 20, 1871, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 27; Post Returns, Camp Supply, July-September, 1871.

²²Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., December 15, 1871.

tranquility of Camp Supply and it ended the year much as it had entered it--with rumors of a spring outbreak.²³

Beginning its fourth year on the Southern Plains, Camp Supply had lost its temporary look. Six sets of troop barracks replaced the original mud huts, and seventeen officers' quarters, a commanding officer's building roofed with shingles, a guardhouse and two warehouses were recent additions to the post. The infantry and cavalry camps moved closer to the new buildings and the already established stables, bakery, hospital, adjutant's office and quartermaster corral added a permanent character to the post. With few exceptions, walls for buildings at the post were of picket construction, upright cottonwood logs covered with canvas.²⁴

Always aware of its duty as a supply depot, Camp Supply kept on hand 800,000 pounds of grain and forage for animals, plus one year's supply of subsistence stores for six companies

Davidson to Darlington, December 26, 1871, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 27.

²³Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., December 20, 1871, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 27; Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., January 16, 1872, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28; John F. Williams to Davidson, January 2, 1872, Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 2.

²⁴Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 14; Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., February 16, 1872, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28.

of soldiers. Transporting these provisions to Indian country was a long haul, often beginning in St. Louis, Missouri. From Fort Leavenworth, Kansas stores were brought by the Kansas Pacific Railroad 453 miles to Hays City, Kansas, and thence by wagon to Camp Supply, 166 miles via Dodge City. The building of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad to Fort Larned, Kansas and later to Dodge City in 1872 cut the wagon distance in half. Surveys of the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad up the Canadian valley gave rise to hopes of even closer railroad connections.

For the time being, however, Camp Supply was an isolated post with only one wagon road north to Fort Dodge, and one road south, 196 miles to Fort Sill, via the Cheyenne and Arapaho agency. Post subsistence required water wagon details to Wolf Creek, and wood, beef, and vegetables were furnished by the contractor.²⁵ Although a larger post in garrison strength and physical plant than most trans-Mississippi military establishments, its men performing important and hazardous duty in Indian country, Camp Supply remained only a temporary supply station.

Cheyenne and Arapaho bands hunted separately for buffalo through the winter of 1871-1872. The Arapahoes moved from the

²⁵Ibid.

North Canadian to the Cimarron, but the Cheyennes remained fifteen miles from Camp Supply on Beaver River.²⁶ On January 4, 1872 the long forecast trouble arrived, only this report of depredations was credited to citizen forces rather than Indians.

Little Raven, Arapaho chief, reported to Colonel Davidson that white men were putting up cabins near the Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation, and were selling whiskey to Indians. Because of the confusion regarding Indian Intercourse laws, Colonel Davidson submitted the problem to his superiors. On January 23 Davidson received authority from the Department of the Missouri to destroy these establishments.²⁷

Throughout February and March, 1872 patrols and scouts from Camp Supply sought illegal Kansas traders from the north and New Mexican whiskey runners from the southwest. Captain William Kennedy and his squadron of the Tenth Cavalry left Camp Supply February 3 to search for traders from New Mexico, but returned without success. Colonel Davidson commanded a detachment on February 4 to break up the northern whiskey es

²⁶John D. Miles to Hoag, August 28, 1872, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for The Year 1872, 249; Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., January 31, 1872, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28.

²⁷Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., January 4, 1872, Fort

establishments, but he too returned empty handed. The ten day scout of Captain Orlando H. Moore with the Sixth Infantry and Tenth Cavalry in mid March traveled 100 miles, but returned with the same discouraging results. Up to this time traders were able to give the military the slip by moving from place to place in light two-horse wagons, often taking refuge among the Indians. When at one time the cavalry proceeded to the Cheyenne camps to make arrests, the fear of the Indians that another Sand Creek Massacre was about to take place forced the troops to back away.²⁸ It was not until the first week of April, when Captain Charles D. Viele with a company of the Tenth Cavalry successfully captured three wagons loaded with New Mexican whiskey twenty miles west of the Antelope Hills, that the illegal traffic temporarily slowed down.²⁹

In spite of Indian displeasure over the military action that curbed their illegal trade goods, which included arms

Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28; AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Davidson, January 15, 1872, Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 2; Post Returns, Camp Supply, January, 1872.

²⁸Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 16; Post Returns, Camp Supply, January, February, 1872; Miles to Hoag, August 28, 1872, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1872, 251; Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., February 9, 1872, Davidson to Orlando H. Moore, March 13, 1872, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28.

²⁹Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 16; Post Returns, Camp Supply, March, April, 1872.

and ammunition in addition to liquor and other unlicensed supplies, the Cheyennes and Arapahoes appeared peaceful. One incident in late April greatly pleased Davidson. Several Lee and Reynolds teamsters were frightened from their freight wagons by the sight of approaching Cheyennes on the road forty miles south of Camp Supply. Yet, when Captain Viele was sent to retrieve the presumed empty wagons, he found them undisturbed and even the loose mules tied to bushes. "I have taken measures," wrote Davidson, "to learn the indications among the Arapahoes, Cheyennes and Kiowa tribes of Indians, and am well assured, that hostilities are not impending, and that the indications of a friendly and peaceful relation are good."³⁰

Colonel Davidson's prediction, while basically true, did not take into account the recent arrival of roving bands of Kiowa warriors from Texas. The incorrigible Kiowas struck first for mules. Captain Orlando H. Moore left Camp Supply on May 12 commanding four companies of the Sixth Infantry on the first leg of a journey to Fort Hays, via Fort Dodge. In addition to his regimental property, Moore took sixty-two mules, eight wagons and one ambulance from Camp Supply for transportation. While encamped at Bear Creek Station on the

³⁰Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., April 26, 1872, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28.

Dodge-Supply road on May 15, thirty-nine mule teams plus the escort mounts were sent 200 yards from camp to graze under the protection of seven guards. Without warning, seven or eight Indians, under cover of bluffs and ravines, swept around a hill and onto the creek bank, yelling and firing shots, successfully stampeding 125 mules and horses. Pickets in camp opened fire and the guards on the other side had to duck from soldiers' and Indians' bullets.

Moore immediately dispatched an officer and twenty men on the available horses to attempt a recovery of the stolen animals. The Indian trail, now joined by fifteen more raiders, was pursued some miles until it was erased by a buffalo herd, and the patrol returned to camp. Fortunately for Moore a Mexican train arrived and the "greaser's" mules pulled the stranded command to Fort Dodge.³¹

The loss of forty-six of its mules severely crippled the transportation facilities of Camp Supply. Colonel Davidson was rightfully angry over the episode, and tactfully suggested to his superiors that Captain Moore was negligent. In a letter of May 19, 1872 Davidson remarked that as he passed

³¹Moore to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 17, 1872 (COPY), Central Superintendency, Letters Received; Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 17; William Fetterer to Editor, Winners of the West, II, May, 1925, 3.

through Bear Creek Station, moving in the opposite direction, a few hours before the attack, he observed Indians hanging around Captain Moore's camp. Moreover, he stated that if Captain Moore, who admitted he suspected the Kiowas headed for Antelope Hills, had informed Camp Supply of the disaster, the mules would probably have been recovered as the Kiowas trail passed less than twenty-five miles west of Camp Supply.³² In spite of the efforts of scouts and friendly Indians, by January, 1873 only fifty of the stolen mules were recovered.³³

On May 22 discontented Cheyenne warriors used the Kiowa attack as a veil and themselves murdered two couriers of the Sixth Cavalry, Privates Alexander Christopher and Henry Weusserman, eight miles north of the Cimarron crossing. Indians took the soldiers' horses, arms and equipment.³⁴ Frequent scouts of the area were now begun in an effort to prevent a

³²Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 19, 1872, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28.

³³Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., January 8, 1873, Lawrie Tatum to Davidson, December 23, 1872, Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 2; Pope to AAG, Military Division of the Missouri, September 28, 1872, in House Exec. Doc. No. 1, 42 Cong., 3 Sess., 46.

³⁴Private Alexander Christopher was immediately killed on the Cimarron, and Private Henry Weusserman died of injuries at Camp Supply on June 1. Post Returns, Fort Dodge, May, 1872; Post Returns, Camp Supply, May, 1872; Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., June 3, 23, 1872, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28.

reoccurrence of the attacks of May and June, 1870.

Because of the alleged unhealthy location of Camp Supply between two streams, and its presumed temporary character, Colonel Davidson attempted, in late May, 1872 to relocate the post. For several months Davidson had felt the 125 mile distance between Camp Supply and the Cheyenne and Arapaho agency was preposterous, but assuming Camp Supply would be abandoned in the spring 1872 he did not press the issue with his superiors. When word was received in January, 1872 that the Department of the Missouri had no plans for abandoning the post, Colonel Davidson looked for a new site.³⁵

With fifty mounted men the post commander, on May 25, 1872, conducted a reconnaissance of the surrounding area. Covering the territory eighty miles west and thirty-five miles east of the post, several potential sites were observed. The final choice was made and the most suitable location turned out to be within a half-mile of the existing establishment. Davidson's recommendation was to construct all new post buildings on the higher ground of his location, using the older post structures as stables, shops, mechanic houses and corrals.

³⁵Davidson to Francis A. Walker, December 31, 1871 (COPY), Upper Arkansas Agency, Letters Received; Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., December 21, 1871, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 27; AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Davidson, January 15, 1872, Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 2.

In this manner the camp would remain in Indian country, although the problem of remoteness to the agency would not be solved, and the existing system of roads and mail stations would not be lost.³⁶ The only advantage gained, it seemed, was to create a more healthful location.

Headquarters, Department of the Missouri, did not believe the proposed removal of the post a mere half-mile was significant, and ordered Davidson to desist from such operations, especially in view of the phase of Indian troubles in his vicinity. These orders did not reach the post, however, before Captain George B. Head made a scout in search of another site suggested by scouts and traders. Cedar Bluff, on the south bank of the North Fork of the Canadian, eighteen miles from the post, and Osage Springs on the north bank of the same river, thirty-six miles from Camp Supply, proved to be unacceptable when investigated. In the end, the present site, when extended a half-mile, was the finest location in the region.³⁷ It appeared General Sully's choice of a spot

³⁶Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 17; Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 19, 28, 1872, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28.

³⁷AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Davidson, May 29, 1872, Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 2; George B. Head to Post Adjutant, Camp Supply, May 30, 1872, Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., October 9, 1872, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28.

for an active post was a good one.

Holding fifty-six cavalry troops at Camp Supply, Colonel Davidson took a more serious view of the Indian raids when the Kiowas struck near his post on June 3, running off the post beef contractor's herd. To this point it was not known if the Cheyennes were involved in the hostilities. Cheyennes admitted to the murder of Christopher and Weusserman when questioned by Davidson on June 23, but the identification of his attackers as Kiowas by the dying Weusserman placed the blame for all depredations on the Kiowas until that time. Fearing a general outbreak, Davidson asked for and received from Fort Dodge another troop of the Sixth Cavalry.³⁸

Convinced the Kiowas were on the warpath with one group across the Washita bound for northern Texas, and another party of 200 warriors operating between Fort Dodge and Camp Supply, Davidson concerned himself with the intentions of the Cheyennes and Arapahoes.³⁹ Grey Beard's band returned twenty-

³⁸Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 22, 29, 1872, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28; Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 17.

³⁹Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., June 3, 6, 1872, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28.

five of the mules stolen from Captain Moore,⁴⁰ but Davidson considered the act a facade to relieve the Cheyennes of any guilt. He accepted the offering, but continued to doubt the Cheyennes. When Little Raven promised peace in his tribe and sent an Indian escort to accompany Camp Supply cavalrymen, it appeared that the Arapahoes would not join the Kiowas in making war. The entire Camp Supply garrison went into defensive formation awaiting the Cheyennes' decision.⁴¹

Under orders from General Pope, Colonel Davidson was charged with the safety of all trains between Camp Supply and Fort Dodge.⁴² In the discharge of this duty troops from Camp Supply were on constant patrol of the Dodge-Supply road, one of the areas of concentration by Kiowa warriors.

Fortifications at Upper Bear Creek and Cimarron crossing were particularly attractive to Kiowa and Comanche raiders. Indian scouts were repeatedly seen spying on the redoubts. On the night of June 3 a party of three Indians rode to within

⁴⁰Apparently these mules were recovered by the Cheyennes after a buffalo herd stampeded the Kiowa's booty. Tatum to Davidson, December 23, 1872, Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 2.

⁴¹Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 29, June 3, 1872, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28.

⁴²AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Davidson, May 25, 1872, Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 2.

400 yards of Cimarron Redoubt, dismounted, crept under cover of the bank, and scaled the parapet before they were discovered and dispersed by the sentry. In an effort to secure these stations howitzers were installed, the garrison increased, stockades strengthened, and dogs attached to guard posts.⁴³

All mail, supply and contractor's trains were escorted on the Dodge-Supply road. Increased Indian activity called for special instructions, but the general policy required of each escort was:⁴⁴

. . . two marches daily of the train, one in the early morning of eight to ten miles, and one in the evening of the same distance. You will require the train to corral at all camps, and on the appearance of hostile Indians. During the march you will cause flankers to be thrown out to give timely warning. And always camp the train with pickets posted upon commanding points. And do the same on breaking camp.

In addition, patrols of one officer and at least twenty men operated between Camp Supply and the Arkansas River, north of which was scouted by Fort Dodge. Captains Kennedy, Viele, Kelley, Walsh and Head, and Lieutenant Harper were constantly in the field from June to August, 1872 seeking Indian signs.⁴⁵

⁴³Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., June 6, 13, 1872, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28. The Indians reacted to the use of dogs by spreading poisoned meat about the station.

⁴⁴Post Adjutant, Camp Supply to V. A. Goddard, June 15, 1872, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28.

⁴⁵Post Returns, Camp Supply, May-August, 1872; Post Re-

In most instances the command was under orders to:⁴⁶

. . . march up Beaver Creek on what is known as the Sully Trail camping on Beaver the first day. On the second you will proceed via Buffalo Springs to the head of the series of ponds on which the Redoubt at the Cimarron is located camping there. On the third day you will march to Bear Creek Station, camping at that place. On the fourth to Bluff Creek where you will remain one day.

Then on your return you will camp at Bear Creek, at the Cimarron, at what is known as Buffalo Ponds on the main road and from thence to the Post.

Increased military protection of the area north of Camp Supply was, for the most part, successful in keeping the warriors in check. Late in June the Cheyennes moved closer to the agency, indicating their peaceful intentions. The Kiowas reacted with a feint toward the agency stock. They withdrew then headed their families toward the "Llano Estacado" of Texas.⁴⁷ As the warriors retreated from north of Supply, seven horses belonging to citizens were daringly

turns, Fort Dodge, May-August, 1872; Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 17-19.

⁴⁶Post Adjutant, Camp Supply to Kennedy, June 21, 1872, Post Adjutant, Camp Supply to William Harper, July 4, 1872, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28. Patrols from Camp Supply were made June 3, 9, 21, July 4, 8, 17, 25, 31, August 2, 10, 27, 1872.

⁴⁷Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., June 23, 1872, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28; Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 18.

snatched from outside the post on July 20.⁴⁸ Another party, however, failed in its effort to stampede the mules at Cimarron Redoubt. Cheyennes were accounted for in camps south of Supply on the Canadian River, but Davidson wondered how it could be the "Kiowas can so multiply themselves as to appear at so many different points," unless they were aided by other tribes.⁴⁹

Little Robe contested Davidson's inference and informed the Colonel that the Kiowas had been joined by the hostile Osages. The alliance, however, was ineffective, for when a small settlement on Medicine Lodge Creek in Kansas was attacked in early August the Indians got the worst of it, losing one Osage and two Kiowas, and getting no stock.⁵⁰

By the end of August the Kiowas had moved on and seventy-five lodges of Arapahoes were drifting from their agency to camp within one and one-half miles of Camp Supply. Fifty lodges of Cheyennes under Stone Calf moved to within twenty-five miles of the post, but the main body took winter camps

⁴⁸Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., June 23, 1872, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28; Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 18.

⁴⁹Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., August 2, 1872, John P. Thompson to Post Adjutant, Camp Supply, July 31, 1872, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28.

⁵⁰Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., August 10, 1872, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28.

on the Canadian, west of Antelope Hills, near Medicine Arrow's band.⁵¹

Unknown to Colonel Davidson a small band of Arapahoes slipped away from Camp Supply in early September, 1872 for another attempt on the Colorado Utes. Largely unsuccessful in their expedition the Indians contented themselves with stealing twenty head of horses, September 15, from settlers at Cimarron Pass, seventy-five miles south of Fort Lyon. Receiving this information, Colonel Davidson immediately dispatched a letter to John D. Miles, Indian Agent replacement after June 1, 1872 for the deceased Brinton Darlington, seeking recovery of the animals. Most of the Arapahoes were camped near his post, and Davidson also made a personal appeal to the chiefs. Thirteen head of stock were returned in October.⁵²

At almost the same time this theft was cleared up, a new act of violence was reported to Davidson. According to the Indians, a party of peaceful Northern Cheyennes were re-

⁵¹Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., August 30, 1872, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28.

⁵²John R. Brooke to AAG, Dept. of Mo., September 20, 1872 (COPY), Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 2; Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., October 7, 21, 1872, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28.

turning home after a visit to the Southern Cheyennes when they were fired upon by a group of buffalo hunters on Walnut Creek. One Indian was killed. Being too small a party to fight, the Indians slipped away, later meeting Mr. and Mrs. Richard Jordan in the vicinity. The Northern Cheyennes killed Mr. Jordan and took his wife captive, being careful to leave the Jordan horses in camp to show they were not on a marauding expedition, but committed the act in revenge.⁵³ Davidson alerted authorities but the northward bound party was out of his jurisdiction.

Indian violence did not frighten Kansas whiskey traders. Smuggled liquor flowed freely in Arapaho and Cheyenne villages. In November, 1872, a drunken shooting incident killed Walk-a-bit, an Arapaho, and dangerously wounded Ben Clark's Cheyenne wife.⁵⁴ One week later two whiskey ranches were established on the Dodge-Supply road inside Kansas, one at Bluff Creek, the other on the Cimarron.

Unable to act on citizens outside Indian country, Colonel Davidson responded with orders to strengthen Cimarron

⁵³Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., October 20, November 2, 1872, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28.

⁵⁴Miles to Hoag, December 12, 1872, January 1, 1873, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received.

Redoubt, and search all approaching Kansas trains for liquor.⁵⁵ Agent Miles, for his part, urged the full power of the Bureau of Indian Affairs to halt the illegal traffic. He charged that certain Indians such as John F. Brown, a Seminole, and Black Beaver, a Delaware, brought liquor into Indian country as unofficial agents of white traders.⁵⁶

By the second week of January, 1873, Agent Miles reported forty gallons of whiskey in a Cheyenne camp turned 1,200 Indians drunk as "Loons" in two hours. Indians insisted they took the liquor from a deserted buffalo hunter camp, but more reliable witnesses denied the story. Arapaho camps continued to welcome Dodge City traders who swapped a bottle of whiskey for a buffalo robe or a pony.⁵⁷ The agent appealed to the tribesmen to come to the reservation and do business with the legitimate, licensed traders. They ignored Miles, and he resolved to deal with the source of trouble.⁵⁸

⁵⁵Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 19; Davidson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., December 8, 1872, Post Adjutant, Camp Supply to Alffed Von Wilke, February 22, 1873, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28.

⁵⁶Miles to Hoag, December 12, 20, 1872, January 12, 1873, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received.

⁵⁷Miles to Hoag, January 16, 1873, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received.

⁵⁸Miles to Hoag, January 28, 1873, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received.

Using information gathered from distraught squaws, Miles outlined his plan to Colonel Davidson. He claimed there were five whiskey ranches on the Dodge-Supply road; one at the Cimarron, two at Bear Creek and two on Bluff Creek. In his capacity as Indian Agent, Miles requested the use of a military escort to protect his charges from the liquor traffic. J. J. Hoag, an agency employee, would accompany Camp Supply troops as the legal representative of Agent Miles, pointing out individuals and property dangerous to the general welfare of Indians.

Such maneuvers were of questionable legality, Miles admitted to his superior, but something must be done. The Medicine Lodge Treaty of 1867 with the Cheyennes and Arapahoes allowed the Indians the right to hunt buffalo in Kansas, south of the Arkansas River, so long as they found animals in sufficient numbers to warrant the privilege. It therefore follows, Miles determined, that since hunting south of the Arkansas was lawful, that same law must protect the hunters, thereby making Indian Intercourse laws applicable south of the Arkansas, within Kansas, even as they were applicable in the Indian country. Such a plan was also important, Miles continued, because it was presumed the prisoners and evidence would be brought into District Court in Kansas, rather than at Fort

Smith. Miles concluded, "If we are to go to Arkansas for trial we had just as well liberate them and go home and say free whiskey and free trade."⁵⁹

Lieutenant R. H. Pratt and twenty men of the Tenth Cavalry departed Camp Supply on January 24, 1873 supporting Miles' effort to close the Kansas whiskey traffic. The first three caches on the road north of Camp Supply were destroyed, and several Indian ponies and robes recovered. The two ranches at Bluff Creek were warned of approaching military so Lieutenant Pratt returned to post on January 29. The Lieutenant successfully arrested fourteen men, dumped more than 400 gallons of liquor, and chased some thirty men from near the Indian camps. Eight of the prisoners were sent to Topeka for trial and two other men, "Slippery Jack" Gallagher and "Frenchy" escaped custody by bribing three privates with \$40 on the road to Kansas.⁶⁰

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Miles to Hoag, September 1, 1873, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs For The Year 1873, 220; Post Returns, Camp Supply, January, 1873. An unfortunate incident of the raid was that on the return to Camp Supply the temperature suddenly dipped below zero, causing one of the prisoners to develop pneumonia. Not allowed out of the damp cellar where he was confined, the man died, and later developments and testimony showed him to have been entirely innocent of the charge of whiskey selling. Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 20.

Hoping to find the Kansans returning to their operations, Lieutenant Joseph M. Kelley and fourteen men of the Tenth Cavalry accompanied Agent Miles on February 5 to the ranches northeast of Bear Creek. The surprised traders boldly decided to fight it out and barricaded themselves inside log houses. For three days the traders withstood the siege, but when Captain James H. Gageby and a company of the Third Infantry arrived with a small cannon and reinforcements, the traders broke from hiding. All escaped in spite of the best efforts to capture them.⁶¹

The excitement of January and February, 1873 did not concern only whiskey traders. About January 15 a party of seventeen young Cheyennes left their winter camps on foot to fight the Utes. Only twelve of that party returned on March 10, to tell a gruesome tale of ambush. Following a tributary of the Canadian in New Mexico the Indian youths passed several settlements where they were treated kindly. But on the night of February 26 they were surprised and fired upon by soldiers and citizens about eighty miles east of Fort Bascom. Two dead were left where they fell and three wounded were hid and inten-

⁶¹Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 20; Post Returns, Camp Supply, February, 1873.

tionally left behind.⁶²

Little Robe immediately sent out three young men to aid the wounded. He then went to Camp Supply where he protested to Agent Miles, who was sympathetic, but reminded the chief his braves were off the reservation more than 100 miles, and had often been warned of the consequences. Whiskey helped excite the Cheyennes, and men in all the camps were reported drunk.⁶³

Looking for someone or something to vent their hostility upon, the Cheyennes choose sixteen railroad survey crews camped nearby. One party of workers was driven from the Cimarron River, and on March 18 a band of forty to fifty Cheyennes entered another surveyor camp twenty miles east of Camp Supply, beat the cook with clubs and an ax, shot at him with arrows and revolvers, then carried off, burned or destroyed the entire camp. The next day E. N. Deming and his three

⁶²Miles to Hoag, March 15, 1873, General Order No. 5, Headquarters, Department of the Missouri, March 17, 1873 (COPY), Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received; House Exec. Doc. No. 1, 43 Cong., 1 Sess., 46; Brooke to AAG, Dept. of Mo., March 15, 1873, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28.

⁶³Miles to Hoag, March 15, 1873, Williams to Hoag, March 31, 1873 (COPY), Hoag to H. R. Vlum, April 1, 1873, Williams to Hoag, March 22, 1873 (COPY), Central Superintendency, Letters Received.

assistants were killed near the Cimarron, just below the Kansas line. Other surveyor crews were followed by Indians until they retreated to settlements.⁶⁴

Theodore H. Barrett, Chief Surveyor, demanded military escort for his crews. General Pope admitted the dangerous nature of the region, then asked why the crews had not sought protection before instead of after the disasters. Detachments from Fort Dodge and Camp Supply were sent to the points indicated by Barrett, with the reminder that escorts would be furnished the surveyors if they made their locations known to either Forts Larned and Dodge, or Camp Supply.⁶⁵

Military authorities assessed the attack on the surveyors as retaliation for the ambush of the Cheyenne party near Fort Bascom. What was even more serious was the degenerate and uncontrollable state whiskey had put the angry Cheyennes in. Bull Bear, a Cheyenne chief, later told special agent

⁶⁴Theodore H. Barrett to Pope, April 8, 1873 (COPY), Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 2; Barrett to Secretary of the Interior, April 4, 1873 (COPY), Central Superintendency, Letters Received; Hoag to E. P. Smith, April 15, 1873, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Sent; Miles to Hoag, March 29, 1873, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received. The dead surveyor's bodies were not found until May 14, 1873, and then only after Indians told a party of hunters where to look.

⁶⁵Pope to Townsend, April 8, 1873, Department of the Missouri, Letters Sent, Vol. 84, Records of the War Department, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

John F. Williams the Cheyennes were on a huge drunk, and the fact that the dead surveyors' bodies were found buried in sand indicated this state of intoxication, for Cheyennes always left their victims exposed.⁶⁶

Lieutenant Colonel John R. Brooke, Third Infantry, who replaced Colonel Davidson as commanding officer of Camp Supply in February, 1873, believed the Cheyennes would send a large party of young warriors to the Fort Bascom vicinity to complete the vendetta. With the exception of Little Robe, Medicine Arrow and Young Whirlwind, the main body of Cheyennes moved down the Washita in early April to recuperate their stock on that area's advanced grass. It was known that "Big Medicine" would be made on the Washita.⁶⁷

The departure of a small party from the Cheyennes' camp on April 8, looked like trouble for Fort Bascom. The band, however, returned to camp upon word from Grey Beard that the three wounded warriors had returned safely from New Mexico Territory.⁶⁸

⁶⁶Hoag to Smith, April 11, 15, 1873, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Sent; Miles to Hoag, April 25, 1873, A. E. Reynolds to Miles, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received.

⁶⁷Brooke to AAG, Dept. of Mo., April 4, 1873, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28.

⁶⁸Brooke to AAG, Dept. of Mo., April 8, 12, 1873, Fort

Military protection allowed Barrett to concentrate his railroad survey crews into three or four parties and continue the work. General Pope, as Commander of the Department of the Missouri, was not bound to extend the escort of these surveyors into Indian Territory as that country, except Camp Supply, belonged within the jurisdiction of the Department of Texas after December, 1871 but he, nevertheless, assumed the responsibility.⁶⁹ Two companies of the Sixth Cavalry were placed on the Arkansas River southwest of Wichita, Kansas to scout from the southern line of Kansas to the Cimarron River. Three companies of the same regiment at Fort Dodge would scout south and east from that post, and troops from Camp Supply were directed to patrol north and east to where the Cimarron meets the southern line of Kansas.⁷⁰

This elaborate system of patrols was designed to protect the surveyors and, at the same time, control the Indians. Prior to this time the policy of the Department of the Missouri had been to punish Indian depredations by maintaining

Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28.

⁶⁹Barrett to Pope, April 8, 1873 (COPY), Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 2; Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 14.

⁷⁰Pope to Brooke, April 14, 1873, Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 2; House Exec. Doc.No. 1, 43 Cong., 1 Sess., 43.

efficient precautionary measures. Now, instead of keeping the troops at the posts, only to be sent out upon report of trouble, large portions of the cavalry force were kept in the field. "In this manner," explained General Pope, "the necessity of watching has been thrown upon the Indians and not, as hitherto, upon the troops shut up in posts for a large part of the season."⁷¹

Besides active participation in this comprehensive network of patrols, Camp Supply was ordered to escort and protect all properly authorized parties of surveyors whose work lay within its jurisdiction, ordinarily any portion of the Indian Territory between the southern line of Kansas and the North Fork of the Canadian.⁷²

Through April and May, Captain Adna R. Chaffee with Company I, Sixth Cavalry and Lieutenant William Harper with Company K, Sixth Cavalry, alternated escort detail with the surveyors. In June, Captain Ezra P. Ewers with a company of Fifth Infantry carried on until relieved in mid June by details from Fort Sill.⁷³ In three months only one small inci-

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²AAG, Dept. of Mo., to Brooke, April 9, 15, 1873, Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 2.

⁷³Adna R. Chaffee to Post Adjutant, Camp Supply, April 29, 1873, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 2; Post Adjutant, Camp Supply to Ezra P. Ewers, June 14, 1873, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28.

dent occurred. On June 3, several young Cheyennes impudently entered a surveyor camp and demanded rations. Sergeant Hamlin and his troops from Camp Supply ordered them out, whereupon the Indians strung bows and prepared for trouble. They left, though, after a few harmless shots in the air.⁷⁴

Horsethieves and highwaymen joined in the whiskey business or practiced their own specialized trade to add to the burden of Camp Supply. "Slippery Jack" Gallagher and "Frenchy," who had escaped their guard on the way to trial for whiskey sales, formed a gang in Indian country with Bob Hollis and several deserters from Camp Supply. Using Baker's Rancho on the Cimarron River as headquarters, Gallagher and his band systematically robbed teamsters, travelers and messengers, stealing horses wherever found. In one interesting masquerade during April, 1873, Gallagher and Hollis impersonated Fort Sill scouts spreading the alarm, falsely, of course, of an Indian uprising, in an effort to frighten survey crews away from their stock and equipment.⁷⁵

In spite of the best efforts of Camp Supply, Gallagher

⁷⁴Miles to Hoag, June 13, 1873, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received.

⁷⁵Miles to Hoag, April 14, 17, 1873, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received; Brooke to AAG, Dept. of Mo., April 20, 1873, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28.

remained at large. On April 28 he held up a stage, then ran off some horses, and still eluded pursuit by Amos Chapman and ten men. General Pope wrote to General E. P. Townsend of the Division of the Missouri,⁷⁶

It is foolish and unjustifiably reckless to have a small party go into that country. The danger is not as great from the Indians as from the gangs of white horsethieves, buffalo hunters, and whiskey sellers, who would not hesitate a moment to kill a small party in so remote a country.

Gallagher and Hollis were found in May, 1873. Hollis was slightly wounded in the chase and the stolen stock recovered, but the two desperados escaped to Baker's hideout. Gallagher vowed to sell his horse for a railroad ticket away from his past, and Hollis told William M. Lee, "The country is getting too warm, I think I'll emigrate."⁷⁷ When thefts resumed in the Camp Supply area a few weeks later, it was presumed Gallagher had returned or never left. Colonel Brooke enlisted Cheyennes as scouts, but even they were mystified by "Slippery Jack's" escapes.⁷⁸

During late spring and summer, details from Camp Supply

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⁷⁶Pope to Townsend, April 8, 1873, Department of the Missouri, Letters Sent, Vol. 84; Miles to Hoag, April 28, 1873, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received.

⁷⁷W. M. Lee to Miles, May 10, 1873, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received.

⁷⁸Brooke to R. I. Dodge, May 21, 1873, Fort Supply,

and Fort Dodge closely patrolled the areas assigned to them. The Indians remained quiet, but whiskey traders and desperados were only temporarily stymied. Far ranging scouts by the Sixth Cavalry at Fort Dodge between June and October, 1873 and the authorization of United States marshals to patrol the Indian country cleared up most of the Kansas whiskey traffic. New Mexican traders were quick to take their place in the Indian camps.⁷⁹

In early June, 1873 the Cheyennes camped on the Washita, southeast of Antelope Hills, to make their "Medicine." The peaceful Arapahoes camped along the North Fork of the Canadian, between Sheridan's Roost and the agency.⁸⁰ Mexican traders, frightened from the Kiowa and Comanche camps by patrols from Fort Bascom sought the Cheyenne as customers.

Letters Sent, Vol. 28; Post Returns, Fort Dodge, May, June, 1873; Post Returns, Camp Supply, May, 1873.

⁷⁹United States Attorney General to Columbus Delano, May 9, 1873 (COPY), Upper Arkansas Agency, Letters Received; Smith to Hoag, May 13, 1873, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Letters Sent, Vol. 112; Reports and Journals of Scouts and Marches, Fort Dodge, Kansas, 1873 to 1879, 1-29, typescript copy in W. S. Campbell Collection, Division of Manuscripts, University of Oklahoma Library. Hereafter this series of reports will be cited as Reports of Fort Dodge, 1873-1879, with appropriate pages.

⁸⁰Brooke to AAG, Dept. of Mo., June 2, 1873, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28.

Moving up the Canadian, touching the heads of the creeks flowing north and south into the Canadian and Red rivers, the Mexicans camped on Elk Creek. From here they sent scouts to find the Cheyenne camps.⁸¹

On July 12, forty Mexicans packed 200 kegs of whiskey into the Cheyenne camps, were paid, and left the next day. Scouts Ben Clark and Ed Guerrier reported the transaction to Agent Miles. Mexicans frequently carried off thirty to sixty ponies for their whiskey, giving rise to fears of a raid on Texas herds to replace losses. Miles endeavored to bring the Cheyennes to the agency, but Little Robe beat him to the camp by a day with a wagon load of liquor, and the agent found the Indians incapacitated when he arrived August 10.⁸²

Colonel Brooke made desperate tries to capture these traders, but they operated from a point south and west of Camp Supply filled with ample natural facilities for concealment. Furthermore the Indians screened the culprits, and the agency itself was so far from the lines of travel that it

⁸¹Brooke to AAG, Dept. of Mo., June 19, 30, 1873, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28.

⁸²Brooke to AAG, Dept. of Mo., July 16, August 16, 1873, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29; Clark to Miles, July 22, 1873 (COPY), Miles to Hoag, July 28, August 11, 1873, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received; Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 25.

could not pass along any intelligence to the commanding officer at Camp Supply. In an effort to control this trade, Colonel Brooke sought aid in New Mexico Territory.

Colonel J. Irwin Gregg of the District of New Mexico replied that the illegal trade was conducted by the boldest and most unscrupulous portion of the frontier population, but these men seemed to have the sympathy and topography of the country in their favor. Still, he countered, the fact the Mexicans engaged in the trade did not necessarily imply that it was carried on from New Mexico. The commander was certain the trade did not reach the Indian camps by any route between Fort Bascom and Fort Sumner. His suggestion was a series of scouts about 100 miles west of Camp Supply that would cut all trails of these traders both north and south of the Canadian. This was preferable, he said, to extending the Fort Bascom patrols to over 300 miles. Gregg gave assurances that every possible effort would be made to accomplish the desired end, "however, I do not anticipate success."⁸³

In addition to making strides toward the capture of horsethieves and whiskey peddlers the garrison at Camp Supply continued to patrol the Cimarron River in coordinated regular

⁸³J. I. Gregg to AAG, Dept. of the Missouri, August 29, 1873 (COPY), Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 2.

scouts with Fort Dodge. Alternate detachments from the two posts would go up and down the river watching for trade irregularities, offering escort to travelers, locating stray Osage hunters, and warning white buffalo hunters--who regarded the soldiers as "a plumb disgrace to the United States,"--off the Indian country.⁸⁴

In September Agent Miles was able to persuade a party of Cheyennes and Arapahoes to visit Washington, D. C. and the Indian lodges moved closer to Camp Supply. As was the case when the chiefs visited Washington in April, 1871 a party of Cheyennes bolted toward Raton Pass, ostensibly for Utes, but more likely to replace horses recently traded for whiskey.⁸⁵ At almost the same time a large party of Kiowas, who had been on the Washita, moved rapidly onto the North Fork of the Red

⁸⁴J. Wright Moor to J. Evetts Haley, April 11, 1936, typescript interview in W. S. Campbell Collection, Division of Manuscripts, University of Oklahoma Library; Post Adjutant, Camp Supply to Harper, September 2, 1873, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29; AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Dodge, October 3, 1873 (COPY), Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 2; Report of Joseph Kerin, September 27, 1873, Reports of Fort Dodge, 1873-1879, 18-22; Dodge to AAG, Dept. of Mo., October 27, 1873, Department of the Missouri, Letters Received, Records of the War Department, in Donald J. Berthrong Collection, Division of Manuscripts, University of Oklahoma Library.

⁸⁵Brooke to AAG, Dept. of Mo., September 5, 8, 1873, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29; Pope to James Riddle, November 3, 1873, Department of the Missouri, Letters Sent, Vol. 85.

River, beating a retreat from depredations in Texas. Hoping to arrest Cheyenne participation in a Kiowa war, Brooke wisely ordered the Cheyennes closer to the post.⁸⁶

When Colonel Brooke received word from Agent Miles, and later read in the St. Louis Democrat of October 9, 1873, that troops from Fort Lyon were in pursuit of raiding Cheyennes, he became alarmed. Should a scuffle occur in Colorado Territory, he felt sure the Cheyennes would join the Kiowas and Comanches in a war. Returning bands of Cheyennes were questioned on October 17, and they acknowledged being followed by a small party of citizens, but there was no fight. Brooke was relieved.⁸⁷

Of the reported 200 Cheyennes who had left camp, it appeared 160 had gone to Colorado, and returned safely. Another party of about thirty under White Eagle went up the Canadian to visit the graves of the two Indians who were killed near Bascom in February, 1873. Only one group of about fifteen went on a raid into Texas, and they were attacked by civilians and troops from Fort Union, New Mexico Territory.

⁸⁶Brooke to AAG, Dept. of Mo., September 11, 1873, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29.

⁸⁷Brooke to AAG, Dept. of Mo., October 13, 17, 1873, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29.

and scattered, leaving all their stolen stock. One of these fragments fell on a courier from a survey party and killed him in retribution.⁸⁸

Kiowa warriors visiting the Camp Supply area contributed to the unrest on November 21 when Big Bow and his band murdered Jacob Dilsey, enroute to Camp Supply with a wagon load of wild turkeys. His charred, scalped body was found by Lieutenant Frank West near Osage Springs on the Supply-Agency road. Brooke sought permission to "mete our just punishment" to Satanta and Big Bow camped on the Canadian, but was refused, for fear such an expedition would lead to a general outbreak.⁸⁹

Once again snows forced soldiers indoors, where rumors abounded. The word in Camp Supply, as winter moved into 1874, was that preparations of a grand scale were already being made for an immediate campaign against the Indians, and

⁸⁸Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 23; Brooke to AAG, Dept. of Mo., October 27, 1873, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29.

⁸⁹Brooke to AAG, Dept. of Mo., December 3, 1873, Statements of Frank West, Ben Clark, Amos Chapman, February 10, 1874, Statement of James Richmond, April 4, 1875, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29.

troops were gathering at Forts Sill and Bascom and Camp
Supply.⁹⁰

⁹⁰Lee and Reynolds Co. to Miles, December 18, 1873
(COPY), Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received.

CHAPTER V

CAMP SUPPLY IN THE INDIAN TERRITORY EXPEDITION, 1874-1875

Early in December, 1874 United States deputy marshals moved in to assist the troops at Camp Supply in suppressing the whiskey traffic. Leaving Caldwell, Kansas on January 16, Benjamin Williams and William Talley entered Indian Territory under orders to halt illegal trade with Indians, and to arrest buffalo hunters trespassing in Indian Territory. In the first sixty miles of their trip great numbers of skinned buffalo were found--at one point twenty-six carcasses within a half-mile radius--mute evidence of widespread trespass.¹

Realizing they were powerless to eject hunters if they found them, Williams and Talley proceeded to Camp Supply where they sought military assistance. Colonel John R. Brooke approved their request and Lieutenant Henry P. Kingsbury and seven men of the Sixth Cavalry joined the marshals on January

¹B. Williams to Miles, February 6, 1874, Central Superintendency, Letters Received.

29. The following day, as the escort plodded through a snow-storm on the Cimarron, six hunters, temporarily sheltered in a dugout on the river bank, were found and arrested. The next morning Lieutenant Kingsbury and three men followed Williams south on the Cimarron, while the remaining four troopers were attached to aid Talley as he moved northeast to the Harker Trail, and then south. When the two parties rejoined at the agency in February they had raided four camps and taken twelve prisoners.²

Wholesale slaughter of buffalo caused the Indians to demand a higher price for their robes. Unwilling to meet the Arapahoes' price of \$15 per robe, licensed traders moved on. This presented a dilemma for Agent Miles. The result of few sales was that the Indians soon returned to the agency to draw upon winter subsistence stores, wherein they should have sustained themselves for some months with profits of the winter chase. Because his storehouses were not prepared for such an emergency, Miles forecast he would run out of rations in early spring, several months before the arrival of next year's supply.³

²Ibid.; Post Returns, Camp Supply, January, February, 1874.

³Miles to Hoag, January 13, 1874, Central Superinten-

About this same time word filtered through the Cheyenne camps that the Kiowas had been attacked by troopers in Texas with three warriors, including Lone Wolf's son, killed. Kiowa and Comanche chiefs earnestly appealed to the Cheyennes to join them in a war of vengeance. Whiskey runners, slipping past the marshals and patrols of Camp Supply, left well-liquored camps to deliberate the proposal. Large shipments of liquor, promoted by Gallagher and "Frenchy," disguised as Cheyenne bucks, changed hands within ten miles of Camp Supply. With the Cheyennes uneasy about the supply of food, and whiskey more plentiful than good water, the prospects for peace in the spring appeared dim.⁴

In mid March, 1874 a new band of horsethieves, led by "Hurricane Bill" Martin, entered into competition with Gallagher, Hollis and "Frenchy" for the spoils of the Indian country. Cheyenne camps of Little Robe and Bull Bear on the Cimarron near the Salt Plains lost forty-three head to Martin on March 11.⁵ A few days later a band of 100 visiting Northern

dency, FOF, Letters Received.

⁴Miles to Hoag, January 24, 1874, Reynolds to Lee, March 3, 1874 (COPY), Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received; Brooke to AAG, Dept. of Mo., March 1, 1874, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29.

⁵Miles to Hoag, March 28, 1874, Central Superinten-

Arapahoes yielded nearly fifty head of horses to two white men on Crooked Creek. So destitute were these travelers that a collection was taken up by the officers of Camp Supply to buy them provisions when they arrived March 26, enroute to the Cheyenne and Arapaho agency.⁶

Little Robe refused to break his treaty word and go north of the Kansas line in pursuit of thieves, but his son and four others, urged on by "Frenchy," sought out Bill Martin near Sun City, Kansas. Failing to find their own spotted ponies the Indians stole about twenty horses and fifty head of cattle from local citizens. Five Kansans tracked this band over exceedingly rough country until Captain Tullius C. Tupper and a troop of the Sixth Cavalry joined them on the morning of April 11. That afternoon, on Bull Bear Creek, the Indians were overtaken and the stock recovered. Little Robe's son and another brave were so closely pursued that they abandoned their ponies and opened fire from behind rocks in a gulch, each sustaining dangerous wounds before they managed to escape.⁷

dency, FOF, Letters Received; Hoag to Smith, April 23, 1874, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Sent.

⁶H. L. Chipman to AAG, Dept. of Mo., March 26, 1874, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29.

⁷Tullius C. Tupper to Post Adjutant, Fort Dodge, April

By the end of April Gallagher and Martin's gangs infested the trails between the Cheyenne and Arapaho agency and Caldwell, Kansas, stealing Indian animals or dealing out whiskey. Three United States deputy marshals and a patrol from Camp Supply were not enough to drive these desperados from their rendezvous on Turkey Creek, near the Cimarron. In early May troopers from Fort Sill successfully chased Gallagher and five men into Texas, possibly wounding "Slippery Jack."⁸

Fear of Indian trouble ran high when Little Robe's wounded son presided at the Cheyenne "Medicine" on the Washita in late May. In a short time Colonel Brooke received word that two small parties of Cheyennes left camp "for the purpose of stealing stock and taking scalps, if possible." One of these bands reportedly struck a party in Texas, but were driven off. The other band approached a surveyor crew and was fired on, one Cheyenne being wounded.⁹ Finally, when

21, 1874, Reports of Fort Dodge, 1873-1879, 34-36; Miles to Hoag, May 1, 1874, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received.

⁸Miles to Brooke, April 25, 1874, Miles to Hoag, May 1, 9, 12, 16, 1874, George Bent to Miles, May 6, 1874, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received; Hoag to Smith, May 18, 1874, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Sent.

⁹Brooke to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 18, 29, 1874, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29; Miles to Hoag, May 16, 1874, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received.

John F. Holloway was murdered May 21 at the agency, and the Cheyennes moved near the camps of the Kiowas and Comanches on Red River, it was presumed hostilities would begin.¹⁰

The Indian war, so long anticipated, gained momentum throughout June, 1874. A Kiowa party under Stone Wolf attacked and killed two buffalo hunters named Dudley and Wallace on June 9, fifteen miles southeast of Adobe Walls in the Texas Panhandle, scalping and mutilating their bodies. Two nights later a combined camp of retreating surveyors and Deputy Marshals E. C. Lefebvre and William Talley was raided, the officers losing their mounts.¹¹

More and more the unpledged Cheyennes tended toward open warfare. A party of Cheyennes ran off Miles' agency stock, and insolently refused to give it up. Camps were moved far off the reservation to the Sweetwater in Texas. Low rations, whiskey merchants, buffalo hunters, and horsethieves--

¹⁰Miles to Smith, September 30, 1874, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for The Year 1874, 233. Philip McCusker, a scout, felt the Cheyennes desired to remain at peace, but the bad influence of the Comanches was very strong. McCusker to Smith, June 11, 1874, Central Superintendency, Letters Received; Miles to Hoag, June 13, 1874, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received.

¹¹E. C. Lefebvre to Miles, June 14, 1874, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received; Brooke to AAG, Dept. of Mo., June 15, 1874, Statement of Richmond, April 4, 1875, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29.

now reportedly scalping victims to make the deed seem Indian-like--made the Cheyennes irritable.¹²

Kiowa and Comanche forces, as an example to the Cheyennes, divided into small parties and moved north to depredate along the Dodge-Supply road. The Camp Supply mail party was attacked by Indians on June 19, north of Buffalo Creek, on the way to Dodge. Major Charles E. Compton and an escort of the Sixth Cavalry received the same treatment enroute to Camp Supply two days later, south of Buffalo Creek, one citizen and one enlisted man wounded. On the return to Fort Dodge on June 24 Major Compton was again fired upon, but this time at defensible Bear Creek Station, and four Indians were killed and several more wounded.¹³

Several Cheyenne leaders, including Grey Beard and Medicine Water, eventually joined the hostiles. A combined Cheyenne, Comanche, and Kiowa force numbering nearly 300 at-

¹²Miles to Smith, June 16, 1874, Upper Arkansas Agency, Letters Received; Miles to Smith, June 18, 30, 1874 (COPIES), Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received; C. E. Compton to AAG, Dept. of Mo., June 19, 1874 (COPY), Central Superintendency, Letters Received. "Frenchy" was arrested in Wichita, Kansas selling stolen horses about mid July 1874, and "Hurricane Bill" Martin was arrested on July 22, also in Wichita.

¹³Brooke to AAG, Dept. of Mo., June 22, 1874, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29; Post Returns, Camp Supply, June, 1874; Record of Engagements, 39-40.

tacked Adobe Walls on the Canadian River, June 27. Twenty-eight buffalo hunters and one woman were trapped in the Adobe Walls station for a full day. Miraculously, the entranced hunters repulsed each wave. At day's end the Cheyennes had lost six braves, the Comanches and inhabitants of Adobe Walls three each.¹⁴

Hostile Cheyennes, Comanches and Kiowas hovered about the Cheyenne and Arapaho agency, killed herders and so harassed the compound that Agent Miles left his post on July 2, taking his employees to the safety of Caldwell, Kansas. Along the route Miles found the scalped body of William Watkins, the charred remains of Patrick Hennessey and his three companions, and several burned out ranches.¹⁵

Camp Supply was as much in a state of turmoil in late June and early July as were the Indian affairs. Colonel Brooke and three companies of the Third Infantry were preparing for transfer to the Department of the Gulf, and at the same time Lieutenant Colonel William H. Lewis and his command of two companies of the Nineteenth Infantry were taking station

¹⁴Berthrong, Southern Cheyennes, 385-386.

¹⁵Miles to Smith, July 7, 1874, Upper Arkansas Agency, Letters Received; Miles to Hoag, July 10, 1874, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received.

at Camp Supply. On July 4, 1874 Colonel Lewis accepted command of the post, and Colonel Brooke and the Third Infantry moved out the following day. It was not until July 10 that the post learned of the events at Adobe Walls and subsequent depredations.¹⁶

There was a division of opinion as to what to do with the hostile Indians. Superintendent Enoch Hoag and Agents John Miles and Lawrie Tatum advocated military chastisement of warring tribes. The Society of Friends executive committee, however, disagreed, asking for understanding, not troops. Among the military, General Pope sympathized with the Indians, outlining the evils of whiskey traders, buffalo hunters, and horsethieves. General Sheridan, on the other hand, blamed the Indian unrest on the immunity these tribes had come to expect from three years of raiding in Texas and the Indian country.¹⁷

Until this policy conflict was resolved Camp Supply, with two companies each of the Nineteenth Infantry and the Sixth Cavalry, was under orders to closely watch the Indians, prevent depredations, continually scout to the east and north-

¹⁶Post Returns, Camp Supply, July, 1874; W. H. Lewis to AAG, Dept. of Mo., July 10, 1874, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29.

¹⁷Berthrong, Southern Cheyennes, 388.

east and aid Fort Dodge in keeping open the Dodge-Supply road. Additional frontier preparations called three companies of the Fifth Infantry to post detachments along the southern line of Kansas and patrol the Chisholm Trail from Caldwell to the agency. Major Compton at Fort Dodge had general charge of the country along Medicine Lodge Creek, both east and west of that stream, and four companies of his cavalry scouted south and southeast of the post while five companies of infantry lined the Arkansas and guarded the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe lines. Troopers from Fort Lyon, Colorado Territory, patrolled the valley of the Arkansas and moved east to close the gap to Fort Dodge.¹⁸

General Sheridan insisted on an immediate attack. Ten companies of the Sixth Cavalry were ordered to gather from their various points on the frontier, and move in fifteen days to Fort Sill on a sweep of the Indian reservations. Pope replied to this demand on July 16, acknowledging the need of some measure, but suggesting a large movement of cavalry at the present time was not the best solution. For the time being, he felt, it would be better to devote the cavalry to the

¹⁸AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Lewis, June 30, 1874, Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 2; AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Thomas Osborn, July 8, 1874, Pope to Sheridan, July 10, 1874, Department of the Missouri, Letters Sent, Vol. 87.

protection of frontier settlements, and when cold weather moved in a campaign much like 1868 would be instituted. It was feared that if the cavalry moved against the hostiles now, nearly all Indians would return to the agencies, only to sally out once the troops had passed.¹⁹

Before Sheridan could review the opinion of General Pope, the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Interior Department made their decision to recommend that the military use force to check the hostile bands. On July 20 Department of Missouri officers ordered troops at Camp Supply to "attack any hostile Indians whom you may meet in or out of the Indian country." The next day further authority was received from the Department of the Interior, through the War Department, to punish the hostiles wherever they may be found, even to following them upon the reservations. General Pope of the Department of the Missouri, and General C. C. Augur of the Department of Texas went about the task of organizing the attack.²⁰

¹⁹Pope to Sheridan, July 16, 1874, Department of the Missouri, Letters Sent, Vol. 87.

²⁰AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Lewis, July 20, 1874, Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 2; Lewis to AAG, Dept. of Mo., August 25, 1874, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29; Record of Engagements, 41.

Plans for the campaign were completed by late July. The Department of the Missouri arranged a three-pronged attack. Colonel Nelson A. Miles commanded eight companies of the Sixth Cavalry and four companies of the Fifth Infantry in a move south against the hostiles on the reservations. Major William Price would move with four troops of the Eighth Cavalry east of Fort Union, New Mexico Territory, along the Canadian to Antelope Hills, where he would join Colonel Miles. At the same time Lieutenant Colonel Thomas H. Neill would join one company of the Sixth Cavalry and four companies of the Fifth Infantry at the Cheyenne agency, where he could either receive surrendered Indians or strike those remaining at war.²¹

General Augur of the Department of Texas likewise employed three columns. Colonel Ranald S. Mackenzie with eight troops of the Fourth Cavalry, four companies of the Tenth Infantry and one of the Eleventh Infantry marched north from Fort Concho, Texas, searching the headwaters of Red River. Lieutenant Colonel John Davidson operated west of Fort Sill with six troops of the Tenth Cavalry and three companies of the Eleventh Infantry, while Lieutenant Colonel George P. Buell

²¹Pope to AAG, Military Division of the Missouri, September 7, 1874, Annual Report of the Secretary of War for The Year 1875, 30.

scoured the territory between Mackenzie and Davidson, commanding four troops of the Ninth Cavalry, two of the Tenth Cavalry, and two companies of the Eleventh Infantry.²²

Colonel Miles received orders to organize his part of the campaign, called the Indian Territory Expedition, on July 27, 1874. The better part of the next two weeks was spent collecting his command at Fort Dodge, and placing these 744 soldiers under responsible officers. Majors Charles E. Compton and James Biddle each commanded four troops of cavalry, Captain H. B. Bristol commanded four companies of infantry, and Lieutenant Frank D. Baldwin was placed in charge of thirty-nine guides and trailers.²³

In general, Miles' force would operate in the Indian Territory between Camp Supply and Fort Sill much in the manner proposed by Pope to Sheridan in mid July. Camp Supply served as the supply depot for the Department of the Missouri in this campaign, as it had in 1868, holding clothing, ammunition, subsistence, forage and other necessary items for the Indian Territory Expedition. Besides equipping Miles, Camp Supply was

²²Leckie, Military Conquest, 205.

²³Nelson A. Miles to Pope, March 4, 1875, Report of the Secretary of War, 1875, 78; Nelson A. Miles, Personal Recollections of General Nelson A. Miles (Chicago, 1896), 164.

ordered to provision Major Price and his command, whenever requested. At all times the post was ordered to have on hand not less than fifty days' subsistence for 1,000 men and 1,200 animals.²⁴

Major Compton and his cavalry battalion, one company of infantry and selected guides, left Fort Dodge August 11, scouting to the southwest. The remainder of the command, under Miles, departed August 14, moving directly south on the Dodge-Supply road. After crossing the Beaver, Lieutenant Baldwin and his scouts left the main body to scout west to Adobe Walls. Late on August 18, Miles and the Indian Territory Expedition arrived Camp Supply, camping a half-mile from the post.²⁵

After taking on fifteen days' supplies at the post, Miles resumed his march on August 20, moving twenty-six miles up Wolf Creek, eighteen miles to Commission Creek, thence thirty-five miles to the Dry Fork of the Washita. Word came at this point of Lieutenant Baldwin's engagement with hostile

²⁴Pope to Miles, July 29, 1874, Pope to William Price, August 12, 1874, Department of the Missouri, Letters Sent, Vol. 87; Pope to Lewis, September 2, 1874, Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 2.

²⁵Miles to Pope, March 4, 1875, Report of the Secretary of War, 1875, 78-79; Post Returns, Fort Dodge, August, 1874; Post Returns, Camp Supply, August, 1874; Miles, Personal Recollections, 164.

Indians thirty miles east of Adobe Walls, and Miles quickly moved southwest to the Canadian. Lieutenant Baldwin reported in on August 24, having observed Indian signs nearly the entire distance from Adobe Walls.²⁶

To trap the Cheyennes, Kiowas and Comanches now retreating southwestwardly before his main body, Miles made forced marches for about 100 miles to a spot near the headwaters of the Washita River. Here the Indians were engaged on August 30. After a two-day running fight of twenty-six miles the Indians were routed at a cost of one soldier and one civilian wounded.²⁷

It was now August 31 and Miles found himself rapidly exhausting supplies. Far extended from his source of supply, and as yet unable to link up with Major Price, camp was made and thirty-six wagons under Captain Wyllis Lyman were directed to meet a supply train from Camp Supply at Oasis Creek on the Canadian.²⁸

Camp Supply was ill-prepared with transportation to

²⁶Miles to Pope, August 25, 1874 (COPY), Central Superintendency, Letters Received.

²⁷Miles to Pope, March 4, 1875, Report of the Secretary of War, 1875, 79; Record of Engagements, 41; Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 28.

²⁸Ibid.

handle the supplies for Miles' command. Lieutenant Cornelius Gardner and thirty men of the Nineteenth Infantry from Camp Supply accompanied the expedition on August 20 as escort to a train of five wagons. When these returned to camp on August 29 in need of repair, Colonel Lewis was presented with a serious problem. He had requisitions from Miles to deliver 290,000 pounds of rations, forage, ammunition, quartermaster equipment and ordnance stores to an advance party at the Canadian on September 10. Yet, Lewis found himself with only enough fresh mule teams and wagons to deliver 25,000 pounds of supplies.²⁹

General Pope, in an effort to ease the concern of Colonel Lewis, reported that Colonel Miles had been informed before he marched that the Department of the Missouri did not have the facilities to supply him in the field, and that he must send his own teams with proper escort to Camp Supply. Lewis was advised to remind Miles of this understanding and then do his best to support him with whatever he could.³⁰

Legal justification of his position was not the real

²⁹Post Returns, Camp Supply, August, 1874; Lewis to AAG, Dept. of Mo., August 31, 1874, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29.

³⁰Pope to Lewis, September 2, 1874, Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 2.

question and Lewis was desperate to give Miles as much aid as possible. Without proper authorization he ordered the post quartermaster to employ a citizen ox train of fourteen wagons to assist the government transportation. With this help a total of 92,000 pounds of supplies was moved.³¹ Under the direction of Captain Charles W. Holsenfrillen a guard of twenty-nine men of the Nineteenth Infantry and 110 men of the Sixth Cavalry left the post on September 4 bound for the Canadian.³²

Captain Lyman had in the meantime reached Oasis Creek five days early, on September 5. Anxious for the supplies, Lieutenant Frank West and an escort advanced in the direction of Camp Supply, found the supply train and escorted it to Commission Creek where the exchange was made September 7. The transfer of goods was made quickly and without incident, except for the killing by Indians of a turkey-hunting teamster barely one mile from camp. Captain Holsenfrillen, his men, and the empty wagons retraced their steps forty-eight miles back to Camp Supply, arriving September 10. Captain Lyman

³¹Lewis to AAG, Dept. of Mo., September 3, 1874, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29.

³²Post Returns, Camp Supply, September, 1874; Lewis to Miles, September 3, 7, 1874, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29.

moved west to rejoin Miles.³³

While encamped, waiting for Lyman, Miles selected Lieutenant Frank D. Baldwin and three men to carry dispatches to General Pope at Fort Leavenworth, via Camp Supply and Fort Dodge. Leaving the main camp September 6 at 8:30 p.m., the entire first night was spent in the saddle. When forty miles out from the command, at 4:40 a.m. of the 7th, the party halted for a meal. No sooner had a cup of coffee been heated than the lookout on the hill spread the alarm, "They are coming!"

Gathering their rifles the four men took positions. In fifteen minutes twenty-six Indians came dashing over the hill within fifty yards of the men. The four fired in a volley instantly killing three warriors. In a moment the Indians circled the bluffs and for a hour brisk firing continued. In desperation the Lieutenant ordered his men to saddle up, draw pistols, and charge through the line.³⁴

Miraculously clearing themselves through the Indians, the party alternately trotted their horses and dismounted to

³³Post Returns, Camp Supply, September, 1874; Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 29.

³⁴Frank D. Baldwin to Alice B. Baldwin, September 17, 1874, reprinted in Winners of the West, IX, August, 1932, 3-4.

fire whenever the Indians gained. Without warning another band of hostiles maneuvered in front of these messengers, and again, screeching, the four men charged through the line, killing another two or three. The chase resumed until a ravine was located from which the raiders could be held at bay.

Rain fell and the Indians did not pursue the attack, so Baldwin and his men started out once more. On the morning of September 8, as they neared the banks of the Washita, they ran into a camp of Comanches, numbering about 100. Dressed against the cold with blankets, Baldwin and his men stumbled past the camp picket before they realized their predicament. In almost unbelievable style these worn riders once again galloped directly through the Indians, stopping only long enough to capture a stray lookout and his two horses. "We had grown desperate," Baldwin wrote, "and not having any thought of being able to get through, we were bound to put on a bold front and sell out for all we were worth after gaining timber, before doing which we had to swim the Washita River three times."³⁵

Careful never to leave the woods, and crossing the Canadian only after dark, the party found Captain Lyman's train.

³⁵Ibid. The captive proved to be a white man who had lived with the Indians since he was six years old.

Here fresh horses were obtained, and two more scouts joined Baldwin. Lyman moved out on the morning of September 9, but Baldwin rested during the day, traveling the final seventy-five miles to Camp Supply after dark. When the Lieutenant and his crew reached the post they had ridden from 8 p.m. September 6 to 10 a.m. September 10, with only fourteen hours rest, the first sixty hours straight in the saddle.³⁶

After leaving camp on September 9, Captain Lyman moved steadily along. As the train approached a ridge between the Washita and Canadian rivers a party of Comanches launched an attack on both flanks of the large train. Able to move only very slowly under extremely hazardous circumstances, Lyman corraled the train at a point two miles from the Washita. One man was already dead, Wagoner McCoy lay mortally wounded and Lieutenant Granville Lewis was severely crippled by a bullet in the knee. In addition, enough mules were disabled to retard progress, Lieutenant West counted only twelve mounted men, and communication with Colonel Miles was closed. Word

³⁶Ibid., Alice B. Baldwin (ed.), Memoirs of the Late Frank D. Baldwin (Los Angeles, 1929), 78. Baldwin left Camp Supply on the morning of September 11, reached Dodge the following day, and arrived General Pope's Headquarters at Fort Leavenworth at 3 p.m. on September 14. He returned to Dodge on September 17 and Camp Supply the next afternoon.

was sent to Camp Supply for relief.³⁷

Shortly after dark on September 10, scout William F. Schmalse dashed out of the besieged camp on horseback, crashing the Indian line. Hotly pursued, the scout spurred his mount into a large buffalo herd which enabled him to escape in the turmoil and darkness. Schmalse rode his horse to death but arrived Camp Supply at 8:30 a.m., September 12.³⁸

Restricted by the number of available horses and mules at Camp Supply, Colonel Lewis mounted only fifty-eight cavalry and scouts, plus five wagons. Under the command of Lieutenant Henry Kingsbury the rescue party left the post at noon, September 12. Eighty-eight miles southwest the crippled train was reached at 2 a.m., September 14. The Indians, however, had moved on, and under escort of Lieutenant Kingsbury, Captain Lyman was able to rejoin Miles, who by this time had begun to move east in search of his train.³⁹

The Comanches who left Lyman's train on the morning of

³⁷Leckie, Military Conquest, 211-212; W. Lyman to Commanding Officer, Camp Supply, September 10, 1874, Report of the Secretary of War, 1875, 86.

³⁸Miles, Personal Recollections, 172.

³⁹Post Returns, Camp Supply, September, 1874; Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 29; Lewis to AAG, Dept. of Mo., September 12, 1874, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29.

September 12th, were joined by the Kiowas, but traveled only a few miles when they spied a party of six messengers. Scouts Bille Dixon and Amos Chapman, plus Sergeant Zachariah T. Woodall, Privates Peter Rath, John Harrington and George W. Smith, all of the Sixth Cavalry, had left Miles' camp on McClellan Creek late on September 10 to bring dispatches to Camp Supply. At 6 a.m. on the 12th they met this band of 125 hostiles.⁴⁰

Dismounting, the couriers lay against a hillside preparing for an attack. Private Smith, holding the horses, was wounded critically in the first volley. With the Indians surrounding all positions, the men determined to make a dash for a mesquite flat several hundred yards distant, but had to decide against that when Chapman took a bullet in the leg, and Harrington and Woodall were also wounded. Choosing a second-best defense the men clamored into a ten foot diameter buffalo wallow. Smith was left for dead on the field. As each man reached the wallow he drew his knife and commenced piling dirt around the sides.⁴¹

⁴⁰Miles to AAG, Dept. of Mo., September 24, 1874, in Miles, Personal Recollections, 173-174; Olive Dixon, The Life of Bille Dixon (Dallas, Texas, 1927), 199; William H. Carter, The Life of Lieutenant General Chaffee (Chicago, 1917), 71-72.

⁴¹Dixon, Bille Dixon, 200-202; Charles E. Campbell, "Down Among the Red Men," Collections of The Kansas State Historical Society, XVII (1926-1928), 654-655.

The fight continued throughout the entire day, the wounded men concealing the crippled condition of the party by sitting upright. Wave after wave of Indians was turned back. About 3 p.m. a rainstorm, followed by a norther, engulfed the battlefield, forming two inch deep pools of blood and water in the little wallow. When the Indians moved out of range for better shelter from the cold and rain, Private Rath returned to Smith's side for his cartridge belt and pistol, only to find him still alive. Brought back to the wallow, Smith expired during the cold night.⁴²

At nightfall Dixon and Rath gathered tumbleweed beds for the four wounded, and all huddled together during the night without food or warm clothing. Rath went for help shortly after dark, but returned in two hours, unable to find the Camp Supply road in the dark. At the first hint of daylight Dixon moved toward Camp Supply, and had gone only about a mile when he ran into Major Price's command. Price allowed his surgeon to examine the men, but no aid, other than a few pieces ofhardtack, was offered. It was not until midnight on September 13 that support from Miles arrived.⁴³

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Dixon, Bille Dixon, 210-213. Frederick Remington painted a picture called "Caught in the Circle," inspired by

The wounded were placed on wagons and joined a few days later with Lieutenant Kingsbury's escort for Captain Lyman's new train seeking subsistence at Camp Supply. The couriers and the wounded of Lyman's command were accorded proper medical treatment upon arrival at Camp Supply on September 18.⁴⁴

The problems Lyman encountered in bringing supplies, plus the events of the Baldwin and Chapman scouts indicated to Miles that he was too far into the field to be compelled to freight in his own supplies. Miles and General Pope distrusted each other since Civil War days and the Colonel wrote his wife that the Department of the Missouri was not properly supporting him. Custer, he complained, was furnished 400 wagons but went no farther from Camp Supply than the Indian Territory Expedition which had only sixty. Moreover, on September 14 he received⁴⁵

. . . one of those cold blooded letters from Department

the story of the Buffalo Wallow Fight. Remington probably heard the tale from officers of the Sixth Cavalry during the Sioux campaign of 1890-91, and in the telling of the story, details became confused for the painting shows only three troopers and one scout, instead of four troopers and two scouts.

⁴⁴Post Returns, Camp Supply, September, 1874; Amos Chapman suffered the most serious wound and his left leg was amputated above the knee. Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 29.

⁴⁵Quoted from Virginia W. Johnson, The Unregimented General, A Biography of Nelson A. Miles (Boston, 1962), 55.

Headquarters saying to the commanding officer of Camp Supply that I must get my supplies with my own wagons and that he was not to furnish me more. It was another case of one man Pope thinking he knows more five hundred miles away than one who is on the ground. I felt enraged and sent my dispatch accordingly.

Colonel Lewis was having a very difficult time at Camp Supply meeting all the demands of the Indian Territory Expedition. The post was well-stocked with required provisions, the problem was to get them to the troops in the field. Camp Supply's garrison fluctuated with Miles' demand for officers and men, but through most of the late summer and early fall the post operated with a garrison of about 200. With these men patrols were made of the surrounding country, the labor of the post was performed, and guard details were furnished to hay contractors, to mail stations, and the mail escort. An emergency such as the assistance sent to Lyman's train cut the operational garrison nearly in half.⁴⁶

Colonel Miles, unaware of Lewis' predicament, informed General Pope of the need for a permanent supply camp to be placed on the Canadian, just off Oasis Creek, approximately ten miles west of Antelope Hills. Pope, anxious to contribute to the success of the expedition, yet aware that Colonel Lewis

⁴⁶Lewis to AAG, Dept. of Mo., September 12, 1874, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29; Post Returns, Camp Supply, September-December, 1874.

had earlier warned him he could not accommodate large requisitions from the field, compromised the situation by charging Lewis with the establishment and protection of Miles' suggested supply base, but ordered all contractor trains to proceed directly through Camp Supply, non-stop to the depot.⁴⁷

Such a compromise was not at all acceptable to Colonel Lewis. It was obvious his garrison would soon be responsible for guarding the trains from Camp Supply to the Canadian, and he could not spare enough men to hold a depot with stores for 1,000 men and 1,500 animals. In fact, reported Lewis, on September 15, because of the Lyman emergency his present command consisted of only seventy-nine infantrymen and no cavalry. Certainly he was in no position to establish new camps, for required duties already spread his men dangerously thin.⁴⁸

At last the plight of Colonel Lewis was understood and Camp Supply was relieved of any responsibility for establishing Miles' depot. As a suitable alternative, Pope required Major Price to turn his supplies over to Miles and then take post on the Canadian, near Antelope Hills, keeping open the

⁴⁷Pope to Lewis, September 5, 1874, Camp Supply, Betters Received, Box 2.

⁴⁸Pope to Miles, September 13, 1874, Department of the Missouri, Letters Sent, Vol. 87; Lewis to AAG, Dept. of Mo., September 15, 1874, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29.

trail between Miles and Camp Supply. Miles was warned that if he moved farther west, his own troops must keep open the lines to Price. Camp Supply would continue escort duties, but from now on only between Fort Dodge and the post.⁴⁹

Thousands of pounds of clothing, ammunition, rations and forage were directed to Miles and Price through the fall of 1874. Infrequently even cattle were herded to the expedition. On October 1, 1874, for example, more than 450,000 pounds of subsistence, grain and equipment for Miles was in motion between Fort Dodge and Camp Supply. Although not required to furnish escorts below Camp Supply, for that was the duty of Price, Lewis was reinforced by Major James Biddle and half the Sixth Cavalry regiment after September 26,⁵⁰ and therefore was able to offer protection to government and contractor's trains all the way from Fort Dodge to Price's camp on the Canadian. The efforts Miles and Mackenzie made in the Texas Panhandle gradually flushed the Indians toward Camp Supply and the Cheyenne agency, so one officer and seventy-five

⁴⁹Pope to Lewis, September 17, 18, 1874, Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 2; Pope to Sheridan, September 18, 1874, Pope to Miles, September 18, 1874, Department of the Missouri, Letters Sent, Vol. 87.

⁵⁰Miles detached Biddle's battalion in order to reduce his command to a more maneuverable number. Miles to Pope, March 4, 1875, Report of the Secretary of War, 1875, 79.

to 100 enlisted men usually guarded the teams. In most instances a supply train ran about a dozen wagons, but sometimes as many as fifty vehicles went south in convoy.⁵¹

Early in November, 1874 Miles moved near Adobe Walls. Lewis, ever ready to support the troops in the field, voluntarily assumed responsibility for the supply of two new locations, one a depot near Miles, the other a new camp on the Washita.⁵² Commodities at Camp Supply seemed inexhaustible.⁵³ Weekly thousands of pounds of material left the post. By November's end nearly 300,000 rations of bacon, beans, peas, coffee, and sugar were kept in readiness for any of the three depots. In addition, warehouses at the post held almost 100,000 pounds of grain, and more than 107,000 pounds of ord-

⁵¹In October, 1874, some 53,000 rations and 218,000 pounds of grain were delivered to the Indian Territory Expedition through Camp Supply. Pope to Lewis, September 18, October 1, 29, 1874, Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 2; Lewis to AAG, Dept. of Mo., September 22, 24, October 1, 4, 7, 8, 10, 20, 25, 1874, November 4, 8, 1874, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29.

⁵²Lewis to Miles, November 8, 1874, Lewis to AAG, Dept. of Mo., November 10, 1874, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29.

⁵³Camp Supply held in reserve on November 14, 1874, 47,000 rations of bacon, 42,000 rations of beans, 32,000 rations of rice, 83,000 rations of coffee, plus 100,000 rations of sugar, hard bread and peas. Lewis to AAG, Dept. of Mo., November 14, 1874, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29.

nance stores, medical supplies, clothing and officer's stores.⁵⁴

In December it was decided a permanent supply post would be established at Miles' station near Adobe Walls, on the Sweetwater in the Texas Panhandle. Camp Supply was charged with provisioning that outpost. Plans were made for Camp Supply to have 1,000,000 pounds of grain, 650,000 pounds of contractor's goods, and 106 mule teams and wagons to haul stores to the new cantonment.⁵⁵

The first shipments to the Sweetwater began late that month. Trains of mixed cargo, with subsistence sufficient for 500 men, and the same number of animals, carried loads of up to 600,000 pounds of grain and 60,000 rations, presumably to last the post until May, 1875.⁵⁶ December was indeed a busy month, for in addition to the accumulation of supplies for the camp on Sweetwater, Colonel Lewis sent 500,000 pounds of grain and 7,000 rations to the Washita camp of the expedi-

⁵⁴Lewis to AAG, Dept. of Mo., November 25, 1874, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29.

⁵⁵Pope to Lewis, December 10, 1874, Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 2.

⁵⁶Pope to Lewis, December 14, 17, 29, 1874, Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 2; Lewis to AAG, Dept. of Mo., December 24, 1874, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29.

tion.⁵⁷

The best laid plans, however, often go awry when confronted with the unpredictable plains weather. The first ox train left Camp Supply on December 16, but became stalled less than forty miles west of the post as a snowstorm struck with paralyzing fury. A large number of animals froze to death and only a few wagons were able to continue. Wintry blasts held all other trains at Camp Supply for six days, until, on January 16, a combined government and contractor train ventured out. In order to pick up the excess supplies left by the frozen ox train, Lee and Reynolds Company, of Camp Supply, were commissioned to join a government convoy on January 23. By month's end Major James Biddle, commander of the new Sweetwater cantonment, had most of his supplies.⁵⁸

The tactics of Miles, Mackenzie, Davidson, and Buell in the fall and winter months of 1874, in the meantime, were effectively harassing the hostiles. Kiowas and Cheyennes surrendered at the Darlington Agency as early as October 3, 1874.

⁵⁷Lewis to AAG, Dept. of Mo., December 25, 26, 30, 1874, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29.

⁵⁸Lewis to John A. Runker, January 4, 1875, Lewis to AAG, Dept. of Mo., January 7, 15, 20, 23, 31, 1875, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29; AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Biddle, January 16, 1875, Department of the Missouri, Letters Sent, Vol. 88.

Little by little the Cheyennes were being driven past Camp Supply and into the agency.⁵⁹ At only one point did troops operating out of Camp Supply engage these Indians. On November 3, 1874 Lieutenant Henry J. Farnsworth and a company of Eighth Cavalry scouted west of the post. About thirty miles out, on November 6, they were surprised by a large force of retreating Cheyennes. The detachment of twenty-eight men fought the entire afternoon, killing at least four and wounding several more. Victory did not come easy because Farnsworth lost one trooper killed and four wounded.⁶⁰

With surrenders increasing daily, Colonel Miles, in January, 1875, made one final southwestward campaign around the eastern edge of the Staked Plains. Moving into Fort Sill, he turned directly north and passed through Camp Supply in February. When Fort Dodge was reached several days later, the

⁵⁹Leckie, Military Conquest, 224-230; Miles to Pope, March 4, 1875, Report of Secretary of War, 1875, 78-85; Record of Engagements, 40-44; Miles to Headquarters, Department of the Missouri, October 17, 1874 (COPY), Central Superintendency, Letters Received; Miles to Smith, October 19, 1874, Upper Arkansas Agency, Letters Received.

⁶⁰H. J. Farnsworth to Field Adjutant, Wingate Battalion, Eighth Cavalry, November 7, 1874 (COPY), Central Superintendency, Letters Received; Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 30; William H. Leckie, The Buffalo Soldiers (Norman, 1967), 132.

Indian Territory Expedition disbanded.⁶¹

Only the most hardy Cheyennes remained unaccounted for when the campaign closed, and it was well known that the winter had been hard on them and they could not last for long. At last, on March 6, 1875, more than 800 Cheyennes under Stone Calf surrendered to Colonel Neill at the Cheyenne and Arapaho Agency.⁶²

The close of the long campaign against the Cheyennes, Kiowas and Comanches was a busy time at Camp Supply. Patrols from the post encouraged the Indians toward the agency by scouring the Canadian River trails beginning in late February, 1875. In addition, fresh supplies were carted to the agency to feed both the increased numbers of surrendered Indians, and the watchful soldiers stationed at the new post. The first load of 20,000 pounds of subsistence, carried in twenty-five mule drawn wagons, left Camp Supply the second week of March, and these errands continued through the spring.⁶³

⁶¹Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 30; Post Returns, Camp Supply, February, 1875; Post Returns, Fort Dodge, February, 1875; Miles to Pope, March 4, 1875, Report of the Secretary of War, 1875, 82.

⁶²Thomas H. Neill to Pope, February 23, 1875 (COPY), Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 1.

⁶³Post Returns, Camp Supply, February-April, 1875; Pope

When at last all hostilities seemed to have come to an end, the Cheyennes broke loose again. Under orders to select the ringleaders of the past war and send them to prison at St. Augustine, Florida, Colonel Neill drew up his captives on April 6. Taunts from squaws caused Black Horse to break toward the Indian encampment. Guard's bullets brought the fugitive to the ground, but stray rounds hit inside the Indian camp, causing pandemonium. Half the Cheyenne tribe fled to nearby hills where they dug up hidden arms and ammunition. Three charges by the troops under Colonel Neill could not dislodge the Cheyennes. When firing broke off at dusk, the brief engagement had cost Neill nineteen wounded men, one of whom later died.⁶⁴

During the night the Cheyennes slipped away, leaving behind seven dead. Two companies of the Tenth Cavalry were immediately ordered up the North Canadian in pursuit, and a courier was sent to Fort Sill. Two thirds of the absent Chey-

to Lewis, March 8, 1875, Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 1; Neill to AAG, Dept. of Mo., March 16, 1875, Cheyenne and Arapaho Agency, Letters Received, Records of the Office of Indian Affairs, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

⁶⁴Neill to AAG, Dept. of Mo., April 7, 1875, House Exec. Doc. No. 1, 44 Cong., 1 Sess., 87; Peter M. Wright, "Fort Reno, Indian Territory, 1874-1885" (Unpublished M. A. Thesis, University of Oklahoma, 1965), 4-7.

enne warriors remained ninety miles northwest of the agency near the Cimarron, but others continued to flee.

Fort Dodge and Camp Supply were not alerted to the outbreak until April 10. Moving into action, troops from Fort Dodge scouted the Dodge-Supply road and Medicine Lodge Creek. Colonel Lewis, uninformed by Colonel Neill as to the direction taken by the escapees, ordered Captain Adna R. Chaffee and sixty men of the Sixth Cavalry and Nineteenth Infantry on April 13 to seek Indian signs south and east of the post.⁶⁵

Captain Chaffee returned to Camp Supply on April 23, having sighted no Indians. Three companies led by Captain William A. Rafferty pursued the main camp of absentees on the Cimarron, and, aided with stores from Camp Supply, eventually brought this group, and another near Antelope Hills, into the agency.⁶⁶

The sixty-six Cheyennes who refused to surrender crossed the Arkansas west of Fort Dodge, heading north. They were

⁶⁵Pope to Compton, April 10, 1875 (COPY), Pope to Lewis, April 10, 1875, Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 1; Post Returns, Fort Dodge, April, 1875; Post Returns, Camp Supply, April, 1875; Lewis to Biddle, April 13, 1875; Lewis to AAG, Dept. of Mo., April 14, 1875, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29.

⁶⁶Berthrong, Southern Cheyennes, 402-403; Lewis to W. A. Rafferty, April 17, 1875, Lewis to Compton, April 21, 1875, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29.

intercepted by Lieutenant Austin Henley and forty men of the Sixth Cavalry out of Fort Wallace at daylight on April 23.

A desperate fight ensued, but Henley killed nineteen warriors and eight women and children, ending all resistance. At last the eight-month war was over.⁶⁷

⁶⁷Berthrong, Southern Cheyennes, 404; Record of Engagements, 46-47.

CHAPTER VI

INDIANS, WHITES AND THIEVERY, 1875-1879

With the Cheyennes subdued, the Department of the Missouri reassessed its line of frontier posts. Camp Supply was still looked upon as only a supply depot, and physical permanency notwithstanding, the settlement on Wolf Creek remained a camp, not a fort. As a result of the Outbreak of 1874, however, two new cantonments sprang into existence. The "Post at Cheyenne Agency," established by Lieutenant Colonel Thomas H. Neill in July, 1874 and the "Cantonment on the Sweetwater, Texas," organized by Major James Biddle in January, 1875 were being expanded. Throughout the spring and summer of 1875 Camp Supply served as a base for outfitting these two camps, making several supply expeditions to each, and draining its garrison to less than 150 officers and men to staff the new posts.¹

¹Post Returns, Camp Supply, March-September, 1875; Post Adjutant, Camp Supply, to William Williams, March 10, 1875, Lewis to AAG, Dept. of Mo., April 3, 1875, Lewis to Biddle, May 17, 1875, Post Adjutant, Camp Supply to Richmond, Septem-

At the close of the Indian hostilities, horsethieves, whiskey peddlers, and buffalo hunters returned to the Indian Territory. But now, because the Indians in their repressed condition had fewer horses, military herds appeared more inviting. Thieves stole twelve mules at Cimarron Redoubt on March 12, and struck again a few weeks later.²

A small Cheyenne hunting party entered the vicinity of Camp Supply in June, and found they had to cope with horsethieves and buffalo hunters. Deputy Marshal Benjamin Williams accompanied the Cheyennes, and used his escort from the Cheyenne Agency to arrest ten men in Indian Territory on June 23.³ Captain Philip H. Remington, temporary commanding officer at Camp Supply, informed General Pope, "The country between this post and Dodge is so thoroughly infested with horsethieves as to make it very unsafe for Government trains, especially to travel over the route without the utmost pre-

ber 8, 1875, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29.

²Lewis to AAG, Dept. of Mo., March 21, 1875, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29.

³Benjamin Williams to Miles, July 5, 1875 (COPY), Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received. In July the prisoners were taken to Wichita, Kansas for trial, four men for horse theft and six for buffalo hunting in Indian country. Miles to Smith, July 22, 1875 (COPY), Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received.

caution." Moreover, whiskey ranches were being re-built on the Dodge-Supply road, and scouts observed a concentration of buffalo hunters operating south and east of Antelope Hills, unmistakably within the Indian Territory.⁴

When two companies of Sixth Cavalry were transferred from Camp Supply the post stood, in August, 1875, with two companies of the Nineteenth Infantry and one troop of the Fifth Cavalry, a total of seventy-eight men and five officers.⁵ The garrison was too small to control the peddlers, bummers, and hunters that prowled the Indian country.

The need for additional troops to combat illegal trespass and watch the Indians was early recognized by Camp Supply, but this duty gradually passed to the garrison at the Cheyenne Agency. On August 14, a party of seventeen Arapahoes slipped from the agency headed northward, taking a number of ponies belonging to other Indians. A detachment of the Fourth Cavalry under Lieutenant James Thompson pursued from the agency but the breakdown of communications between Camp Supply and the agency garrison caused a patrol under Lieutenant Edward L. Keyes from Camp Supply to scout in the opposite direction,

⁴Philip H. Remington to AAG, Dept. of Mo., June 23, 1875, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29.

⁵Post Returns, Camp Supply, July, August, 1875.

allowing the Arapahoes to disappear across the Kansas line.⁶

The patrol of Lieutenant Keyes was only one of several scouts by the tiny garrison at Camp Supply during the Cheyennes' and Arapahoes' annual winter hunt. Scouts of this nature lasted about twenty days, often searching the country as far west as Palo Duro and San Francisco creeks. Other patrols sought hunters' camps within the Indian reservation.⁷

Several thieves and at least one murderer were rounded up near Camp Supply by these patrols, but the Cheyenne and Arapaho camps, even within twenty-five miles of Camp Supply, on Wolf Creek, still were not safe. Deputy Marshal Benjamin Williams rightfully feared trouble from white hunters in the Panhandle of Texas. On October 18, 1875 a party of hunters fired on four Indians about fifty miles above the camps on Wolf Creek, killing one mule. As if by poetic justice, the hunters then feared more Indians would follow, and quickly departed the scene, leaving behind five worn horses. The

⁶Post Returns, Camp Supply, August, 1875; Covington to Smith, August 16, 1875 (COPY), Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received; J. H. Bradford to AAG, Dept. of Mo., August 22, 1875, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29.

⁷AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Camp Supply, August 9, 31, 1875, Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 1; Bradford to AAG, Dept. of Mo., August 26, 1875, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29; Post Returns, Camp Supply, August, 1875.

Indians brought them in, and the owner of the dead mule was compensated with two of the horses.⁸

Fearful of trouble, E. C. Lefebvre, deputy marshal assigned to the Arapahoes, telegraphed General Pope for a special military detail to accompany the Arapahoes, who were about to separate from the Cheyennes' winter camp and go up Wolf Creek. Within a few days Lieutenant Horace S. Bishop and fifteen enlisted men from Camp Supply joined the Arapahoes, allowing the escort from the agency garrison to follow the Cheyennes up the Beaver.⁹

Disturbing news of an engagement between a patrol from Fort Wallace, and a band of Arapahoes near Buffalo Station, Kansas brought reinforcements to the Arapaho escort. Apparently those Arapahoes who had left the agency on August 14, made good their escape and reached the Red Cloud Agency in seventeen days. About October 1 a party of thirty Arapaho men and five women, three of whom had just arrived from the south, left the camp near Red Cloud Agency to join the Southern Arapahoes. According to the Indians, on October 26, soon

⁸Williams to Miles, October 22, 1875 (COPY), Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received.

⁹Ibid.; Bradford to Commanding Officer, Cantonment on Sweetwater, Texas, October 29, 1875, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29; Post Returns, Camp Supply, October, 1875.

after crossing the Republican River and the Kansas Pacific Railroad, troops were sighted, but they were not themselves discovered. The following day the Arapahoes went into camp on a tributary of the Republican River, and two of the party took the travel pass from their agent and backtracked in search of lost ponies. While these two men were absent a detachment of the Fifth Cavalry entered the camp. A squaw told them that they had a pass, but it was with the other two men. It was decided to send one Arapaho with Captain John M. Hamilton in search of the two men while the troopers remained at the camp. The officer and young Arapaho proceeded about half a mile from the camp when it was demanded the youth surrender his revolver. When he refused the Indian was shot at three times before he managed to escape. The shooting was heard in camp, and a general engagement began. The Arapahoes lost two men killed before they eluded the soldiers.¹⁰

Assuming the escaping Arapahoes could join the winter camps as easily as the agency, Captain James H. Bradford, now commanding at Camp Supply, reinforced the escort with the Arapahoes by sending Lieutenant Edward M. Hayes and thirty-one men

¹⁰Miles to Smith, November 5, 1875 (COPY), Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received; Record of Engagements, 48.

of the Fifth Cavalry.¹¹ In bands of eight or nine the fugitives entered the camps, beginning November 5. They were immediately taken prisoner by the escorts and transferred, under guard, to the Cheyenne and Arapaho Agency.¹²

As the winter hunt continued into January, 1876 cattle thieves struck close to Camp Supply. It was believed the raiders were Osage Indians. Lieutenant Horace S. Bishop with two non-commissioned officers and fifteen privates of the Fifth Cavalry were in quick pursuit on January 19. On the fifth day out the detachment overtook the Indians on a tributary of the Cimarron River, 125 miles east of the post. In a heated exchange Lieutenant Bishop killed three men and captured three women, one boy, and thirty-five ponies. The party returned to the post on January 26.¹³

Toward the end of February, 1876 buffalo were so scarce that Agent Miles recalled the Indians. Beginning March 1 par-

¹¹Bradford to AAG, Dept. of Mo., October 30, 1875, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29; Pope to Commanding Officer, Camp Supply, October 28, 1875, Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 1.

¹²Bradford to AAG, Dept. of Mo., November 4, 6, 1875, Post Adjutant, Camp Supply to Edward M. Hayes, November 5, 1875, G. A. Gordon to AAG, Dept. of Mo., November 12, 1875, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29.

¹³Post Returns, Camp Supply, January, 1876; Record of Engagements, 49.

ties began returning to Darlington.¹⁴ Lieutenant Hayes remained with the Arapahoes until they entered the agency, and nearly all hunting parties of both tribes returned by April 1.¹⁵

At Camp Supply the spring and summer months of 1876 were spent in ordinary garrison duty. After February 21, the Cheyenne and Arapaho Agency garrison and the Cantonment on the Sweetwater, Texas were respectively called Fort Reno, Indian Territory and Fort Elliott, Texas.¹⁶ For the most part Fort Reno supplied protection and escort to Cheyenne and Arapaho hunting parties, while the 150 man garrison at Camp Supply provided the field patrols with rations and forage. Such was the case for the Cheyenne and Arapaho hunts in June and July.¹⁷

After the Fifty Cavalry was transferred to the Department of the Platte in June, 1876 only sixty to seventy men, in two companies of the Nineteenth Infantry, remained to hold

¹⁴Miles to Hoag, August 31, 1876, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Year 1876, 46-47.

¹⁵Hayes to Post Adjutant, Camp Supply, March 1, 1876, Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 1; Post Adjutant, Camp Supply to Hayes, March 3, 1876, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29.

¹⁶General Orders No. 3, Military Division of the Missouri, February 21, 1876, Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 1.

¹⁷Miles to William Nicholson, June 19, July 5, 1876, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received; Post Returns, Camp Supply, February-October, 1876.

Camp Supply. By the time the Cheyenne and Arapaho winter hunt moved into the vicinity of the post in October, 1876, its garrison was too small to deliver supplies to the escorts out of Fort Reno.¹⁸ Command of the post fluctuated between Captain Philip H. Remington, Major George A. Gordon and Captain James H. Bradford, all of the Nineteenth Infantry.

The absence of cavalry at Camp Supply allowed horse-thieves to run at will. Two mounts of the Fourth Cavalry escort with the Cheyennes were snatched, and a few days later, on February 3, 1877, outlaws made away with seventeen Cheyenne horses and mules from Kiowa Medicine Lodge Creek. In total the Indian loss to horsethieves on the 1876-77 winter hunt amounted to about 150 animals.¹⁹ Post commander Colonel William H. Lewis returned February 4 but was powerless to stop these outrages. Not only did he suffer from an undermanned garrison, but he had only five horses capable of making a chase. Even if the outlaws were put on the run, they inevitably lost themselves in the trackless No Man's Land squeezed

¹⁸ Bradford to AAG, Dept. of Mo., October 20, 1876, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29; Post Returns, Camp Supply, October-December, 1876.

¹⁹ William Malaley rescued about forty-four head, reducing the sale value loss to the Indians to approximately \$3,000. Miles to Nicholson, August 31, 1877, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs For The Year 1877, 82.

between Texas, Kansas and New Mexico Territory, west of the 100th meridian. In the opinion of Colonel Lewis, a series of scouts west of Indian Territory, as far as Palo Duro Creek and beyond, if necessary, was the only solution to these raids.²⁰

William Nicholson, Acting Superintendent of Indian Affairs, asked aid from General Pope in curbing these thefts. He concluded, "As you are aware, it is just such deeds as this extensive horse stealing that incite these Indians to acts of retaliation and depredation, and they should be stopped."²¹

When at last Deputy Marshal William Malaley was authorized military support, he captured a thief, Joseph Harriman, on March 8, near Crooked Creek, Kansas, northwest of Camp Supply. This was an important arrest because Harriman made a full confession of organized thievery in the region. Apparently bands of outlaws gathered large numbers of stolen animals in Ellsworth and Russell counties, Kansas and then sold them. Agent Miles understood there to be "a stolen pony in almost

²⁰Lewis to AAG, Dept. of Mo., February 10, 1877, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29; Miles to Nicholson, January 1, 1877, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received.

²¹Nicholson to Pope, March 2, 1877, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Sent.

every stable from the Cimarron to the Platte."²² General Pope would eventually recognize the serious conditions in the Indian Territory and advise full garrisons for Forts Reno and Elliott and Camp Supply,²³ but for now the Cheyennes and Arapahoes could only finish their winter hunt and return to the agency in March, 1877.

In July a new addition to the Cheyenne and Arapaho Agency arrived in Indian Territory. The Northern Cheyennes, distinct from the Southern Cheyennes since the early nineteenth century, were being joined with their southern brothers as a portion of the peace settlement following the Sioux war on the Northern Plains. Escorted by Lieutenant Henry W. Lawton and fifteen troopers of the Fourth Cavalry from Fort Robinson, Nebraska, about 950 Northern Cheyennes traveled for seventy days before reaching Darlington on August 5.²⁴ The

²²Miles to Nicholson, March 28, 1877, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received; Nicholson to Pope, April 9, 1877, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Sent.

²³House Exec. Doc. No. 1, 45 Cong., 2 Sess., 64.

²⁴Senate Report No. 708, 48 Cong., 2 Sess, v.; Dodge City Times, July 14, 1877. While the Cheyennes were camped at Camp Supply on July 23, a dispute arose between the soldiers and Indians. The Camp Supply correspondent to the Dodge City Times reported Lieutenant Lawton "offered to take four of his men and whip the whole tribe, nearly 1,000 in number." Dodge City Times, August 4, 1877.

Northern Cheyennes held serious doubts about the Indian Territory, and after taking stock of the agency location and climate they desired to return north. Agent Miles feared only force could bring the Northern Cheyennes under control.²⁵

One reason the Northern Cheyennes were reluctant to remain in Indian Territory was because of the prevalence of horsethieves. Outlaws showed their hand at Camp Supply early in October, 1877 when they removed two saddle horses from Lee and Reynolds' stable, stopping along the way to take George Thomas' colt.²⁶ A short time later, reports from the Texas Panhandle alerted stockmen to the notorious Chummy Jones and Andy Griffin.

When riders with a Fort Elliott wagon train observed they were being followed on an early October trip to Fort Sill, word was returned to the post. Captain Wirt Davis and ten troopers of the Fourth Cavalry were ordered after the

²⁵Wright, "Fort Reno," 40-41.

²⁶Dodge City Times, October 6, 1877. George Thomas recovered his horse about a month later. A man seeking stray cattle on the prairie near Camp Supply discovered a horseman a short distance off. With a view to seeking information relative to cattle he rode in that direction. It was quickly apparent that the faster he rode the more the horseman increased his gait. Soon the horseman cut the sack of grain on his pack horse, and finally abandoned the horse altogether. It was later proved to belong to Thomas. Dodge City Times, November 10, 1877.

desperados. Some distance southeast of the post five horse-thieves were captured with 139 head of stock, and all were delivered to Fort Sill. For an unknown reason, the commanding officer at Fort Sill refused to receive Chummy Jones and Charley Morrow, so Captain Davis decided to take them to Fort Elliott. In a few hours Davis returned to Fort Sill and told the authorities that the prisoners had escaped, but he felt sure they would never steal again. The next scouting party out of Fort Sill found Jones and Morrow hanging from a tree.²⁷

More trouble was in store for Captain Davis thirty miles from Fort Elliott. An ambulance, with a sergeant riding with the driver, was in advance of the rest of the men. The vehicle passed a tent and the Captain was about opposite it when a man burst out of the tent shouting and firing. The first shot grazed Davis and the next killed his horse. Soldiers riddled the man in the tent with bullets, but not before a cohort stepped from the brush and killed the ambulance driver. He continued firing, killing the mules. Captain Davis and his men turned their fire into the brush and the bushwacker fell lifeless on the trail. The man in the tent was identified as Johnny Jefferson, an alleged horsethief.²⁸

²⁷Dodge City Times, October 6, 27, 1877.

²⁸Ibid.

Thieves raided Arapaho herds near the agency on October 23, getting away with forty-two head. It was sheer good fortune that a party of Indians recovered thirty-eight horses when they chanced to meet three horsethieves near the Salt Fork of the Arkansas, three days later.²⁹

Another band of rustlers was discovered in late October, about fifty-five miles southwest of Camp Supply. A Mr. Ivey, employed by Lee and Reynolds to recover stolen horses, stumbled onto the thieves' camp. Ivey put up his gun and threw his hands in the air, signaling a parley. The result of the interview was that Ivey could "take the horses if he could," but seven-to-one odds were not appealing. The commanding officer at Camp Supply, upon this intelligence, sent out Lieutenant William Leeper and a squad of the Fourth Cavalry, stationed at Camp Supply since early July, 1877. The cavalry returned, however, without the prairie pirates.³⁰

About November 15, 1877, the Darlington Agency Indians began to move west on their annual winter buffalo hunt. With the rapid depletion of buffalo in Indian Territory the remaining herds gradually shifted into the northern Texas Panhandle.

²⁹Miles to E. A. Hayt, November 17, 1877 (COPY), Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received.

³⁰Post Returns, Camp Supply, October, November, 1877; Dodge City Times, October 27, November 3, 1877.

The winter of 1876-77 netted the Indians only about 7,000 buffalo, while the commercial hunters collected approximately 15,000 hides.³¹

The scarcity of buffalo caused other tribes to move into the vicinity of Camp Supply for the winter chase. Under the escort of Sub-Agent Charles McFarlow and eight men of the Fourth Cavalry, about 800 Pawnees left their agency on November 1 in search of herds. After several weeks of failure they moved west to Camp Supply, demanding rations. Major Henry A. Hambright, commanding Camp Supply, could not, under General Orders of December, 1874, issue rations to these Indians and the request was denied. The escort, however, was allowed to draw regular supplies.

Subsistence stores gone, no meat found on the way, and their small annuity payments already paid to the post trader, the Pawnees were desperate. Before they left Camp Supply these Indians disposed of their shirts, pants, coats, vests, hats, boots, shoes, and anything salable to the soldiers at the post for prices ranging from twenty-five cents to \$3 in order to buy food. When the Pawnees moved west of the post on

³¹Miles to Nicholson, August 31, 1877, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1877, 82.

November 27, an advance party of Cheyennes arrived at Camp Supply.³²

Observers at Camp Supply saw bad blood between the Cheyennes and Pawnees. According to one source, the Pawnees, in passing near the Cheyenne camps on their way west, drove off ponies, used them until their backs were sore, and then cut them loose. The Cheyennes were angry over the abuse of their ponies, and the invasion of their hunting lands was expected to lead to war.³³

Captain Sebastian Gunther and Company H, Fourth Cavalry brought the main party of Cheyennes and Arapahoes to Camp Supply on December 3. The total number of Northern Cheyennes, Southern Cheyennes, Arapahoes and Pawnees camped near the post was estimated by one cavalry officer to be 2,000 Indians. To settle differences between the Indians a council was held at Camp Supply whereby the Cheyennes were allotted hunting privileges south of the post, the Pawnees west, and the Arapahoes northwest. The Cheyennes left Camp Supply on December 15.³⁴

³²H. A. Hambright to AAG, Dept. of Mo., November 27, 1877, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½; Dodge City Times, December 8, 1877; Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 168, 145.

³³Dodge City Times, December 8, 1877.

³⁴Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 168, 149; Post Returns, Camp Supply, December, 1877; Dodge City Times, December 15, 1877.

Prospects for a successful buffalo hunt dimmed with each day on the plains. The Pawnees, who had reached the range three weeks early, were accused of overworking the herds, leaving nothing for the Cheyennes and Arapahoes.³⁵ After only a week of effort a band of 300 Cheyennes, under chiefs Little Raven, Black Crow and Dull Knife, returned to Camp Supply seeking rations. Amos Chapman saw Indians so hungry they readily ate dead horse flesh. Pawnees and Cheyennes expressed their discontent not only to each other, but to the soldiers, too. Pawnee hunters came across Sergeant Storr of Camp Supply while hunting and stole his turkeys and fried skunk meat in his frying pan. A week later Indians shot a civilian, mistaking him, they said, for a big turkey.³⁶

Other dissatisfaction was reported from Kansas. Mr. D. Sheedy alerted Dodge City of "another sneaking, treacherous outrage perpetrated by the noble red man," in late December. He reported five Northern Cheyennes burst into his cattle camp on Salt Fork in Comanche County, Kansas "in their accustomed

³⁵Miles to Nicholson, August 31, 1878, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for The Year 1878, 55.

³⁶Post Adjutant, Camp Supply to Lee and Reynolds Co., December 19, 1877, Hambright to Commanding Officer, Fort Reno, December 21, 1877, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½; Dodge City Times, December 15, 1877.

insolent manner," brandishing guns. They killed a beef and stole four horses as the unarmed men in camp watched.³⁷

Old Cactus, Dodge City Times correspondent at Camp Supply, told his readers that Stone Calf of the Cheyennes could scarcely contain his warriors from committing depredations, Dull Knife and Standing Elk of the Northern Cheyennes were aching for an outbreak, and even Powder Face and Big Mouth of the Arapahoes were hostile. Fear existed that if the Cheyennes and Pawnees confronted each other and the Fourth Cavalry escorts intervened the "whole posse of red devils would no doubt turn on them, causing general war."³⁸

The 1877 winter hunt furnished only 219 robes to the Cheyennes after lodge repairs. Starving Pawnees, Cheyennes and Arapahoes gave final proof the buffalo herds could no longer support the Indians. An endorsement from Headquarters, Department of the Missouri, December 26, 1877, on a letter of the Secretary of the Interior, ordered Camp Supply to furnish subsistence to destitute Indians when returning them to their agencies.³⁹

³⁷Dodge City Times, December 22, 1877; Miles to Hayt, December 20, 1877, Central Superintendency, FOF, Letters Received.

³⁸Dodge City Times, January 19, 1878.

³⁹Hambright to AAG, Dept. of Mo., February 3, 1878,

On January 2, 1878 the escorts for the Pawnees, Cheyennes and Arapahoes were directed to return their charges to the agencies, via Camp Supply, where they would be given rations. About 700 Northern and Southern Cheyennes had by this time surrounded Camp Supply, able to survive only by killing their horses and dogs, and a few wolves. On January 2 these Indians were given a partial ration. Another 700 Cheyennes and Arapahoes were expected at the post in time for the January 5 issue. The Pawnee were eighty-five miles from the post and suffering from extreme exposure.⁴⁰

In small bands the Cheyennes and Arapahoes struggled to Camp Supply. Over 1,000 rations of flour and beef were delivered. All the Arapahoes, except five lodges, and all the Cheyennes, but for two bands under Little Robe and Whirlwind, numbering fifty lodges in all, departed for the agency on January 7. Some of the remaining Cheyennes moved directly into the agency from the Washita, and others were reported near Adobe Walls.⁴¹

Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½; Miles to Nicholson, August 31, 1878, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1878, 55.

⁴⁰Hambright to S. Gunther, January 2, 4, 1878, Hambright to AAG, Dept. of Mo., January 2, 1878, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½.

⁴¹Hambright to AAG, Dept. of Mo., January 6, 23, Febru-

The Pawnees, being farthest out, and in the worst condition, were not present for the January 5th ration. They struggled into the post throughout January, the main body finally arriving January 24. Flour and bacon were issued, bringing the total number of rations issued by Camp Supply that month to 657 for men and 1,137 for women and children.⁴² In a few days the Pawnees moved on toward their own agency.

Horsethieves had no qualms about striking the destitute Indians. Cavalry mounts were also fair game. Two Fourth Cavalry guards for the Pawnees, while looking for stolen horses, were surprised by five white men and robbed of their mounts. Eight lodges of Cheyennes staggered into Camp Supply less twenty-six horses on January 30, and the company under Lieutenant Otho W. Budd that went in pursuit of the thieves was turned back by a heavy snowstorm, which caused his own horses to stampede.⁴³

It was an open secret that Dodge City afforded a no-questions-asked market for stray horses. Certain civilians,

ary 3, 1878, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½.

⁴²Hambright to AAG, Dept. of Mo., February 3, 1878, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½.

⁴³Hambright to AAG, Dept. of Mo., January 23, February 17, 1878, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½; Ford County Globe, February 5, 19, 1878.

ranchmen and traders surrounding the Indian Territory, either from fear or motives of personal interest, furnished supplies to these desperados and marketed the stolen property. Instead of aiding the military, some Kansans and Texans seemed more disposed toward throwing the authorities off the track or concealing the stolen stock. Under such circumstances it was nearly impossible for troops to identify the outlaws or arrest the lawlessness.⁴⁴

Rumors of an outbreak by Northern Cheyennes flooded the Southern Plains as spring broke over the prairies. Amos Chapman obtained information that the mid April councils at Fort Reno demanded better provisions or they would leave the reservation. Warnings by Dull Knife and Standing Elk, when at Camp Supply the previous December and January, could not be disregarded either. These Cheyennes vowed to die on the field fighting rather than see their women and children die from want. Major Hambright believed these signs and asked for an additional cavalry troop. With maximum cavalry strength at Camp Supply roads north and south of the Canadian, plus the trails leading along the Cimarron, could be patrolled

⁴⁴Hambright to AAG, Dept. of Mo., February 17, 1878, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½.

against pending trouble.⁴⁵

Tension increased during the summer months of 1878. Little Raven, Left Hand, and Yellow Bear stampeded a herd of cattle on June 16, stealing forty-three head when it passed near their camp. Rations ran low, and the Interior Department failed to recognize the need for twelve months subsistence now that the winter chase was an event of the past. In August, Spotted Horse, a Pawnee chief, prowled the plains near Camp Supply and killed ten or twelve buffalo. Major Hambright was forced to arrest Spotted Horse and inform the Pawnee Agent there were only a few buffalo at Camp Supply and the Pawnees should not be allowed to spread the word the buffalo were running.⁴⁶

The Northern Cheyennes were particularly vocal in their contempt for agency life. Their plans to leave were widely broadcast within the agency, but no one knew exactly when the break would come.⁴⁷

⁴⁵Hambright to AAG, Dept. of Mo., April 14, 21, 1878, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½.

⁴⁶Dodge City Times, May 18, 1878; Hambright to AAG, Dept. of Mo., July 13, 1878, Hambright to Agent Ely, Pawnee Agency, August 20, 1878, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½; J. K. Mizner to AAG, Dept. of Mo., September 19, 1878, Department of the Missouri, Letters Received, typescript copy in the W. S. Campbell Collection, Division of Manuscripts, University of Oklahoma Library.

⁴⁷Wright, "Fort Reno," 41-42.

Friendly Southern Cheyennes informed Miles the Northern Cheyennes were leaving September 5. Major John K. Mizner, commanding Fort Reno, acted on the advice of the agent and ordered two troops of the Fourth Cavalry under Captain Joseph Rendlebrock to follow the fugitives and return them to the agency.⁴⁸ At the same time a dispatch was carried to Camp Supply, arriving the post at 6 p.m., September 7.⁴⁹

Major Hambright, upon receipt of this communication, immediately directed Captain William C. Hemphill to move north on the Dodge-Supply road, following the Indian trail when found, and overtaking them with all due speed. Company I, Fourth Cavalry, with two officers and forty-six enlisted men, assisted by Amos Chapman, left the post at 8:30 p.m. that same evening.⁵⁰

Captain Rendlebrock, however, found the Northern Cheyennes had not left the reservation, but had shifted their village a few miles farther from the agency. The command sent word to Major Mizner and camped about two miles from the

⁴⁸Ibid.; W. C. McFarland to Joseph Rendlebrock, September 6, 1878, Annual Report of the Secretary of War for The Year 1878, 46.

⁴⁹Hambright to AAG, Dept. of Mo., September 8, 1878, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½.

⁵⁰Ibid.

Indians.⁵¹ A courier was dispatched to Camp Supply canceling the last request. The recall was received at Camp Supply at 4:30 p.m., September 8, about twenty hours after Captain Hemphill left the post. After an exhausting ride a scout reached Hemphill with orders to return, which he did on September 10.⁵²

Back at the agency a band of ninety-two Northern Cheyenne warriors and 268 women and children, led by Dull Knife and Little Wolf, slipped away from their lodges about 10 p.m. on September 9, making a break for the Northern Plains. American Horse and an agency policeman notified John Miles in the early morning hours. Miles reported to Mizner and only then did messengers return to the sleeping sentinels at Rendlebrock's command.⁵³

Major Mizner did not act until after daybreak. Captain Rendlebrock was ordered to take Troops G and H, Fourth Cavalry,

⁵¹Mizner to Rendlebrock, September 8, 1878, Report of the Secretary of War, 1878, 46; Campbell, "Down Among the Red Men," 676.

⁵²Hambright to Commanding Officer, Fort Reno, September 9, 1878, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½; Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 168, 185; Post Returns, Camp Supply, September, 1878.

⁵³Wright, "Fort Reno," 44; Campbell, "Down Among the Red Men," 677; Dennis Collins, The Indians Last Stand or the Dull Knife Raid (Girard, Kansas, 1915), 240-241.

pursue the fleeing Indians and force their immediate return. The pursuit commenced at 8 a.m., September 10.

Rendlebrock's battalion of four officers and eighty-one enlisted men struck the Cheyennes' trail about noon and proceeded sixty miles before camp was made at 10 p.m. When about forty miles out of Fort Reno couriers were sent to Camp Supply asking Major Hambright to patrol the Bear Creek area, where it was most likely the Cheyennes would cross the Dodge-Supply road.⁵⁴

This message was received at Camp Supply at 8 a.m., September 12. Two and one-half hours later Captain Hemphill and Company I, Fourth Cavalry, was on the Dodge-Supply road headed for Bear Creek, Kansas.⁵⁵

Hemphill stopped only for supper at Snake Creek and arrived at Bear Creek, about fifty-four miles from Camp Supply, near midnight. The next day pickets were sent to find signs of either the Indians or Captain Rendlebrock. The road was patrolled from Bear Creek to Bluff Creek, and when, by 4 p.m.

⁵⁴Army and Navy Journal, XVI, October 12, 1878, 150; Report of the Secretary of War, 1878, 45; Hambright to AAG, Dept. of Mo, September 12, 1878, Fort Supply, Letters Sent. Vol. 29½.

⁵⁵Hambright to Commanding Officer, Fort Dodge, September 12, 1878, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½.

nothing had been found, the command proceeded toward Fort Dodge where they arrived about noon September 14.⁵⁶

By this time the Department of the Missouri had mobilized great numbers of troops to head off the Indians. Captain Philip H. Remington marched with Company F, Nineteenth Infantry from Fort Dodge west to Pierceville, Kansas hoping to intercept the Dull Knife band, and Colonel John Davidson at Fort Sill sent Troop C, Fourth Cavalry to Fort Reno on September 13 to control the remaining Cheyennes. Mounted infantry troops left Fort Wallace by special train to cut-off trails and crossings east and west of the post. Two infantry companies from Fort Hays were posted at crossings on the Kansas Pacific Railroad between Hays and Wallace, and Fort Lyon was ordered to scout the country east and west of its post.⁵⁷

Captain Rendlebrock continued in pursuit of the Indian trails on September 11 and 12. The Northern Cheyennes, were

⁵⁶William C. Hemphill to J. P. Hatch, November, 1878, Department of the Missouri, Letters Received, typescript in the W. S. Campbell Collection, Division of Manuscripts, University of Oklahoma Library. Hereafter this report will be cited as the Hemphill, Report, OU. Hambright to Commanding Officer, Fort Reno, September 15, 1878, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½.

⁵⁷Post Returns, Fort Dodge. September, 1878; Pope to Sheridan, September 11, 12, 1878, Division of the Missouri, Letters Received, typescripts in the W. S. Campbell Collection, Division of Manuscripts, University of Oklahoma Library.

not intimidated by the cavalry, and attacked cattlemen and ranch property in their path. On September 12 two young nephews of Charles Colcord were killed near Salt Fork, the redmen gathering in their horses and one mule. That same day John Evans, a herder for the D. Sheedy camp was slain, and the Indians made off with more than \$1,600 worth of equipment. The next afternoon a cattle herder named Dow was killed and the E. W. Payne ranch suffered one man and two children wounded.⁵⁸

Willing to swap danger for distance the Northern Cheyenne warriors sent their women and children ahead on September 13 and retraced their own trail to meet the slowly gaining troopers. Rendlebrock's command was surprised to find the Indians drawn up for battle when they met forty miles northeast of Camp Supply. Through the help of an Arapaho scout named Chalk, a parley was held and the Indians informed they must return to the agency. Little Wolf preferred to dispute the passage through the range of bluffs near Turkey Springs, and refused the order.

⁵⁸Report of Captain William G. Wedemeyer, in James van Voast to AAG, Dept. of Mo., October 29, 1878, Department of the Missouri, Letters Received, typescript in the W. S. Campbell Collection, Division of Manuscripts, University of Oklahoma Library. Hereafter this report will be cited as the Wedemeyer, Report, OU.

At this point Chalk spied several of his stolen ponies, about 250 yards from the cavalry line. Seizing a revolver from one soldier, and mounting the horse of another, he made a wild charge against the seven stunned Cheyennes holding the horses. Firing his revolver at close range four of the seven Cheyennes were hit, the scout taking wounds in both thighs and the bowels, dropping him to the ground.⁵⁹

This opened the battle. A portion of the Indians charged the soldiers, attempting an encirclement, while others fired from the bluffs surrounding the troops. The cavalry, momentarily thrown into confusion, retreated to a draw, where they took up positions against the withering fire. Hemmed in on all sides and isolated from water, the troopers kept up a constant but ineffective fire until dark. About 8 p.m. seven men broke for fresh water, but they were repulsed. The Cheyennes, in return, fired the prairie, but at no cost to the troopers. After nearly thirty hours of charges and counter-charges the detachment made a determined effort on the morning of September 14 to break the enemy lines. Advance and flanking columns forced the Indians to give way in one last

⁵⁹Mari Sandoz, Cheyenne Autumn (New York, 1953), 38-39; George B. Grinnell, The Fighting Cheyennes (Norman, 1956), 404-405; Campbell, "Down Among the Red Men," 678; Dodge City Times, September 28, 1878.

effort. The troops made a rapid movement for water, after which they turned and in a final skirmish sent the Indians in retreat.⁶⁰

A courier from the besieged command reached Camp Supply at 9 a.m., September 16. Major Hambright ordered a medical officer and an ambulance into the field to meet Rendlebrock and bring in the wounded. Several hours later the command staggered into Camp Supply, bearing three killed and three wounded. The unofficial count of Indian casualties was thought to be fifteen killed, about thirty wounded and some twenty odd ponies killed.⁶¹

Captain Hemphill had meanwhile provisioned his command at Fort Dodge on September 14 and then, after permission from Colonel William Lewis, returned fifty miles south on September 15 to resume his post on the Dodge-Supply road. Near Bluff Creek camp, a courier arrived at 2 a.m., September 16, and

⁶⁰Army and Navy Journal, XVI, October 12, 1878, 150; Grinnell, Fighting Cheyennes, 404-405; Dodge City Times, September 28, 1878; Hambright to Commanding Officer, Fort Elliott, Texas, September 16, 1878, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½.

⁶¹Hambright to Commanding Officer, Fort Elliott, September 18, 1878, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½; Dodge City Times, September 28, 1878. The Fourth Cavalry troopers killed were Corporal Patrick Lynch, Co. G, Private George Sand, Co. H, and Private Bartin, Co. H; those wounded were Chalk, the Arapaho scout, and Privates Learnd and Barrows, both of Co. G.

reported Kollar's Ranch, twenty-four miles to the southeast, had been raided the night before. At daylight the command started for the ranch, where they arrived at 3 p.m. While circling for a trail six Indians were spotted, but upon chase they disappeared into the hills. Hemphill's troops remained at the ranch the night of the 16th.⁶²

Camp Supply also received news of the attack on Kollar's Ranch. Scout Harry Coons arrived on the morning of September 17 from Captain Hemphill and was followed a few hours later by a stage coach that passed so near the point of conflict it heard heavy firing. Coons reported Captain Hemphill to be but a few miles north of the Cimarron making for the ranches of that area. In an effort to reinforce Hemphill, should he contact the Indians, Major Hambright took command of Captain Rendlebrock's forces and ordered three junior officers and forty men of Companies G and H, Fourth Cavalry to go to the assistance of Captain Hemphill. They left Camp Supply at 10 a.m. September 17, and were expected

⁶²Hemphill, Report, OU. Henry Kollar's camp on Bluff Creek was raided September 15, 1878, Warren Richardson killed, two strangers wounded. Mr. Kollar lost property and animals valued at \$1,800. Wedemeyer, Report, OU; Lewis to Sheridan, September 16, 1878, Division of the Missouri, Letters Received, typescript in the W. S. Campbell Collection, Division of Manuscripts, University of Oklahoma Library.

to intercept Hemphill at the Cimarron crossing about 5 p.m.⁶³

Captains Joseph Rendlebrock and Sebastian Gunther remained at Camp Supply with twenty-eight men of the Fourth Cavalry until September 19, when they were directed to join their detachments and make all efforts to communicate with Hemphill. With the scene of action shifting northward, Companies B and F, Fourth Cavalry from Fort Elliott were transferred to Fort Dodge. Lieutenant Clarence Mauck and his command reached Camp Supply at 4 p.m. on September 22, and left for Dodge twelve hours later.⁶⁴

Hemphill continued to search the country bordering Bluff Creek and the Cimarron crossing on September 17. While in pursuit of a small band of Indians, Hemphill stumbled upon two herders from the Driskill Ranch seeking help after an attack at sunrise.⁶⁵ The twelve miles to Driskill's were

⁶³Dodge City Times, September 28, 1878; Hambright to Commanding Officer, Fort Elliott, September 18, 1878, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½.

⁶⁴Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 168, 186; Post Returns, Camp Supply, September, 1878; Hambright to Commanding Officer, Fort Reno, September 20, 1878, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½; Pope to Sheridan, September 20, 1878, Division of the Missouri, Letters Received, typescript in the W. S. Campbell Collection, Division of Manuscripts, University of Oklahoma Library.

⁶⁵J. W. Driskill lost fifty-five head of horses and an unknown number of cattle. Wedemeyer, Report, OU.

not made before dark, so it was not until the morning of the 18th that the Indian trail was located. At 10 a.m. Hemphill drew up before a large force of Indians concealed in the breaks of Sand Creek. Each fourth man held four horses or mules and the effective command of thirty or so men attempted to drive the Indians into the open. The skirmish lasted about a hour and no man was wounded, but Hemphill was forced to retire to Bluff Creek. He remained until dark, then marched for Fort Dodge arriving at 3 a.m., September 19.⁶⁶

Captain Charles E. Morse and a company of the Sixteenth Infantry arrived by rail from Fort Riley, Kansas at Fort Dodge at 10 a.m., September 18. When Captain Hemphill and Company I, Fourth Cavalry arrived the next day, Captain Morse assumed command of the combined force. A party of about thirty-five citizens from Dodge City boarded the troop train of the Santa Fe line, and departed with Morse at 9 a.m., September 19 for Pierceville, Kansas, some forty miles west of Fort Dodge.⁶⁷

Twenty miles west of Dodge Captain Morse alighted from

⁶⁶Hemphill, Report, OU; Post Returns, Fort Dodge, September, 1878.

⁶⁷Ibid.; C. E. Morse to Post Adjutant, Fort Dodge, September 27, 1878, Department of the Missouri, Letters Received, typescript copy in the W. S. Campbell Collection, Division of Manuscripts, University of Oklahoma Library. Hereafter this report will be cited as the Morse, Report, OU.

the cars at Cimarron Station, Kansas to find an armed body of citizens reporting a a band of Indians. Unable to verify the story, Morse continued on to Pierceville where Colonel C. H. Smith and Company D, Nineteenth Infantry had been stationed since September 17. Convinced the Indians had not yet crossed the Arkansas, the entire command marched about forty miles south to Crooked Creek, where they spent the night of September 20.

On the 21st, about 6:45 a.m., word reached Morse that Indians had encamped at Sand Creek. While in pursuit, further information from Fort Dodge advised Morse that Captain Rendlebrock and Companies G and H, Fourth Cavalry were about to join him. The junction of the two commands was effected about noon and Captain Rendelbrock assumed full command as the senior officer.⁶⁸ The march continued under Rendlebrock and camp was made about 4:30 p.m. when Sand Creek was reached.

The troops engaged in making camp, but the Dodge City cowboys decided to scout around. Less than a half-hour later rapid firing was heard and the alarm was given. Lieutenant Abram E. Wood and Company G, Fourth Cavalry was the first to reach the scene of battle, quickly followed by Captain Hemp-

⁶⁸Ibid.

hill and Company I. Captain Gunther's Company H and Captain Morse's infantry were not moved from camp. A force of about 100 Indians pushed Wood back, and as night set in Wood and Hemphill retreated three miles across Sand Creek leaving the Indians in their hideout.⁶⁹

In the morning Rendlebrock learned the Indians had moved west. Rapid marches for more than two hours brought the Cheyennes into sight. The infantry was ordered forward in an advance column and, after about 200 yards, skirmishing began. Positions were taken by both sides and constant but ineffectual fire was kept up until 4:30 p.m. at which time Rendlebrock ordered a withdrawal. Camp was made about one and a half miles from the site of the engagement.⁷⁰ The Northern Cheyennes once again escaped during the night of September 22 and Rendlebrock returned to the campsite of September 21. Here, on the following night, supply trains from Fort Dodge brought rations and ammunition.

The next two days were spent in indecision, Rendlebrock milling about the Sand Creek area, then moving north to

⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰Captain Hemphill later stated that the squaw trail was detected on September 22, but that Captain Rendlebrock decided against that trail and followed the warriors. Hemphill, Report, OU.

the Arkansas River, crossing it about four miles west of Cimarron Station. About 4 p.m. on September 25, Colonel William H. Lewis joined the command bringing Captain Mauck's Companies B and F, Fourth Cavalry, recently arrived at Fort Dodge from Fort Elliott, plus Captain James H. Bradford and another company of the Nineteenth Infantry. Colonel Lewis assumed command and retired Captain Morse and his company of the Sixteenth Infantry to Fort Dodge.⁷¹

Captain Hemphill continued to follow Colonel Lewis, and on the morning of September 26, after locating the Indian trail where it crossed the Arkansas the chase continued north. At Punished Woman's Fork of the Smoky Hill River of central Kansas on September 27, the Indians turned. In a sharp encounter the Dull Knife band gained fire on the troopers while the command struggled to bring five wagons across a bad place. Lewis ordered the cavalry near him to drive back the Indians from the nearest ridge and when this was accomplished the command fell back under cover. Indians occupied three sides of the ravine, but Colonel Lewis and Captain Mauck remained mounted, directing their forces. In the wild shooting Colonel Lewis was fatally shot by a bullet that struck him in the thigh, cutting his femoral artery. The troops lost three

⁷¹Ibid.; Morse, Report, OU.

other men wounded and counted only one dead Indian.⁷²

On the morning of the 28th Captain Mauck, now in command, continued on the trail of the Northern Cheyennes and an ambulance returned to Dodge with the wounded. From this point on, the Dull Knife band was not sighted in the region of Camp Supply and Fort Dodge. Mauck retained his command until he reached the South Platte in Nebraska and turned in to Fort Sidney on October 19, 1878. Hemphill remained at Fort Sidney long enough to organize the escort of another band of Northern Cheyennes, who had had no part in the outbreak, back to the Cheyenne and Arapaho Agency in Indian Territory.⁷³

For the most part, after Captain Hemphill carried the colors of Camp Supply against the Northern Cheyennes on September 12, the post could do no more. It was too far south

⁷²C. C. Gardner to AAG, Dept. of Mo., October 10, 1878, Department of the Missouri, Letters Received, typescript in the W. S. Campbell Collection, Division of Manuscripts, University of Oklahoma Library; Dodge City Times, October 5, 1878; Hemphill, Report, OU; Army and Navy Journal, XVI, October 19, 1878, 166; Harper's Weekly Magazine, XXII, October 19, 1878, 827.

⁷³Senate Report No. 708, 130; Hemphill, Report, OU. Captains Rendlebrock and Gunther were court martialed at Fort Reno in February, 1879 for their conduct in the pursuit of the Dull Knife band. This information can be found in Wright, "Fort Reno," 60-61. The remainder of the Dull Knife story on the Northern Plains can be found in Record of Engagements, 80-85.

to offer supplies, and much too undermanned to send troops. The death of Colonel Lewis, commanding officer at Fort Dodge, caused Major Hambright to assume command of that post on October 22. Captain William J. Lyster took command at Camp Supply.⁷⁴

On November 16, 1878 Captain Lyster received confidential information that Little Robe and about 300 Cheyennes had left their agency without permission on November 6 and were somewhere between the Antelope Hills and the Staked Plains.⁷⁵ Apparently the Cheyennes had asked permission to be absent a month or two but the agent told them they must wait until the cavalry escorting the Northern Cheyennes from Fort Sidney returned. The Indians replied that then it would be too late, and started. Word of this movement was also sent to Forts Reno and Elliott.⁷⁶

Captain Mauck and the Fourth Cavalry, including Captain Hemphill, escorted the Northern Cheyennes to Camp Supply on

⁷⁴Post Returns, Fort Dodge, October, 1878; Post Returns, Camp Supply, October, 1878.

⁷⁵W. J. Lyster to Mizner, November 16, 1878, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½.

⁷⁶Dodge City Times, November 30, December 7, 1878; Lyster to AAG, Dept. of Mo., November 18, 1878, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½.

November 27. When the outbreak of September, 1878 occurred these Indians were at Fort Sidney under the care of Ben Clark.⁷⁷ The three companies of the Fourth Cavalry under Mauck continued to Reno on November 29 and Little Robe in the Texas Panhandle was looked after by the cavalry from Fort Elliott.⁷⁸

Even as the Outbreak of 1874 caused the establishment of Forts Reno and Elliott, the Dull Knife raid brought permanent status to Camp Supply. In December, 1878 the camp on Beaver River was formally named Fort Supply.⁷⁹ In addition, it was decided by the Department of the Missouri that a new military station, midway between Fort Supply and Fort Reno should be established for the future protection of Kansas against run-a-way Indians. With rare foresight the Secretary of War suggested in his 1879 report that whatever the attitude of the Indians might be now, the future value of the post would be "to maintain them in possession of their lands and to protect them against broils and difficulties with the

⁷⁷Dodge City Times, November 16, 23, 1878; Post Returns, Camp Supply, November, 1878.

⁷⁸Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 168, 197; Dodge City Times, December 14, 1878.

⁷⁹General Orders No. 9, Headquarters, Division of the Missouri, December 30, 1878, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 3.

whites, both respectable persons and outlaws."⁸⁰

In order to strengthen the defenses of Fort Supply and to staff the new cantonment, Regimental Headquarters of the Twenty-third Infantry was brought to the Indian Territory. The Field Staff, Band and Companies E, F and H, in command of Colonel Jefferson C. Davis, left Fort Leavenworth at 9 a.m., January 27, 1879 by the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad. Company B joined the command at Topeka, that same day and the entire force arrived Dodge City at midnight January 28, after a rail trip of 369 miles. Remaining in Dodge City a few days the command took the Dodge-Supply road at 9 a.m., February 3. A march of ninety-three miles to Fort Supply was completed in six days.⁸¹

General Sheridan originally proposed Sheridan's Roost on the North Canadian as the best location for the new camp, but he later settled on a spot known as Barrel Springs.⁸² Lieutenant Colonel Richard I. Dodge, commanding the detach-

⁸⁰Annual Report of the Secretary of War for the Year, 1879, 74; Henry C. Keeling, "My Experiences with the Cheyenne Indians," Collections of The Kansas State Historical Society, XI (1909-1910), 305.

⁸¹Post Returns, Fort Supply, January, 1879.

⁸²Keeling, "My Experiences with the Cheyenne Indians," 305.

ment of the Twenty-Third Infantry attached to the Cantonment, however, preferred a point on the south bank of the North Canadian about three miles directly south of Barrel Springs. The first night at this spot was spent on March 6, 1879. The Cantonment, as it was called, was seventy miles by road from Fort Supply and sixty miles from Fort Reno. Wichita, Kansas, 150 miles north, was the nearest railroad and telegraphic station and the point from which stores were shipped.⁸³

The return of Little Chief and the captured Northern Cheyennes from Dull Knife's band created new tensions in Indian Territory. In an effort to remove some of the discontent, Little Chief was given permission in April, 1879 to visit Washington.⁸⁴ Yet, the uneasiness continued. Southern Cheyennes and Arapahoes complained that Northern Cheyennes were already stealing horses and making preparations for the next break north.⁸⁵

⁸³Dodge City Times, January 18, 1879; Dodge to AAG, Dept. of Mo. /March, 1879/, Cantonment, I.T., Letters Sent, Vol. 17, Records of the War Department, National Archives, Washington, D. C. Colonel Dodge located Cantonment I.T. "in Section 13, Range 19, Latitude about 36-6, longitude about 98-38." Dodge to AAG, Dept. of Mo., June 9, 1879, Cantonment, I.T., Letters Sent, Vol. 17.

⁸⁴Hayt to Miles, April 4, 1879, Central Superintendency, Letters Sent.

⁸⁵A. J. Dallas to AAG, Dept. of Mo., April 4, 1879, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½.

Mindful of the mistakes of September, 1878 the Department of the Missouri, on March 26, 1879 ordered a cavalry force from Fort Elliott to aid Fort Supply in observing the Northern Cheyennes. Amos Chapman informed Major Alexander J. Dallas, commanding Fort Supply, on April 2 that on a recent visit to Fort Reno the Northern Cheyennes told him they would not take the Dull Knife route in departing the reservation. It was their intention to pass to the south of Fort Supply, thence to a point at or near the mouth of Palo Duro Creek, a tributary of the Beaver, crossing the Santa Fe tracks east of Fort Lyon.⁸⁶

Lieutenant Abiel L. Smith and Company B, Fourth Cavalry, an aggregate of forty-six men, arrived Fort Supply from Fort Elliott on April 6 to begin temporary service. In an effort to foil the Northern Cheyennes' plans, the next morning Smith took the field to establish a camp on the Cimarron, and from there scout the Dodge-Supply road for any possible attempt by Indians to escape northward. Contact with cattlemen in the area was recommended as one way to obtain the latest information on Indians.⁸⁷

⁸⁶Dallas to AAG, Dept. of Mo., April 2, 1879, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½.

⁸⁷Dallas to Abiel L. Smith, April 6, 1879, Dallas to

A small body of Indians located near Fort Supply on April 14 and Amos Chapman moved to ascertain their intentions. Lieutenant Smith was directed to station himself about thirty miles south and east of the Cimarron to cover any break past Chapman. Neither Chapman nor Smith caught sight of the Indians, but Chapman tracked them forty miles before he concluded a party of ten Cheyennes were looking for stock but returned to the agency empty-handed. Lieutenant Smith returned to his station, this time camping on Snake Creek, Kansas. Cattlemen were alerted to possible trouble and several drove their herds nearer Fort Supply.⁸⁸

When the break of the Northern Cheyennes did not materialize by May 9, Lieutenant Smith was reassigned. Still the rumors of Northern Cheyenne discontent continued. Mysteriously, Southern Cheyennes and Arapahoes lost one or two of their best horses from each herd in May, 1879. The Indians complained to Colonel Dodge at Cantonment and Major Dallas at Fort Supply, expressing their suspicion the thieves were

AAG, Dept. of Mo., April 7, 1879, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½; Post Returns, Fort Supply, April, 1879; Dodge City Times, April 12, 1879; Ford County Globe, April 15, 1879.

⁸⁸Dallas to AAG, Dept. of Mo., April 16, 1879, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½; Post Returns, Fort Supply, April, 1879.

Northern Cheyennes.⁸⁹

Acting on a strong complaint by Stone Calf, Major Dallas dispatched Lieutenant William Leeper and a small party of troopers to recover a dozen missing ponies, authorizing them to proceed as far as the Kansas line. Lieutenant Leeper halted just inside Indian Territory and William Wells, a post employee, continued to follow the trail across the line into Kiowa, Kansas, where, with the aid of some honest citizens, William Parker was arrested and placed in the custody of the United States Marshal. Seven of the lost ponies were subsequently recovered.⁹⁰

Unknown to Leeper, a party of Southern Cheyennes and Arapahoes, still believing the Northern Cheyennes to be the culprits, were searching the canyons between North Fork of the Canadian and the Cimarron for their stolen animals. What their actions were are not fully known, but Wells, on his return from Kansas, found the Sheedy Ranch ransacked and abandoned with plentiful Indian signs in the vicinity. Wells

⁸⁹Post Returns, Fort Supply, May, 1879; Dallas to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 4, 1879, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½; Dodge to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 16, 1879, Cantonment, I.T., Letters Sent, Vol. 17.

⁹⁰Dallas to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 10, 1879, Dallas to Miles, May 10, 1879, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½.

refused to name the Indians as the depredators but warned that it would be unwise for Indians to stray above the North Canadian as the cowboys were in a touchy mood.⁹¹

The Northern Cheyennes never made their advertised break north, although fears remained until June, 1879. Possibly Little Chief was favorably disposed toward peace after his return from Washington, or it could have been the extensive military preparations of the Department of the Missouri that stopped the proposed exodus. Six companies of infantry were stationed at Cantonment and four more at Fort Supply. In addition, Forts Reno, Elliott and Dodge held cavalry units on guard under momentary orders to take the field. Moreover, the Dull Knife raid had been a success, in part, because of the faulty communication among the posts below the Arkansas. Beginning in June, 1879, however, that situation was corrected, as details from Cantonment, Reno, Elliott, and Supply worked through the summer linking their respective posts with telegraphic lines.⁹²

⁹¹Dallas to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 17, 27, 1879, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½. Because of the sudden departure of mounted troops from his post Major Dallas asked troops from the Cantonment to check out the Indian scare at the Sheedy ranch. Dallas to Commanding Officer, Cantonment, I.T., May 13, 1879, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½.

⁹²Post Returns, Fort Supply, June-September, 1879;

On May 5, 1879 Fort Supply was placed under orders of the Department of the Missouri to use necessary force, upon the application of the Indian agent, in expelling certain "Boomer" parties attempting to make settlements south of the Kansas line.⁹³ The Boomer movement called for civilian settlement on the unoccupied lands of the Indian Territory, and for some months in the spring of 1879 it generated a great deal of excitement. Two days after being placed on alert a telegram ordered Fort Supply into action.

A courier was directed to Lieutenant Smith's camp at Snake Creek on May 9, ordering Company B, Fourth Cavalry to proceed as rapidly as possible to Arkansas City, Kansas where they would assist in ejecting intruders from Indian Territory.⁹⁴ That same day Captain William C. Hemphill and Company I, Fourth Cavalry were detached from the Fort Supply garrison

Dallas to AAG, Dept. of Mo., June 9, 1879, George J. Brady to AAG, Dept. of Mo., August 14, 1879, Brady to Commanding Officer, Cantonment, I.T., August 29, 1879, Brady to J. W. Swift, September 9, 15, 1879, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½; Dodge to Commanding Officer, Fort Supply, August 27, 1879, Cantonment, I.T., Letters Sent, Vol. 17.

⁹³Dallas to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 5, 1879, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½.

⁹⁴Post Returns, Fort Supply, May, 1879; Dallas to Smith, May 9, 1879, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½.

and ordered to Coffeyville, Kansas for a like purpose.⁹⁵

Cantonment troops were similarly drawn out, taking post at the nearest point where the Kansas line crossed the Reno-Wichita road.⁹⁶

Company I, Fourth Cavalry, forty-five aggregate, headed northeast at 5:30 p.m. May 9, carrying the spirit of Fort Supply to this new challenge to the Indian Territory. Moving across the country, without regard for established roads or trails, Hemphill marched his command past the Pawnee Agency and to Coffeyville, on May 21, a distance of 280 miles. For ten days, May 21 to 31, the company remained at this point, performing the duties assigned them. On May 24 two scouting parties of one corporal and six privates each penetrated the Indian Territory, one to the southwest and the other to the southeast. After covering forty miles and failing to find unauthorized persons they returned to camp. On May 31, a telegram from the Department of the Missouri ordered the detached company to return to Fort Supply, via Fort Reno.

The command left Coffeyville on June 3 and traveled

⁹⁵Dallas to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 9, 1879, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½.

⁹⁶Dallas to Commanding Officer, Cantonment, I.T., May 14, 1879, Dallas to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 15, 1879, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½.

the 226 miles to Fort Reno in an uneventful nine days, arriving June 11. Camp was made at Fort Reno until June 24 when the company was ordered to resume its march to Fort Supply. The remaining 130 miles to Fort Supply, in a total expedition of 636 miles, was covered in time to reach the post at midnight, June 30.⁹⁷

Lieutenant Smith and the company of the Fourth Cavalry detached from Fort Elliott, returned to Fort Supply from their post at Arkansas City on July 3. Two days later Smith left for the camp on Snake Creek occupied before the assignment to the Kansas line. By this time, there was no longer a real danger of a Northern Cheyenne break, and on July 20 the detail was relieved and it left for Fort Elliott the next day.⁹⁸

Only one event of notice interrupted the otherwise quiet summer at Fort Supply while Captain Hemphill was absent. On the morning of June 9 a band of ninety Pawnees, escorted by twenty-six men of the Nineteenth Infantry arrived the post. These Indians had been depredating ranch stock near their agency, Major Dallas was informed, and in retaliation it was feared the cattlemen would act on the Indians. In the hope

⁹⁷Post Returns, Fort Supply, May, June, 1879.

⁹⁸Post Returns, Fort Supply, July, 1879.

of preventing trouble the commanding officer at Fort Gibson arranged to send the Pawnees to hunt buffalo away from the agency and cowboys.⁹⁹

After clearing the situation with the department commander, Fort Supply allowed these Indians to hunt buffalo for a few days within forty-five miles of the post. The chase was a success, 150 buffalo brought down with bows and arrows, and the Pawnees were well-behaved. The hunt ended June 30 and the Indians headed toward their agency on July 2.¹⁰⁰

As the fall of 1879 turned toward the decade of the 1880's, Fort Supply closed a chapter on Indian problems. For more than ten years the post had guarded the white man from the Indians, the Indians from the white man, and the Indians from each other. In these years the temporary camp for the expedition of 1868 experienced three Indian wars, controlled illegal trespass by whites, and became senior post among the military guardians of the Indian country. The end of hostile Indian resistance to the white man's way of life did not, how-

⁹⁹Dallas to AAG, Dept. of Mo., June 8, 1879, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½.

¹⁰⁰Dallas to AAG, Dept. of Mo., July 1, 1879, Dallas to A. C. Williams, July 1, 1879, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½.

ever, mean Fort Supply could diminish her interest in the red-man. The Great Plains was in the midst of a great cattle boom in 1879, and ranchers, like Boomers, were unwilling to respect Indian boundaries. The decade of the 1880's called for new responsibilities for the Fort Supply garrison.

CHAPTER VII

SOLDIER AND CITIZEN AT FORT SUPPLY

Life at Fort Supply, deep within Indian Territory, was a true pioneer experience. An energetic garrison brought the post from a temporary supply depot in 1868 to a permanent guardian of the frontier in just ten years. Transportation links with surrounding settlements attracted a civilian population, and in a short time social life flourished. The post had many attributes of a frontier settlement.

In 1872 Fort Supply consisted of a complex consisting of officers' quarters, barracks, stables, offices, and a hospital. Private H. Harbers, stationed at Camp Supply in September, 1872 remembered the post construction as "a continuous duty every day. There was no lay-off."¹

Stability, however, was not confused with luxury as Mrs. Frances M. Roe, who accompanied her husband to Camp Supply in

¹H. Harber's "Service Account" in Percy M. Ashburn, A History of the Medical Department of the United States Army (Boston, 1929), 98.

May, 1872 wrote, "This place is quite as dreadful as it had been represented to us."² Quarters, she found, were nothing more than huts built of logs, with canvas to partition the rooms. Sand and dirt floors encouraged little white toadstools and the cottonwood logs "have the bark on, and the army of bugs that hide underneath the bark during the day and march upon us at night is to be dreaded about as much as a whole tribe of Indians!"³

Danger lurked almost everywhere at Fort Supply for Mrs. Roe. A sudden down-pour of rain could wash her house away, the colored troops of the Tenth Cavalry were good soldiers, but better thieves, and hostile Indians surrounded the post.⁴

The /Indians/ have a disagreeable way of coming to the windows and staring in. Sometimes before you have heard a sound you will be conscious of an uncomfortable feeling, and looking around you will discover five or six Indians, large and small, peering at you against the windows, each ugly nose pressed flat against the glass! It is enough to drive one mad. You never know when they are about, their tread is so stealthy with their moccasined feet.⁵

Fort Supply continued to expand until progress was interrupted by the Outbreak of 1874. The reduced garrison could

²Roe, Army Letters, 54.

³Ibid., 57-59, 77.

⁴Ibid., 58.

⁵Ibid., 64-65.

not easily keep such a large post in repair and the military cutback after the Indian wars caused some deterioration. A fire at the post on July 1, 1877 completely destroyed three sets of officers' quarters, and very nearly spread to the rotted logs of several other buildings. Disaster was averted only through the efforts of the entire command. Recognizing the perilous condition of Fort Supply, a rebuilding program was begun at the post two days later by the new commanding officer, Captain William J. Lyster, one of the two men who lost all his personal possessions in the fire.⁶

This program continued through 1877 and into the following year. Stockade or picket wall structures were replaced with rows of frame buildings. When cost prohibited a complete renewal of the extensive sets of barracks, about 600 cedar logs were cut to replace every fourth cottonwood log.⁷

Water, ice and fresh vegetables at Fort Supply were at the same time necessities and luxuries. None was easy to come by, but ingenuity and persistence produced each for the

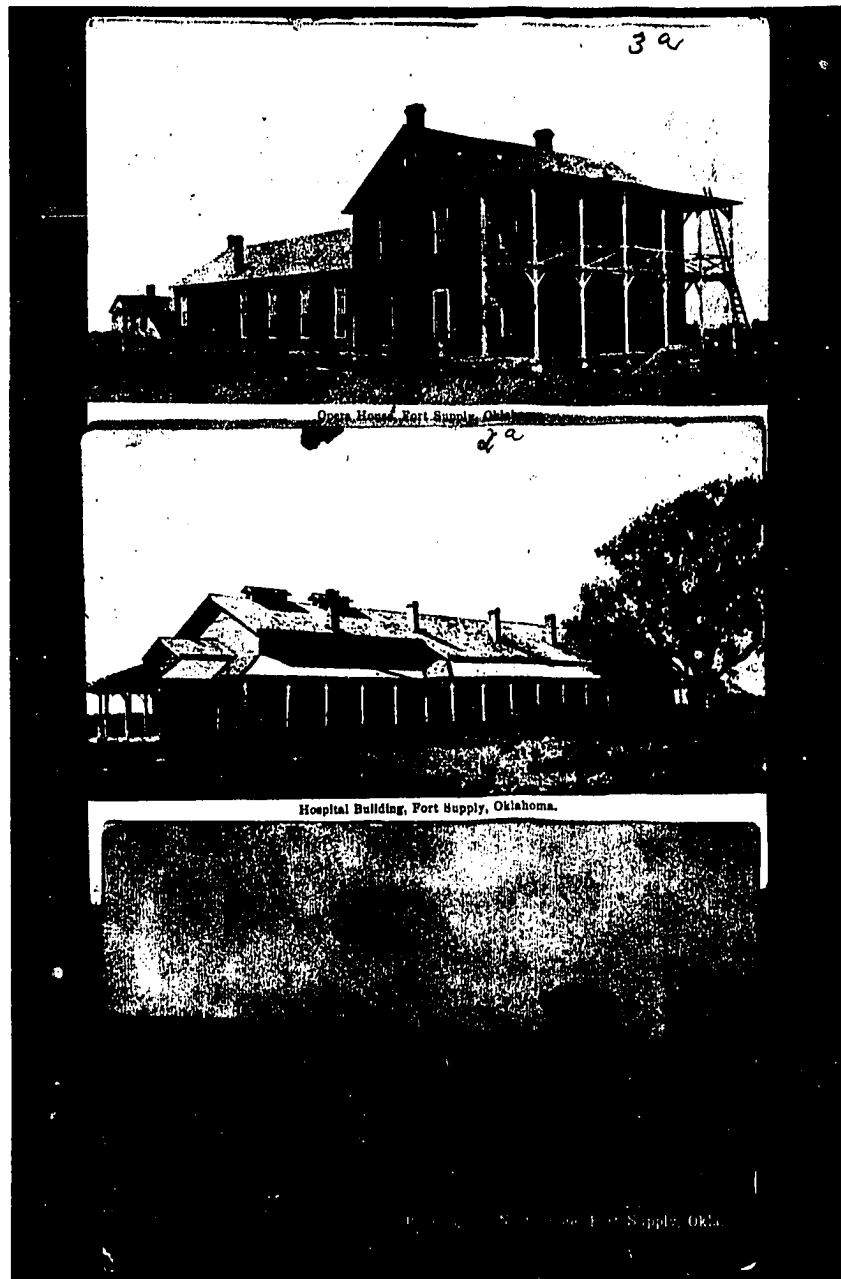
⁶Consolidated Quartermaster Correspondence, Envelope 3182, Records of the War Department, National Archives, Washington, D. C.; Lewis to AAG, Dept. of Mo., July 2, 1877, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29; Dodge City Times, July 7, 1877.

⁷Dodge City Times, September 1, 1877; Hambright to AAG, Dept. of Mo., February 17, 1878, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½.



Fort Supply Headquarters and Library, sometimes called the Opera House.

Lee and Reynolds shop building.
Woodward County Collection, University of Oklahoma Library.



Woodward County Collection, University of Oklahoma Library.

garrison.

In the beginning water in insufficient quantity and poor quality was hauled from Wolf Creek. Wagons carted water to barrels stationed behind the officers' quarters, laundry and barracks.⁸ Mrs. Roe remembered the water "so full of alkali that we are obliged to boil every drop before it is used for drinking or cooking, and even then it is so distasteful that we flavor it with sugar or lemons so we can drink it at all."⁹ One or two wells within the post were pressed into duty during dry periods but it was not until a windmill and clay pipe were installed in late 1879 that the post received adequate water.¹⁰

Usable ice was a rare commodity at Fort Supply. Each winter great blocks of ice were cut from Wolf Creek and stored for later distribution. Prior to 1875 ice was temporarily deposited in a sand hill covered with manure, but it usually melted before mid June.¹¹ In 1872 an attempt was made to cart ice from Fort Dodge, but without success. The commodity

⁸Harber, "Service Account," Medical Department, 99.

⁹Roe, Army Letters, 70-71.

¹⁰Granville O. Haller to Chief Quartermaster, Dept. of Mo., June 9, 1880, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½; Ford County Globe, September 28, 1879.

¹¹Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 16.

succumbed to the summer heat and melted in thirty-six hours.¹² Construction of special icehouses in 1875 allowed the storage of ice in quantities depending upon the severity of the winter. In 1877, for example, about 450 tons of ice were stored, but the mild winter of 1878 allowed only fifty-five tons to be cut.¹³

Improper nourishment was common at frontier posts. Scurvy often affected entire garrisons, so military authorities encouraged the growing of vegetables near the post. An attempt was made at Fort Supply to cultivate a garden in 1871, but heat, drought and grasshoppers caused it to fail.¹⁴ The following year was one of "discouraging success" as watermelons and cucumbers grew but were destroyed in an Indian raid. A new garden was located about three miles from the post in 1873 and about twenty acres cultivated, but still with no profit.¹⁵ The next year the post medical officer observed; "Although there is nominally a Post garden here, it scarce deserves the

¹²Ibid., 19.

¹³Ibid., Vol. 168, 113, 153.

¹⁴Ibid., Vol. 166, 16.

¹⁵Ibid., 19; Brooke to AAG, Dept. of Mo., December 8, 1873, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29.

name and is not worth the timber that fences it."¹⁶

Not until 1877, under abundant rains, did the gardens furnish a good supply of vegetables. Years of failure had taught the agriculturists much. Drain pipes prevented flooding, even when rains covered the garden at one time to a depth of three feet. Strict attention was also paid to the selection of crops.¹⁷ In the years following, the post gardener and the medical officer joined hands to make Fort Supply one of the healthiest posts on the plains. In 1879 the crop suffered disaster from drought, but after 1880 the addition of the post windmill provided water for irrigation.¹⁸

Military life at Fort Supply in the 1870's was rigorous. Until the gardens produced vegetables the main diet consisted of salt port, hard bread, and coffee in winter, and dried beef, fresh game and fruits in summer. Barracks were not styled for comfort. Pay for a private was only \$13 a month, and his duty was hazardous. A soldier from Camp Supply made some interesting comments to the editor of the Ford County Globe on November

¹⁶Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 24.

¹⁷Ibid., Vol. 168, 109-128; Dodge City Times, July 7, 1877.

¹⁸Dodge City Times, March 30, April 20, 1878; Ford County Globe, February 19, 1878, September 28, 1879.

1, 1878:¹⁹

Thirty seven men is at present the maximum number allowed a company of infantry and to my certain knowledge there never is that number in a company. I have known 37 men borne on the rolls of a company, but after deducting the extra duty and daily duty men, which comprises about 40% of the number reported, besides orderlies, sick, 'dog robbers,' etc. which at times will average more than 10% of the total number--there was seldom 15 men remaining on for actual duty. And then deduct 5 Sergts., 4 corporals, 2 musicians, and we have a company as follows: Three commissioned officers, (who are not counted in the aggregate of enlisted men), 9 non-commissioned officers, two musicians, and in the name of all that is absurd, 6 privates. Yes, 6 privates soldiering in a company of infantry available for duty.

Since the visit of the band to this post the military ceremonies have been imposing: reviews, dress parades, and guard mounts ad lib. We all like to see fine military turnouts, but when 2 commissioned officers, 3 sergeants, 2 or 3 corporals, and 5 or 6 dilapidated privates constitute the entire strength of a company marching on parade to martial strains of 20 brass horns and a big drum major covered with gold lace leading them, the situation becomes rather ridiculous.

Weather in northwest Indian Territory did not make life more pleasant, or less exciting. Temperatures regularly ranged about the 100 degree mark in July and August, and in November through March a sudden "Blue Norther" caused rapid decline in temperature. Surgeon Peter J. A. Cleary testified in 1875 that "the thermometer during the latter part of March went from 40 to 92 in twenty-four hours and down to 20 in the suc-

¹⁹Ford County Globe, November 12, 1878.

ceeding forty-eight."²⁰ Winds were constant, from the south in summer, the north in winter. In good years twenty-five inches of rain fell, but bad years counted less than ten.²¹ Sometimes rain came too quickly and the post, unfortunately located on low ground between two streams, was flooded. Wolf Creek overflowed its banks in December, 1877 and swift water undermined the Lee and Reynolds bunkhouse, causing it to collapse and kill one employee.²² Electrical storms were equally dangerous, one time lightning struck a tent, causing shock to the five occupants.²³

Congressional failure to renew special pay allowances for the Civil War soldier automatically reduced the post war privates' pay from \$16 to \$13 a month. "The desertion of about one-third the total number of enlisted men in the Regular Army in 1872 in part reflects their reaction to the pay cut."²⁴ Fort Supply was no exception as its desertion rate equaled the

²⁰Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 166, 36.

²¹The medical officers at Camp Supply kept a meteorological chart on the post from 1878 to 1894 in Vols. 166, 168 and 170 of the Medical History of Fort Supply.

²²Dodge City Times, December 29, 1877.

²³Ford County Globe, August 6, 1878.

²⁴Don Rickey, Jr., Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay (Norman, 1963), 127.

national average. Colonel Nelson lost large numbers of men in March, 1872. Patrols were organized day and night to retrieve deserters, but to no avail.²⁵

Still the men went. Many were caught and when put in confinement tools were handed in nightly thru the prison gratings for them to escape with. I was in the heart of Indian country and must use stringent measure to stop all this. When as a matter of prison discipline and to mark escaped deserters I had the hair cut short of all deserters in the guard house, I believe it effectively stopped the combination to aid the escape of prisoners.

Desertions were reduced by the passage, May 15, 1872, of a new pay bill, but there were always some run-a-ways at Supply, as at every post. A spate of deserters in 1878 caused a standard reward of \$25 to be posted for capture.²⁶

Most troopers were good soldiers and Fort Supply had her share of these. Private Harbers recalled one night on guard duty in 1872 when several Indian attempts had been made on the Fort Supply herds:²⁷

At night the sentries had importuned the Commanding Officer to allow the three men of each guard post to be together, so as to have protection in case of a surprise attack as sentries had been shot at post and it would not be found out until the hour call would be

²⁵Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., March 10, 1872, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 28.

²⁶Dodge City Times, June 1, 1878, January 18, 1879; Ford County Globe, July 22, 1879.

²⁷Harber, "Service Account," Medical Department, 100.

made. One night on No. 2 Post (I was on that Post) and Humpy Brown was on No. 3 Post (the hay stack). At 8:20 I went to the farthest end of my beat to exchange the situation before going back to meet the other sentry and told him that Humpy Brown did not report and I was going to call for the Corporal of the Guard. When the grand round came, the officer in charge asked me what was the matter. They hunted in the hay stack and found Brown with two arrows in his neck. They asked him why he did not call out, and he said, 'Oh! I was waiting for the man to show himself before seeing me--I was going to get him.' They took him to the hospital and extracted the arrows. He recovered.

Soldiers regularly sounded off at Camp Supply through the two Dodge City newspapers. The Dodge City Times received comments from Old Cactus, and Young Cactus, while the Ford County Globe printed letters of Jerry, Reville, and Domingo. Perhaps the most perceptive critic and satirist was Jerry of the Globe. In a communication of December 20, 1878 Jerry combined the usual complaints of being overworked and underfed with a play on the recent desertions:²⁸

At break of day the soldier is called from the land of dreams in order that it may be ascertained if during the night he evacuated the ranch. Answering to his name he is allowed 20 minutes to wash and arrange his toilet for breakfast, which consists of stale-bread, muddy, weak coffee and the time-immemorable hash, which latter is compounded from refuse bits of bread, meat, etc. accumulated from the day previous.

Then ten minutes are allowed before fatigue call, when he goes forth to labor. Some as mechanics, others to saw wood, dig sewers, build roads, blast rock, burn

²⁸Ford County Globe, January 1, 1879.

lime, mound brick, drive teams, police the garrison, and other care for public property and animals, and other things.

At 11:45 there is recall from fatigue and all hands repair to their quarters where another feast is spread, comprising beef, thin bean soup or water and stale-bread.

At 1 pm each one resumes his work which lasts until fifteen minutes to sundown. The recall is again sounded and supper is announced. Supper is the most transparent meal in the army. A slice or two of bread with a pint or two of the inevitable weak coffee fills the bill of fare for supper.

At sundown all are assembled for retreat or parade, and here the scene changes, for instead of the laborer of a few minutes ago the man is now transformed into a soldier and is put through the maneuvers of drill. Darkness comes on and this servant of Uncle Sam is dismissed, but not for the night. Oh no! for at 8:30 he is again called out to satisfy his superiors that he is still present in propria persona. This being satisfactorily settled he is allowed to retire to dream, perhaps of the reign of terror or the dark days of the inquisition.

Communication links for a frontier post were vital.

As the first outpost in western Indian Territory, Camp Supply was originally joined to Fort Dodge, and later to Fort Sill, by roads developed in the troop movements of the Campaign of 1868. Fort Sill was 196 miles south and Fort Dodge ninety-three miles north. Supply concentrated relations with the latter post. The Outbreak of 1874 brought two new posts to the region, but Fort Reno was linked to Wichita on the north and Fort Sill to the south. Fort Supply and Fort Elliott in the Texas Panhandle, on the other hand, had a close bond. In

1879 Cantonment was established midway between Forts Supply and Reno. This post merged with the Sill-Reno-Wichita eastern network of roads, while Forts Supply, Elliott, and Dodge formed a western transportation system.

Until 1872 Fort Supply received her supplies by wagon 166 miles from Fort Hays, via Fort Dodge. After the Santa Fe tracks reached Fort Dodge in 1872 the distance was cut to the Dodge-Supply road. Freightage between the posts was done by private contractors but threat of Indian attacks forced the military to furnish escorts.²⁹ Both freighters and troopers suffered on winter details. More than once men had to be thawed from leather saddles, lost limbs from frost bite, or died in a blizzard.³⁰

By 1877 the Dodge-Supply road was a familiar trail to most travelers of western Kansas and the Indian Territory. Thirteen miles out from the Arkansas River bridge at Dodge City, Mulberry Creek was reached. Water could be found here in even the driest seasons, and the Pat Ryan farm was located

²⁹Harber, "Service Account," Medical Department, 98; H. H. Raymond family letters, Henry H. Raymond Collection, Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, Kansas; Joseph W. Snell (ed.), "Diary of a Dodge City Buffalo Hunter, 1872-1873," Kansas Historical Quarterly, XXXI (Winter, 1965), 345-356.

³⁰Wright, "Personal Reminiscences," 80-81; Page to AAG, Dept. of Mo., March 17, 1869, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 24.

nearby. Fourteen miles farther, over a rolling prairie, the first stopping point was reached at Bluff Creek. Banks as high as 200 feet walled in the creek, and the Silas Maley ranche offered accommodations, or there was a camping spot on a little plateau not far away.

From Bluff Creek the road continued fourteen miles on a level prairie into Bear Creek valley. The decaying station established in February, 1872 remained at this one-time Cheyenne hunting camp as a relic of days past. Bear Creek, too, afforded water for stock the year round. The second day on the trail ordinarily ended at Red Clarke's "Boss Ranch," near the old Cimarron Redoubt.³¹ Sandy beds and low banks characterized the Cimarron at this point, fifty-five miles from Dodge City.

The thirty-eight miles from the Cimarron to Camp Supply was the most difficult part of the trip. Eight miles south the road crossed and re-crossed deep gulches, wound like coils, from Snake Creek. It was another five miles to Buffalo Creek and a splendid camping ground for the third night. The final day of the four day trip began with a ten mile trek to Gypsum Creek, one of the more interesting streams on the road. Three

³¹After 1875 Upper Bear Creek Station and Cimarron Redoubt were abandoned and in time they were replaced by ranches.

miles farther brought the traveler to Sand Creek with its high banks, followed in four miles by Devils Gap, the spot where General Sully met the Indians in September, 1868. In a moment Camp Supply could be seen from the top of the divide overlooking Beaver River.³²

As a railroad center, Dodge City supplied both Forts Supply and Elliott. There was a Dodge-Elliott road, in fact three versions of one, but it was not as practical as the route to Elliott via Camp Supply.³³ The Supply-Elliott road was an easy to travel, well-marked, road, used more by hunters than freighters. The abundance of good camp sites did not call for a rigid four day schedule as the Dodge-Supply road did.

Eighteen miles southwest of Fort Supply, Wolf Creek was crossed, offering the first of several camping spots. It was at this point that hunters usually unlimbered their gear

³²Dodge City Times, June 1, July 7, 21, August 25, 1877; Ford County Globe, February 5, 1878.

³³One trail from Dodge City to Fort Elliott proceeded down Crooked Creek to Mulberry Creek and due south, a distance of 170 miles; another left the Dodge-Supply road at the Cimarron crossing, moved past Bear Creek to Kiowa Medicine Lodge Creek and south to Wolf Creek crossing, thence to the Supply-Elliott road crossing of the Canadian, a route of 160 miles; and probably the best trail for water and wood was the path 160 miles due south through No Man's Land, often called the Jones-Plummer Cattle Trail. Dodge City Times, September 29, 1877.

for the buffalo that ranged immediately south. It was only ten miles more to Willow Springs and another well-watered camp. Rock Springs, eight miles distant, and Commission Creek, still eight miles more, were also camping points. The Polly Hotel at Commission Creek served the less adventurous. Commission Creek was crossed twice in three miles, and three miles past the south ford the 100th meridian, boundary between Indian Territory and Texas, was crossed.

Twelve miles into the Texas Panhandle the Boggy offered good water, wood, and buffalo grass. Three miles more and the traveler could purchase refreshment at the A. G. Springer ranche on the Canadian River. The next twelve miles pushed the traveler past Cottonwood Springs and onto the Washita River. Here, also, was a well stocked ranche. Gageby Creek and the settlement of the same name was reached nine miles out and an equal distance brought Fort Elliott and Sweetwater City.³⁴

Mail call was an exciting event at Camp Supply. Government mail contractors early made the post a weekly stop, and in 1871 twice weekly mail was delivered on an irregular schedule. Numerous complaints were made of the indifferent service, but Fort Supply was not able to improve or increase the collec-

³⁴Dodge City Times, June 1, September 1, 1877.

tion. The Department of the Missouri could not justify better delivery because it estimated that the bi-weekly mail from Dodge to Supply cost nearly \$3,000 per year.³⁵

After the establishment of Fort Elliott in 1876 Fort Supply carried from 800 to 1,000 pounds of mail and express twice each week to that post. The Dodge City Times calculated the cost of this service to the military at about \$6,000 per year.³⁶ Panhandle residents joined with Fort Supply in protests and in 1878 Lee and Reynolds Company received a subcontractorship of \$4,400 per year to deliver the mail from Dodge to Elliott. The mail from Dodge City to Fort Supply was thereafter regularly delivered twice each week, and Reynolds then carried the mail to Fort Elliott.³⁷ This was only token improvement for Fort Supply and more than 200 persons signed a petition in June, 1878 for a tri-weekly mail from Dodge City. Yielding to the demands a Tuesday-Thursday-

³⁵Jacobs, "Military Reminiscences," 29; AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Camp Supply, February 8, 1871, Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 1; Brooke to AAG, Dept. of Mo., December 23, 1873, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29.

³⁶Dodge City Times, September 29, 1877.

³⁷Ford County Globe, March 19, 1878; Dodge City Times, March 9, April 6, 1878.

Saturday schedule was granted in November, 1878.³⁸ Supply residents then requested, in January, 1879, for six mails a week from Dodge, but were refused. By June, 1879, the Reynolds stage line could carry mail, express and passengers 185 miles from Dodge City to Fort Elliott, via Camp Supply in forty hours, for a \$35 round trip ticket.³⁹

Military men and civilians at Camp Supply met on equal footing at the post trader's store. As early as the spring of 1869 Camp Supply had a self-appointed merchant, and later John F. Tappan officially served as trader for a few months.⁴⁰ The isolation of the post caused Colonel A. D. Nelson to recommend the appointment of a single person to barter with the Indians and military. The Secretary of War, on November 17, 1870, appointed A. E. Reynolds the post trader at Camp Supply.⁴¹

Reynolds, in partnership with W. M. Lee, held a monopoly

³⁸Dodge City Times, June 8, 1878; Ford County Globe, November 5, 1878.

³⁹Ford County Globe, June 24, September 16, 1879.

⁴⁰AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Camp Supply, April 22, June 2, 1869, AAG, Dept. of Mo. to John Tappan, November 11, 1869 (COPY), Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 1.

⁴¹Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., July 2, 1869, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 25; Nelson to AAG, Dept. of Mo., December 30, 1870, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 26.

at the post store, sub-contracted with Camp Supply for hay and wood, dealt with the Indians for buffalo robes, and eventually developed the first stage route to Fort Elliott. In 1872 when General William B. Hazen drew the attention of his friend Representative James A. Garfield to the machinations of post trader, J. S. Evans, at Fort Sill, Reynolds was described as one possessing material information regarding Evans' relationship to Secretary of War William Belknap.⁴² It was also stated that Lee and Reynolds paid \$10,000 outright for their extensive privileges at Camp Supply,⁴³ but there was no investigation at the post and the tradership remained with the firm. In later years Lee and Reynolds developed a tradership at Fort Elliott, some business enterprises at the Cheyenne and Arapaho Agency, and a ranch on the Texas-New Mexico line.⁴⁴ Through hard work and public service Lee and Reynolds were respected in Indian Territory.

By the close of the 1870's there were other businessmen at Fort Supply, and Washington Avenue in the post became a

⁴²Kroeker, "William B. Hazen," 193.

⁴³R. H. Pratt to Hazen, November 25, 1871, quoted in Ibid., 189.

⁴⁴"Catalogue of Ranches of the Texas Pan-Handle," in the Laura V. Hamner Collection, Panhandle-Plains Historical Society, Canyon, Texas.

street of many stores. Tailors advertised "genuine Parisian style," and bootmakers, barbers, and drygoods merchants offered fine work at reasonable prices.⁴⁵

Camp Supply had its share of brawls, too. Each flight was investigated by the Officer-of-the-Day, in the absence of civil authority, and some proved quite brutal. Intoxication lay at the bottom of most arguments, and thus the first week following payday was the most critical. Eye gouging, thumb-pulling, and nose biting were common injuries at Fort Supply in the rough and tumble, catch-as-catch-can style of frontier brawling.⁴⁶

Post records are sparse on murders and only one real troublemaker appears to have located at the post. Bill Gibbs, a 24 year-old Negro wagon boss for Lee and Reynolds established himself at Fort Supply in 1877. On August 3 Gibbs directed a wagon train to Fort Elliott, but when only a few miles southwest of the post an argument developed between the train-master and the Mexican cook, Joe Campo, resulting in the latter's dismissal. Campo left for Fort Supply to pick up his pay but after a few moments Gibbs followed and ordered him back to

⁴⁵Ford County Globe, April 30, 1878.

⁴⁶H. S. Bishop to Post Adjutant, Camp Supply, February 25, 1876, Camp Supply, Letters Received, Box 1.

work. The Mexican refused and when Gibbs reached for his revolver, Campo matched his draw and both fired at the same time. The wagonmaster's bullet creased the scalp of Campo, but Gibbs took a ball through the lungs, dropping to the ground. Campo turned himself into Fort Supply authorities, and Gibbs was brought to the hospital, where he recovered from a serious injury.⁴⁷

Gibbs learned nothing from his shooting scrape and continued to make a nuisance of himself at the post. He took particular delight in making uncomplimentary remarks about the young wife of George Thomas. It was known the two were laying for each other, and at 1 p.m., March 23, 1878 they met.

Gibbs was seated on a wheelbarrow in front of the post butcher shop when Thomas approached and asked Gibbs if he had a pistol. Gibbs immediately drew a revolver from his hip pocket, just as Thomas leveled a Navy six-shooter. Both fired, but only Thomas hit the mark. The wounded man attempted to run inside the butcher shop, but Thomas fired and Gibbs sagged to the floor. The post sympathized with Thomas, but he was liable for the act of firing into the crowded shop, although,

⁴⁷Dodge City Times, August 11, 18, 1877. Upon recommendation of the Commanding Officer at Camp Supply charges were dropped against Campo. Post Adjutant, Camp Supply to U. S. Marshal, West District of Arkansas, September 2, 1877, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29; Dodge City Times, September 1, 1877.

luckily, every one of his five shots entered Gibbs. Thomas was bound over to the marshal at Fort Reno.⁴⁸

In November, 1878 Fort Supply became an interested observer to an unusual shooting incident on the Supply-Elliott road. Reports carried by newspapers and stage drivers told of the death of A. G. Springer and his barkeep Tom Ledbetter in a row with four soldiers at the Springer ranche.

A. G. Springer was a salty cowman in the Texas Panhandle about fifty miles southwest of Camp Supply on the road to Fort Elliott. Because his ranche was only twelve miles down the Canadian from Indian Territory, Springer knew his spread would probably be struck on the first hostile movement. To protect his property he built "Fort Sitting Bull," two small log buildings, about 100 feet from either side of the ranche, available only by an underground passage from the house.⁴⁹ In February, 1877 a hunting Cheyenne ventured too close to these buildings and Springer shot him down, defending his action by declaring the redman was off his reservation.⁵⁰

⁴⁸Dodge City Times, March 30, 1878; Ford County Globe, April 2, 1878; Hambright to U. S. Marshal, West District of Arkansas, April 7, 1878, Hambright to AAG, Dept. of Mo., March 24, 1878, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½.

⁴⁹Dodge City Times, June 1, 1878.

⁵⁰Lewis to AAG, Dept. of Mo., February 8, 1877, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29.

On the night of November 16, 1878 the Army Paymaster, Major A. J. Broadhead, was enroute to Fort Elliott, escorted by a detachment of the Nineteenth Infantry out of Fort Dodge. As was customary, camp was pitched about fifty yards from Springer's ranche. After nightfall some soldiers visited the bar of the ranche where liquor was served. One Sergeant Kerrigan engaged the proprietor in a game of cards and apparently felt swindled for harsh words followed. When the sergeant protested, Springer drew a revolver and beat Kerrigan over the head. Springer fired some shots to force the soldiers back to their camp.

Soon afterward the soldiers were fired upon in their tents and two privates were wounded. At this stage of the story nothing is certain. Some soldiers said four approaching men were observed, presumably highwaymen. Other versions reported the shots coming from the ranche. The Major ordered his escort to attack and a deadly fire was poured into the night. At a range of fifty yards a volley hit the ranche. Springer was struck in the neck, the ball passing through him and into Ledbetter standing behind him. Both were dead.⁵¹ A coroner's inquest, made up of Panhandle citizens, returned a

⁵¹Dodge City Times, November 23, 1878; Ford County Globe, November 26, 1878; Post Returns, Camp Supply, November, 1878.

verdict that Springer fired the first two shots and Ledbetter was in the act of preventing him from shooting again when he received his death wound. The soldiers were exonerated from any blame as they acted in self-defense. Lieutenant Thomas M. Wenie of Fort Elliott took possession of the ranch property, valued at about \$50,000, until the deceased's brother could arrive from Delaware.⁵²

Hunting remained the most popular recreation at Fort Supply for military and civilians. Within ten to fifteen miles buffalo, elk, antelope, turkey, rabbit, quail and grouse could be found in abundance. Mulberry, plum, chokecherries, gooseberries, currants or fruits were also plentiful. Game provided a large measure of the food at Supply and organized parties would beat the game toward the post where the best shots would bag it. In winter, detachments of ten men and an officer would move near the Cimarron and kill what they could in ten days and bring it back to the garrison for the use of the troops.⁵³

For a time in 1877 and 1878 baseball was a popular pastime, with the cavalry and infantry regiments playing on

⁵²Dodge City Times, November 30, 1878.

⁵³Dodge City Times, July 7, 1877; Harbers, "Service Account," Medical Department, 99.

company levels. Later the best squads of each league would meet in a short series, which the cavalry usually won.⁵⁴ In the spring of 1878 a new game, croquet, swept the post. A Globe reporter wrote, "Croquet seems to be the great outdoor amusement at this place. No less than three grounds are occupied on fair days, and it has entirely taken the place of base ball."⁵⁵ For those less athletically inclined rides and picnics were popular.

Evening amusements included strolling shows, magicians, road companies, and band concerts. In spite of isolation the men at Fort Supply enjoyed a wide cultural exposure. Professor Petrie was acknowledged a conjurer with "scarcely an equal in this country,"⁵⁶ and the Texas Star Troupe presented performances of high quality.⁵⁷ On the other hand, five bummers inflicted "horrid punishment" on the Fort Supply patrons of the arts and were labeled humbugs. One attendant lamented, "The Indians have not taken us yet, but this strolling show has!"⁵⁸

⁵⁴Dodge City Times, September 1, 1877, April 20, 1878.

⁵⁵Dodge City Times, May 18, 1878; Ford County Globe, April 30, 1878.

⁵⁶Dodge City Times, May 25, 1878.

⁵⁷Ford County Globe, May 21, 1878.

⁵⁸Dodge City Times, May 18, 1878.

The arrival of the regimental band on its tour of the post offered the best entertainment. Usually spending two or three weeks at each post where units of that regiment was stationed, the band performed at concerts and dances. The Nineteenth Infantry band visited Fort Supply in October, 1878 and in 1879 and 1880 the bands of the Twenty-third and Twenty-fourth Infantries were stationed at the post.⁵⁹

Holidays were always observed at Fort Supply. While Christmas time, when Lee and Reynolds "set 'em' up" for the boys was pleasant, the Fourth of July was the event of the year. In 1878 a baseball game started the activities and was followed by foot, sack, and wheelbarrow races. The last contest of the day was to catch the greased pig for a prize of the pig. Music and dancing out-of-doors closed the program.⁶⁰

July Fourth in 1879 was expanded, after the great success of the previous year. A Federal Salute with full band was held at daylight, after which shooting matches for small money prizes were held. Races were then run, but the most exciting event was the greased pole climb for a prize of a

⁵⁹Dodge City Times, October 26, 1878; Ford County Globe, November 5, 1878; Post Returns, Fort Supply, October, 1878, January, 1879, December, 1880.

⁶⁰Dodge City Times, July 13, 1879.

twenty day furlough. After retreat hops were held for the men and officers.⁶¹

Clubs and societies were another outlet for the men at Fort Supply. Two of the less important clubs were called the "Gutter Snipes" and the "Knights of the Big Canteen."⁶² There was always talk of forming a literary society at the post, but one was never organized. "Old Cactus" tried to promote this idea, and listed the "education, natural intelligence and stamina" of the officers, but noted the enlisted men were also a noble lot:⁶³

Among the three small companies here we find . . . two ex-Congressmen (Rebel), five ex State M.C.'s /Member of Congress/, two ex-clergymen, one ex-lawyer, two ex-judge, four squires, four ex-school teachers, two professors, four agitators, 13 of the brotherhood, one Polish count, six strikers, three professional dog-robbers and ten ex-commercial drummers.

For the gentry, society was guided by the exclusive Camp Supply Social Club. Grand Balls, or hops in the military term, were the attractions for the officers, their ladies, and certain civilians, such as Lee and Reynolds. Dancing began about 8 p.m. and before long individual or community singing in German, Irish, and Southern songs delighted the gather-

⁶¹Ford County Globe, July 22, 1879.

⁶²Dodge City Times, July 21, 1877.

⁶³Dodge City Times, September 1, 1877.

ings. After 11 p.m. the sideboard in the adjoining room was spread with ice cream, cake, pie, sandwiches, ham, cold beef, roast antelope, venison, canned fruits, tea, coffee, and milk. About 3 a.m. the festivities drew to a close and all returned to their homes.⁶⁴

On Christmas Eve, New Years Eve and Saint Patrick's Day the Officers' Club joined the Camp Supply Social Club in presenting spectacular balls.⁶⁵ The uninvited called the social elite the "wash tub aristocracy," but the Yuletide dances and the Seventeenth of Ireland Ball were traditional events.⁶⁶ Perhaps the exclusive nature of these dances was justified if only to keep out the unwanted gentry. Old Cactus skillfully recorded the ejection of one such undesirable.⁶⁷

He went to considerable expense to secure a proper outfit - that is, white gloves, etc. for the purpose of adorning his hand - some person to an irresistible and fascinating status, thereby securing in his own imagination the exclusive attention of the ladies to his fascinating form. But alas! when he entered the ballroom one of the committee waited upon him for the

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵Dodge City Times, January 12, 1878.

⁶⁶Ford County Globe, February 19, March 12, April 2, November 5, 1878.

⁶⁷Dodge City Times, September 1, 1877.

purpose of getting a sight at his 'credentials' - his ticket. Unluckily he did not possess this. He was then politely informed that his presence was not required. After a furtive attempt to bulldoze another one of the committee as to the absolute necessity of his presence in order to give the ball social standing he made for the door in this manner:

'Is this a dagger which I see before me.'

(And gave a tremendous roll on the r-r-r in dagger.)

'The handle towards me hand -

Come let me clutch thee,'

(Long strides, three stamps and a tragical snort.)

'I have thee not

(Gives sixteen jumps, interspersed with several of his most bewitching snorts)

'And yet I see thee still'

(Makes devious punches in the air, three high-falutin snorts and a blur-r)

'Art thou but

a dagger of the mind, a false creation,

Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain.'

(This is somewhat difficult for it presupposes a brain. But the close is grand, and so appropriate.)

'There is no such thing;

It is the position which informs thee to mine eyes.'

The men at Fort Supply developed an active social schedule. They showed that life among buffalo hunters and Indians had not dimmed their esthetic tastes.

CHAPTER VIII

CATTLE, RESERVATIONS AND TRAILS, 1880-1889

While the Indian wars absorbed most of the attention of Fort Supply's garrison in the 1870's, a new force was emerging on the Southern Plains which soon involved troops from this post. Beginning in 1866 herds of Texas cattle streamed north to markets. In the eighteen years following the Civil War nearly 6,000,000 head of cattle were driven up Indian Territory trails to Kansas cowtowns.¹ Prime beeves went to slaughterhouses, others were consigned to the corn belt or to stock the northern ranges of the Dakotas, Montana and Wyoming.

Indian Territory lay between the Texas breeding grounds, Kansas markets and northern ranges and consequently several cattle trails crossed it south to north. The eastern half of the Indian Territory was occupied by the Five Civilized Tribes and the western half by reservation tribes, including the

¹House Exec. Doc., No. 7, 48 Cong., 2 Sess., 122.

Cheyennes and Arapahoes, and Kiowas and Comanches. Herds regularly used the Dodge City Trail or the Old Caldwell Trail through this territory and no great complaints were recorded.

Because the reservation Indians appeared peaceful and the cattle traffic generally moved east of Fort Supply, serious doubts were raised regarding the continuance of the post after pacification of the tribes. Colonel Granville O. Haller, Twenty-third Infantry, submitted his semi-annual report as commander of Fort Supply in September, 1880 which hinted that it might be well to close the post.

Colonel Haller listed four defects at Fort Supply. First of all, he explained, the location of the post rendered its service to the frontier almost negligible. The buffalo were gone and the Indians appeared peaceful. Moreover, the physical location of the post buildings at an indefensible low point made the stockade liable to a punishing attack from the higher sandhills. Haller agreed with Colonel John Davidson, who in May, 1872 suggested a better site a short distance away. In addition, the post covered an excessive area, filling over 165 acres. Haller compared the post buildings to "a line of peaked-roofs running through Pennsylvania Avenue, from the U. S. Capitol to the President Mansion, in Washington,

if the shingled roofs were placed in a row."²

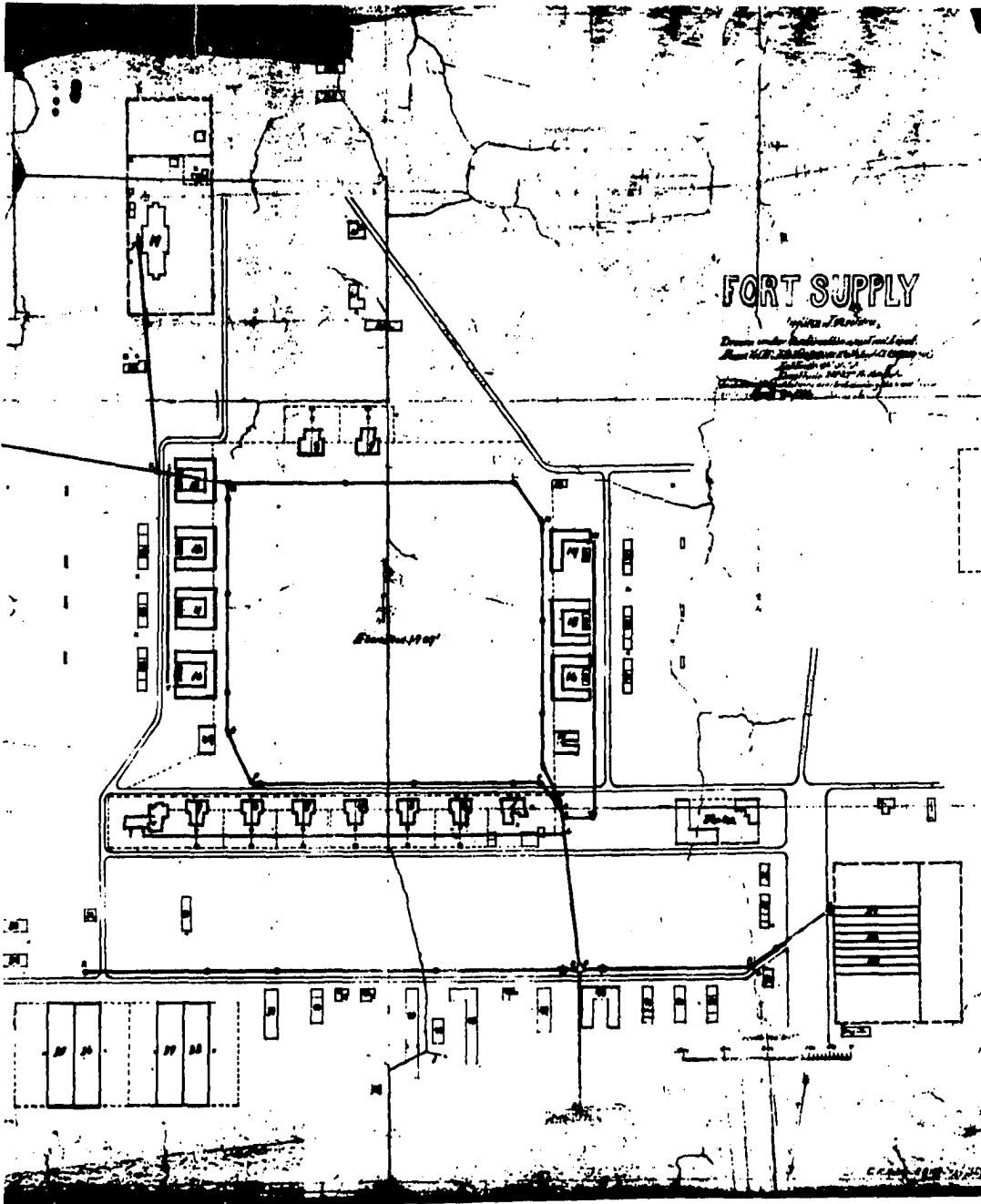
Secondly, the post was in such poor repair as to hardly justify rehabilitation costs. The cottonwood logs had been partially replaced by the Twenty-third Infantry in 1879, and yet more than 20,000 logs were still in need of substitution. Floors remained a luxury at the post, and "the Officers Quarters seem to harbor snakes." A third defect was the lack of a military reservation at the post. Haller found a reservation not only proper, but necessary, because Fort Supply lay within the Cherokee Outlet and agents of the Cherokee Nation were beginning to lease sections of the Outlet to cattlemen.³ Finally, the fort had lost its importance, according to Haller, because the legal state of affairs in Indian Territory did not allow the military to directly prevent depredations of citizens or Indians on private or even government property.⁴

The inspection report of Captain George M. Randall, Twenty-fourth Infantry, in September, 1881 substantiated

²Haller to Inspector General, Department of the Missouri, September 5, 1880, Office of the Inspector General, Letters Received, Records of The War Department, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.; Haller to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 12, 1880, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½.



Ground Plan of Fort Supply, June, 1886

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Commanding Officer | 39-40 & 47. Quartermaster Stores |
| 2-9 & 46. Officers' Quarters | 41. Post Quartermaster Office |
| 10-16. Company Barracks | 42. Commissary Sergeant |
| 17. Commanding Officer's House | 43-44. Subsistence Officer |
| 18 & 22. Ordnance Stores | 45. Quartermaster's House |
| 19-20. Hospital | 48. Armory |
| 21. Bakery | 49. Carpenter Shop |
| 23-26. Ice Houses | 51-54. Civilian Employee's Quarters |
| 27-29. Married Men's Quarters | 55-57. Quartermaster Stables |
| 30. Old Picket Building | 58. Butcher Shop |
| 31. Guard House | 59-62. Married Men's Quarters |
| 32. Magazine | 63-64. School House & Reading Room |
| 33-34 & 50. Blacksmith | 65-71. Bath Houses |

Haller's remarks.⁵ Request for the abandonment of Fort Supply was forwarded through the Department of the Missouri, but when it reached the desk of General of the Army Sheridan, the refusal was quick and emphatic. Sheridan on November 30, 1881 wrote that Fort Supply:⁶

. . . was built under my direction of logs, originally, and has been improved, except for a few years past, so as to have good company quarters, good storehouses and a most excellent hospital, but the officers quarters have been neglected by General Pope, who seemed to take a fancy to Cantonment about fifty miles down the Canadian River which had not a military point about it, and which is now about to be abandoned. It is midway between Supply and Reno, and cost something, but will be out in the spring. . . .

It /Fort Supply/ has been valuable heretofore strategically and as a supply camp, and is now valuable strategically for the protection of the Indian Territory, the Atlantic and Pacific RR and the cattle trail from Texas. I cannot give my approval to its abandonment.

General Sheridan's intercession gave the post a new life. Consequently, defects at the post were remedied. The water system was improved by the installation of windmills and clay pipes, mail delivery increased to six times a week,

⁵G. M. Randall to Inspector General, Department of the Missouri, September 1, 1881, Office of the Inspector General, Letters Received.

⁶Sheridan endorsement, November 30, 1881, in Report of Inspector General D. B. Sacket, October 22, 1881, Fort Supply, Reservation File, Records of the War Department, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

and the Fort Supply to Fort Dodge telegraph, begun in September, 1880 but temporarily discontinued, was sped toward completion by September, 1881. Fort Supply remained a fixture on the western Indian Territory frontier for another fourteen years.⁷

The decision to continue the post thereby increased the need for a military reservation at Fort Supply. Questions of a reservation were first discussed in 1870, but at that time the Department Commander, the Division Commander, and the General of the Army all agreed such action was premature, as the camp was only temporary. In March, 1881 Lieutenant Colonel John E. Yard, commanding Fort Supply, petitioned Headquarters for a military reservation. The exact status of the lands in the Cherokee Outlet subject to reservation for military purposes, however, was a complex legal problem.⁸

Fort Supply was located upon lands set apart for the

⁷Post Returns, Fort Supply, August, September, 1881; Pope to Adjutant General of the Army, December 28, 1880, Department of the Missouri, Letters Sent, Vol. 102; John E. Yard to Hazen, March 7, 1881, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 29½; J. C. Potter to AAG, Dept. of Mo., September 10, 1881, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 30; AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Supply, August 4, 1881, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 3.

⁸"Case of the Military Reservation for Fort Supply, I.T.," March 28, 1881, Fort Supply, Reservation File.

Cherokee Indians by various treaties. The sixteenth article of the 1866 treaty authorized the United States to settle friendly Indians in any part of the Cherokee Outlet, the Cherokee Nation retaining possession until said occupation. Article twenty-seven of the treaty permitted the United States to establish one or more military posts or stations in the Outlet, but it was a matter of interpretation whether or not this included a military reservation.⁹

The War Department took the matter under advisement and under instructions of July 12, 1881 Colonel Joseph H. Potter, commanding Fort Supply, examined the country surrounding the post relative to laying out a reservation. A six miles square reservation, with the post flag staff as center point, was recommended by Potter on September 23, and approved by the Department Commander.¹⁰

Township 24 North, Range 22 West, embracing thirty-six square miles, or 23,040 acres was proclaimed as the Fort Supply Military Reservation on April 18, 1882 and the bound-

⁹Report in K-File, Office of the Quartermaster General, Records of the War Department, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

¹⁰Potter to AAG, Dept. of Mo., September 23, 1881, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 30; AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Supply, September 29, 1881, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 3.

aries outlined in General Orders, No. 14, Department of the Missouri, May 10, 1882. A subsequent survey found a need for additional timber lands and hay fields and the War Department, with the consent of the Indian Bureau, petitioned for an additional tract in January, 1883.¹¹ Accordingly, the reservation was enlarged under Executive order of January 17, 1883 by the addition of Township 25 North, Range 21 West. Addition of this twenty-seven mile tract brought the total area of Fort Supply reserved lands to sixty-three square miles, or 40,320 acres. The declaratory orders of the Department of the Missouri, January 30, 1883, contained one provision: "Whenever any portion of the land set apart for this post may be required by the Secretary of the Interior for Indian purposes, the same shall be relinquished by the military upon notice to that effect by the Secretary of War."¹² The reserve was surveyed by Lieutenant R. H. Hill, the boundaries forwarded to the Office of the Chief Engineer, and a barbed wire enclosure erected.¹³

¹¹Petition of the War Department, January, 1883, Fort Supply, Reservation File.

¹²Report in K-File, Office of The Quartermaster General.

¹³Potter to Inspector General, Department of the Missouri, September 3, 1884, Office of the Inspector General, Letters Received.

While legal technicalities of a military reservation were being worked out in 1882 and 1883, Fort Supply performed regular Indian Territory duty. Boomers became suddenly active on the Kansas state line in 1880 and Fort Reno, commanded by Major George M. Randall, sent a detachment of the Fourth Cavalry to the field in November, 1880 in an effort to halt the trespass.¹⁴ Boomers refused to be easily ejected and Fort Reno remained responsible for the control of the Kansas line. After January, 1882 Fort Supply was directed to aid in removing trespassers from the Indian country when asked by the Cheyenne-Arapaho Agent. The post did not act in this capacity, however, because the garrison consisted of only 128 enlisted men, all infantry.¹⁵

In June, 1882 Forts Dodge and Wallace in Kansas and the Cantonment, Indian Territory were abandoned by the Department of the Missouri and their garrisons and equipment transferred to Forts Reno, Supply and Elliott.¹⁶ The peaceable

¹⁴Cheyenne Transporter, November 26, December 17, 1880, January 25, 1881.

¹⁵AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Supply, January 4, 1882, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 4; Potter to AAG, Dept. of Mo., January 15, 1882, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 30; Post Returns, Fort Supply, January, 1882.

¹⁶Cheyenne Transporter, June 17, 1882; AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Dodge, June 12, 1882 (COPY),

character of Indians in the region no longer required these outposts, but Apache trouble in Arizona demanded an increase in troops that only the Southern Plains could spare.

For a time, in September, 1882 it appeared the War Department had withdrawn these troops too quickly. New rumors of Northern Cheyenne discontent and cattlemen's reports of Indian hostilities led Colonel Potter to patrol the surrounding area. Lieutenant Henry H. Wright and Troop K, Ninth Cavalry, recently arrived at Fort Supply to increase mobility, moved north to the Cimarron to scout that country on September 8. Amos Chapman undertook an independent patrol of Medicine Lodge Creek and there found about ten Southern Cheyennes peacefully returning from a hunt. Lieutenant Wright found no Indian signs and after interviewing trailmen, decided to disclaim the ranchers' reports of depredations. The entire scare was concluded to be without foundation.¹⁷

Duty at Fort Supply in these years varied. Timber

AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Cantonment, I.T., June 1, 1882, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 4; Annual Report of the Secretary of War for the Year 1882, 92.

¹⁷Post Adjutant, Fort Supply to Henry H. Wright, September 7, 1882, Potter to Wright, September 8, 10, 1882, Potter to AAG, Dept. of Mo., September 17, 1882, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 31; Wright to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, September 12, 1882, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 4.

thieves were particularly numerous in the Indian country during the early 1880's. In March, 1883 Colonel Potter stated the Cherokee Outlet was "swarming with these marauders." Scouts were frequently dispatched to remove the intruders, but the inability of the military to act on citizens within the Cherokee Outlet only allowed these patrols to order woodsmen out.¹⁸

Permission was granted the Northern Cheyennes, in July, 1883 to return to the Northern Plains near Sidney, Nebraska and Troop K, Ninth Cavalry from Fort Supply aided in escorting 357 Indians to Sheridan, Kansas.¹⁹ With the exception of an occasional murder in the Territory, or the removal of an illegal hunting party from the Outlet,²⁰ most of the real action in the Indian country involved the conflict over Indian leases in the Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation.

Cattle grazed on the Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation beginning in the late 1870's. Beef contractors for the agency, Fort Reno and Fort Supply pastured herds on unsettled

¹⁸Potter to AAG, Dept. of Mo., March 6, 1883, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 31.

¹⁹Post Returns, Fort Supply, July, August, 1883.

²⁰Potter to U. S. Marshal, Southern District of Kansas, September 14, 1884, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 31; Post Returns, Fort Supply, August-November, 1883.

portions of the reservation. In addition, Texas ranchmen frequently allowed their herds to drift across the line, "pilgrim cattle" lingered as their trail north passed through lush meadows, and there were always some men who knowingly kept cattle on the reservation in violation of the laws.

For the most part the Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation was big enough for cattle trails and Indians. Indifference to Indian Bureau rules by the drovers, however, sparked trouble. Cattlemen refused to stay on the established trails, preferring to cut across Indian property without respect for herds, fences or farms.²¹

"Doc" Day of Day Brothers Ranch had a run-in with Cheyennes on August 1, 1880 that nearly resulted in bloodshed. Stone Calf and two friends approached the Day herd in friendly fashion and spent the night in camp with the cowboys. In the morning the Indians demanded an animal for beef, and when refused they threatened the cattlemen with guns and stopped the herd. Only the timely arrival of Amos Chapman ended the confrontation at harsh words. It was apparent to Captain Charles Wheaton at Cantonment that his greatest problem was

²¹Dodge to Commanding Officer, Fort Elliott, April 27, 1880, C. Wheaton to Miles, July 8, 1880, Cantonment, I.T., Letters Sent, Vol. 18.

to keep "Mr. Day and the cattlemen out of the way of the Indians for the ranchmen are determined to come and go as they please, and allow none to interfere." Day himself stated that "no Indian Agent could fix any trail for him to drive cattle on, that he supported the government so he would drive his herd the way that seemed best."²²

Attempts to put cattlemen off the reservation usually met with deception. When told to remove from Cheyenne lands, ranchers argued they were on Cherokee property and paid for the use of pastures. Cheyennes did not understand the ruse and set fire to the grass on ranges used by unfriendly herders.²³ Other Indians demanded a tax of one to three head of stock for each herd that passed.²⁴ Dissatisfaction on the part of Indian and cowboy urged an immediate solution.

Agent John D. Miles proposed a system of leases as the most practical answer. The Department of the Interior

²²Wheaton to AAG, Dept. of Mo., August 1, 1880, Cantonment, I.T., Letters Sent, Vol. 18.

²³R. F. O'Bierne to Miles, September 3, 1881, Cantonment, I.T., Letters Sent, Vol. 18; O'Bierne to Miles, November 7, 8, 1881, Cantonment, I.T., Letters Sent, Vol. 19; Miles to H. Price, July 20, 1882, Sen. Exec. Doc. No. 54, 48 Cong., 1 Sess., 72.

²⁴Charles C. Hood to Miles, May 27, 1882, Cantonment, I.T., Letters Sent, Vol. 19.

refused this request and urged the War Department to expel the intruders. Troops from Fort Reno made a token attempt but then the War Department desisted, claiming it was an impossible task and urged support of Miles' request. Nevertheless, the Department of the Interior, in July, 1882 ordered all cattle off Indian lands.²⁵

When the pressure of cattlemen on one side, and short rations on the other, became too great, Miles decided to proceed as he thought best and consult his superiors later.²⁶ Accordingly a council of chiefs decided upon a leasing arrangement with seven cattlemen on January 8, 1883. The leases totaled nearly 3,000,000 acres, ran for ten years, and brought approximately \$60,000 per year to the Cheyennes and Arapahoes.²⁷

Those ranchmen not included in the exclusive set of leases were understandably angry. B. H. Campbell protested

²⁵Miles to Price, July 20, 1882, Randall to Pope, July 20, 1882, H. M. Teller to Secy. of War, August 5, 1882, Sen. Exec. Doc. No. 54, 48 Cong., 1 Sess., 72, 74-80; Cheyenne Transporter, August 10, 1882.

²⁶E. E. Dale, "Ranching on the Cheyenne-Arapaho Reservation, 1880-1885," Chronicles of Oklahoma, VI (March, 1928), 42-43.

²⁷Miles to Price, January 13, 15, 1883, Sen. Exec. Doc. No. 54, 48 Cong., 1 Sess., 92-93; Sen. Exec. Doc. No. 17, 48 Cong., 2 Sess., 21-29.

to the Department of the Interior, but his claim went unheeded.²⁸ The Dickey Brothers, whose ranch straddled the Cheyenne-Arapaho Reservation and the Cherokee Outlet, also demurred when they were ordered to remove from the leased property.²⁹

Secretary of the Interior Henry M. Teller set down Interior Department policy in the "Fenlon letter" of April 25, 1883. In substance, Teller said the department would not recognize the leases, yet "would endeavor to see to it that parties having no agreement are not allowed to interfere with those who have."³⁰ Professor E. E. Dale concludes the policy was absurd:³¹

It invited ranchmen to enter the Indian Territory and intrigue with savage tribesmen. It placed a premium upon bribery and corruption and made of every agency employee a person to be flattered, cajoled, and, if possible, bribed by men with large investments at stake. Also, it could not be enforced. Men who had no agreements approved by the agent, but who were friendly with certain small bands of Indians,

²⁸Miles to Price, April 6, 1883, Sen. Exec. Doc. No. 54, 48 Cong., 1 Sess., 89-92, 96-98.

²⁹Dickey Brothers to Price, July 30, 1883, Price to Miles, August 7, 1883, Ibid., 110-112.

³⁰Teller to E. Fenlon, April 25, 1883, Ibid., 99.

³¹E. E. Dale, "History of the Ranch Cattle Industry in Oklahoma," Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1920, 315.

refused to remove, and their Indian friends, who were receiving more money from these ranchmen than their share of the lease money would amount to, refused to ratify the agreements made by their chiefs, and cut the fences and killed the cattle of the 'approved lessees.' The latter appealed to the agent for protection, demanding that men without leases be excluded; but the War Department, when called upon for troops, refused to furnish them on the ground that leases had not been approved by the Department of the Interior.

Cattlemen not included in the leases banded together to break the system of contracts. Six influential Cheyennes, including Stone Calf and Little Robe, in company with Amos Chapman and William Wells, journeyed to Fort Supply to outline their grievances. Colonel Potter at first refused to enter into the squabble, but at last heard the Indians on July 14, 1883. The Cheyennes insisted Agent Miles forced them to agree to the leases, but such was not their real desire.³² Potter tended to believe the Indians but Agent Miles demanded their return to the agency, branding the chiefs tools of the cattlemen, and Amos Chapman the unprincipled and irresponsible speaker for vested interests.³³ The Indians did return to the agency, but the Dickey Brothers and others con-

³²Potter to Miles, Potter to AAG, Dept. of Mo., July 18, 1883, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 31.

³³Miles to Potter, July 13, 16, 1883, Sen. Exec. Doc. No. 54, 48 Cong., 1 Sess., 114-115; D. B. Dyer to Price, May 20, 1884, Sen. Exec. Doc. No. 16, 48 Cong., 2 Sess., 11.

tinued to use them for their own purpose.

The lessees, now organized as the Cheyenne-Arapaho Live Stock Association, found their claims challenged by Indians as well as whites. Kiowas stole cattle, cut fences, and exacted tolls on Cheyenne and Arapaho lands under the pretense the stock was actually on the Kiowa-Comanche Reservation. Protests by the association were shifted from one department to another in Washington.³⁴ The Secretary of the Interior, in April, 1884 finally issued a statement that the Department would offer no protection to lessees while on Indian lands.³⁵

Disorder increased and although Agent D. B. Dyer, who replaced Miles in April, 1884, appealed for troops six times, his requests were disregarded.³⁶ Cheyenne and Arapaho bands, encouraged by cattlemen without leases, became increasingly hostile. E. M. Horton and three men were stopped by a small party of Cheyennes on May 4, 1884 who demanded ponies as toll for crossing their lands. Horton refused and when Running

³⁴Dale, "Ranching on the Cheyenne-Arapaho Reservation," 52-53.

³⁵Teller to Robert T. Lincoln, April 22, 1884, Sen. Exec. Doc. No. 17, 48 Cong., 2 Sess., 98.

³⁶Requests were sent out May 6, 20, 28, July 22, August 12, 21, 1884, Ibid., 6, 10, 12, 13-15.

Buffalo snapped his gun at him the cowboy shot him from his horse. When he tried to regain his feet Horton killed him. Only the prompt arrival of troops from Fort Reno saved the cowboys from a large party of enraged Indians. The Cheyenne Transporter deemed this the "most serious Indian affair for some time in the area."³⁷

Little Robe's band, undaunted, continued through May to stop all persons passing over the Old Caldwell Trail unless paid.³⁸ By August, Agent Dyer estimated the loss to cattlemen in the past year at not less than \$100,000. When this loss was added to the more than \$76,000 annual rent paid the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes, Dyer concluded "the cattle business had other than bright sides."³⁹ Even into December, 1884 Dyer knew of scarcely a week that passed "that does not bring notices of depredations, intimidations, etc."⁴⁰

Much the same conduct in the spring of 1885 made it

³⁷Cheyenne Transporter, May 10, 1884.

³⁸Dyer to Price, May 20, 1884, Sen. Exec. Doc. No. 16, 48 Cong., 2 Sess., 10.

³⁹By this time additional leases brought the total revenue to about \$76,000 per year for some 4,000,000 leased acres, Ibid., 21; House Exec. Doc. No. 7, 48 Cong., 2 Sess., 109.

⁴⁰Dyer to Price, December 24, 1884, Sen. Exec. Doc. No. 16, 48 Cong., 2 Sess., 26.

apparent that Cheyenne opposition had not diminished. The shooting of Running Buffalo was damaging, but the disappearance of Sitting Medicine, Little Robe's Son, in late May, 1885 was incendiary to the Cheyennes.⁴¹

Stronger measures were ordered against the Indians upon rumors of an outbreak. Colorado and Kansas officials petitioned the government for protection and state troops were put on a stand-by basis. Under such pressures Secretary of War William C. Endicott ordered General C. C. Augur to deploy military forces at his command to prevent an Indian outburst. Some 3,5000 troops were quickly ordered to reinforce Forts Supply and Reno and take positions sealing the northern line of the Indian Territory.⁴²

President Grover Cleveland, on July 10, 1885 ordered General Sheridan to meet with General Nelson A. Miles, now

⁴¹Sitting Medicine's body was found by Indian scouts twelve miles from Fort Supply on July 28, 1885. He had been shot in the back of the head. Potter to Sheridan, July 28, 1885, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 34.

⁴²Wright, "Fort Reno," 100-102; House Exec. Doc. No. 1, 49 Cong., 2 Sess., 134. Troop I, Fifth Cavalry, in camp at Fort Laramie, Wyoming, left post June 2 and marched 405 miles to Red Cloud, Nebraska where they then boarded a train that took them 495 miles to Caldwell, Kansas. Leaving Caldwell on June 27 they marched 107 miles to Fort Reno where they encamped from July 2 to 22, 1885. The troops engaged in escort and courier duty on the Caldwell Road, and finally took station at Fort Supply on July 27. Post Returns, Fort Supply, July, 1885.

commanding officer of the Department of the Missouri, and personally visit the Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation to examine the situation. They reached Fort Reno on July 15 and meetings were held with the Cheyennes.⁴³

After a series of interviews with the Indians, Agent Dyer, and two of the lessees, Sheridan made his recommendations to President Cleveland in a report of July 24. The Cheyenne tribe, it was certain, no longer approved the system of leases, although the agency employees favored them. Sheridan advocated rescinding the leases, removing unauthorized persons from the reservation, and replacing the civilian agent with an experienced army officer.⁴⁴

President Cleveland, however, acted on preliminary reports and one day before the Sheridan report, issued a proclamation which voided all leases on the Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation. All persons and property were ordered to remove within forty days. At the same time Captain Jesse M. Lee was ordered to take station at the agency and relieve D. B. Dyer. Two weeks later President Cleveland issued another proclamation, this time requiring the removal of all wire fences from

⁴³Wright, "Fort Reno," 102-103.

⁴⁴Sheridan Report, July 24, 1885, Annual Report of the Secretary of War For The Year 1885, 65-71.

Indian lands.⁴⁵

Department Commander Miles contributed to positive measures for Indian control when he directed that 130 of the most active and restless young Cheyenne men be enlisted as scouts under the surveillance of competent officers.⁴⁶ Fifty of these scouts and their families served at Fort Supply.⁴⁷

Troops from Fort Supply and Fort Reno shared the duty of visiting the members of the Cheyenne-Arapaho Live Stock Association to ascertain their progress in departing the reservation. Colonel Potter, temporarily at Cantonment to direct the removal of the estimated 210,000 head of cattle, called on Major Louis H. Carpenter and the Fifth Cavalry at Fort Supply to report on the three ranches south of the post.

Lieutenant E. P. Andrews, with a fourteen-man detachment left Fort Supply August 28.⁴⁸ The Cheyenne and Arapaho Cattle Company, managed by Edward Fenlon, was reached the

⁴⁵Presidential Proclamation, July 23, 1885 (COPY), Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 5; Kappler, Indian Affairs, I, 938-939.

⁴⁶Report of the Secretary of War, 1885, 133.

⁴⁷Potter to J. E. Lee, August 7, 1885, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 34; Post Returns, Fort Supply, July, 1885.

⁴⁸Lieutenant Andrews was under orders by Acting Agent Lee to report the situation as observed under a list of nine specific questions.

following day. This ranch, covering some 570,000 acres bordering on and about Commission Creek had already abandoned or destroyed the buildings on Quartermaster Creek and was in the process of removing the headquarters ranch into Texas. Some 4,200 cattle had already started out of the reservation, 3,000 more were slated to begin in a few days and the remaining 6,500 head would be driven in herds of 2,000 as fast as they could be gathered. Even the doubled work force, however, could not remove all the cattle by the September 4, 1885 deadline set by the proclamation, nor could they tear down the fences or dismantle the ranch equipment by that time. Lieutenant Andrews was satisfied Fenlon was making every effort to carry out the proclamation and moved south to the next company.⁴⁹

Striking out across country the detachment reached the round-up camp of the Taurus Cattle Company, directed by part-owner A. S. C. Forbes. A crew three times normal size had driven 4,800 beeves out of the lands, but there still remained 4,500 head. September 25 was considered the earliest pos-

⁴⁹E. P. Andrews' Report on the Cheyenne and Arapaho Cattle Company, August 29, 1885, Andrews to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, September 3, 1885, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 5; L. H. Carpenter to AAG, Dept. of Mo., September 4, 9, 1885, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 34.

sible completion date and that did not include time needed to remove ranch buildings or take down fences. Again Andrews was convinced of the best efforts of the Forbes outfit.⁵⁰

The Standard Cattle Company managed by Richard Allen was blessed with a favorable location for removal. Having about a sixty-mile border on Texas and Greer County the herds were quickly taken from the leased pastures. About 5,000 head departed by August 30, but the remaining 13,000 head could not hope to be off the reservation by September 4. Ranch buildings were being moved one mile across the line to Texas, but it was estimated another six weeks' work remained for fence removal. It appeared the company was making an energetic attempt to comply with the proclamation and Andrews could do no more.⁵¹

It was obvious even the outfits closest to Texas could

⁵⁰Andrews' Report on Malaley and Forbes Company, August 31, 1885, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 5; Carpenter to AAG, Dept. of Mo., September 4, 1885, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 34.

⁵¹Andrews' Report on the Standard Cattle Company, September 1, 1886, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 5; Carpenter to AAG, Dept. of Mo., September 4, 1885, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 34. On the return to Fort Supply, Andrews traveled east of his southern route and checked the headquarters ranch of Malaley and Forbes. He reached his station on September 3, 1883. Andrews to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, September 3, 1885, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 5.

not get all their stock off the Cheyenne-Arapaho Reservation by September 4, and the deadline was extended to December. By that time all but one of the ranches had removed, and the entire process was carried out in a peaceful and organized manner.

Only one cowman claimed Indian harassment during the removal period. Mr. J. V. Andrews alleged in a letter of October 9, 1885 to Colonel Potter that the Cheyennes were killing his cattle, stealing his horses, and burning the grass as he moved his herds to new leased ranges in the Cherokee Outlet. Colonel Potter investigated these reports at length and determined in January, 1886 that Andrews allegations were not sustained. Little Robe and his band did hold Andrews responsible for the death of Sitting Medicine, but only one cow could be found killed, and that would hardly be retribution in Indian eyes.⁵²

During the spring and summer of 1886 scouting parties were frequently sent from Forts Supply, Elliott, Sill and Reno for the purpose of expelling intruders, escorting cattle herds on the established trails, removing unauthorized cattle from the Indian reservations, and quelling trouble between cattlemen

⁵²Potter to Lee, November 12, 1885, Potter to AAG, Dept. of Mo., January 20, 1886, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 35.

and Indians.⁵³ Troops from Fort Supply operated both in the Cherokee Outlet and the Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation.

Lieutenant John J. Brereton, Twenty-fourth Infantry, leading ten Indian scouts from Fort Supply in February, 1886 searched for unauthorized cattle on the Cheyenne-Arapaho Reservation.⁵⁴ The following month Brereton again took the field and moved over the Hackberry Trail and the Canadian. After an extensive patrol the Lieutenant reported on April 12 that about 2,000 head of cattle, belonging to various outfits, had drifted from the Cherokee Outlet onto the Cheyenne and Arapaho lands. For the time being the cattle were left alone, as the burned over range made it impossible to move the herds north.⁵⁵

In due time Fort Supply became as interested in keeping cattle on the proper trails as it was in keeping them off the Indian reservation. The Dodge City Trail and the Old Caldwell Trail both crossed western Indian Territory.

The Dodge City Trail, also called the Western Cattle

⁵³House Exec. Doc. No. 1, 49 Cong., 2 Sess., 134.

⁵⁴Post Returns, Fort Supply, February, 1886.

⁵⁵John J. Brereton to Potter 1886, March 26, 1886, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 6; Potter to Lee, April 21, 1886, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 35.

Trail,⁵⁶ was first used about 1876. It started near Bandera, Texas, ran north past Fort Griffin and crossed the Red River into Indian Territory at Doan's Store. From there the trail passed through Greer County, crossed the North Fork of the Red River and went into the Wichita Mountains between Soldier Mountain and Tepee Mountain. Passing east of Gyp Springs the trail straightened for some miles and proceeded north to Cedar Springs, a well-known watering and camping place, crossed the Washita, Canadian and Cimarron. From the Cimarron some herds continued on the trail to Dodge City and others followed the Dodge-Supply road.⁵⁷ Millions of cattle and horses passed over this trail until it was discontinued in 1889, with the largest number of animals, over 300,000 head, moved in 1881.⁵⁸

The Old Caldwell Trail, or Chisholm Trail, was established in 1866. It began near the southern tip of Texas, led through San Antonio, Austin, Fort Worth and entered Indian

⁵⁶Other names for the Dodge City Trail were the Old Texas Trail, the Abilene and Fort Dodge Trail, and the Fort Griffin-Fort Dodge Trail.

⁵⁷H. S. Tennant, "The Texas Cattle Trails," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XIV (March, 1936), 86-122.

⁵⁸A. L. Turner to J. Evetts Haley, July 2, 1926, Memoirs of E. A. Upfold as told to Robert Linder, June 30, 1939, C. F. Doan to J. Evetts Haley, October 8, 1926, Division of Manuscripts Collection of the Panhandle-Plains Historical Society, Canyon, Texas.

Territory at Red River Station. Heading due north the trail crossed the Washita at Elm Springs and split at the Canadian, one part skirting Fort Reno, the other holding farther east going up the valley of Kingfisher Creek. The trails rejoined near the Cimarron, and continued through the Cherokee Outlet, ending at Caldwell, Kansas.⁵⁹

In May, 1886 the Indians resumed their harassment of northbound herds through the reservation, and Fort Supply was directed to detach a portion of its garrison to keep the trails open.⁶⁰ Colonel John E. Yard, commanding Fort Supply after Colonel Potter was attached to the Department of the Missouri, ordered Lieutenant C. H. Walls and a troop of the Fifth Cavalry to move south on the Dodge City Trail as far as the Washita River, and then observe all established cattle trails on the Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation to see they were kept open.⁶¹

Lieutenant Walls and fifteen enlisted men proceeded south on the Dodge City Trail as it passed seven miles west of

⁵⁹Tennant, "Texas Cattle Trails," 86-122; see also Wayne Gard, The Chisholm Trail (Norman, 1954).

⁶⁰AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Supply, June 4, 1886, Department of Missouri, Letters Sent, Vol. 125.

⁶¹Post Adjutant, Fort Supply to C. H. Walls, June 4, 1886, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 36; Post Returns, Fort Supply, June, 1886.

Fort Supply, on June 4. Numerous herds were met and each complained of having lost two beeves as toll to Indians at the Washita. Before Walls reached the Washita, word reached him that a troop of cavalry from Fort Reno arrived on the scene and the tolls ceased. The Lieutenant then moved north up the Canadian to the Old Caldwell Trail where it crossed the Fort Supply-Cantonment road. Finding the area covered by a recently stationed detachment under Lieutenant E. P. Andrews at Cantonment, and a party of Indian scouts at Elm Creek, Walls returned to Fort Supply. With the Washita crossing under the control of troops from Reno, and the Old Caldwell Trail protected from Cantonment and Elm Springs, Lieutenant Walls concluded the established cattle trails through the Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation were properly guarded.⁶²

Captain John B. Babcock, meanwhile, had left Fort Supply on June 5 under orders to check the Old Caldwell Trail as it passed west of Cantonment. Before much could be accomplished, however, word arrived on June 8 that a company of the the Fifth Cavalry under Lieutenant Andrews would take station for the summer at Cantonment and he should return to Fort Supply. While camped at Deep Creek on the evening of the 9th,

⁶²Walls to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, June 13, 1886, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 6; Post Returns, Fort Supply, June, 1886.

telegraphic orders summoned Babcock for an inspection of the Grimes Cattle herd for theft of Indian ponies.⁶³ Babcock moved to Eagle Chief Pool, but reported the herd had already passed him.⁶⁴ Thereupon, Major Carpenter, at midnight on June 12, sent Lieutenant George W. Read and fifteen men of the Fifth Cavalry to Buffalo Creek Ranch to head off the Grimes' herd and seize all Indian ponies and government cattle found in it.⁶⁵

Lieutenant Read overtook the herd at 11 a.m., June 13 about six miles west of the Grimes' ranch on the Cimarron River. A careful inspection was made of fifty ponies with the herd but only three were of questionable origin. The cattle herd of 1,500 head was also inspected but no government brands were located. The three ponies cut out by the Indian scouts were brought to Fort Supply on June 19 where a

⁶³Post Adjutant, Fort Supply to John B. Babcock, June 5, 1886, Carpenter to Babcock, June 9, 1886, Carpenter to AAG, Dept. of Mo., June 10, 1886, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 36; Babcock to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, June 10, 1886, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 6.

⁶⁴Babcock to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, June 15, 1886, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 6; Post Returns, Fort Supply, June, 1886. Babcock returned to Fort Supply on June 15.

⁶⁵Post Adjutant, Fort Supply to G. W. Read, June 12, 1886, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 36; Post Returns, Fort Supply, June, 1886.

hearing determined the rightful owners.⁶⁶

Activity in the spring of 1886 indicated a renewal of old conflicts. Therefore, General Sheridan, upon the request of the Department of the Interior, directed the Division of the Missouri to station one company of cavalry at Cantonment on the North Fork of the Canadian, plus a detachment of Indian scouts at Elm Creek, for the summer. The object of such a move was to (1) arrest and expel from the reservation every unauthorized person, (2) protect the Indians against molestation, (3) patrol the northwestern frontier of the reservation, preventing the location of outsiders, (4) evict all unauthorized cattle grazing on the reservation, (5) supervise the northern half of the cattle trail, confining such herds to the trail, (6) and in general to promote peace and good order.⁶⁷

Lieutenant E. P. Andrews, Troop I, Fifth Cavalry, and several Indian scouts left Fort Supply June 7, 1886 for Cantonment in compliance with these orders. During June, Can-

⁶⁶Read to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, June 13, 18, 19, 1886, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 6; Carpenter to AAG, Dept. of Mo., June 17, 1886, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 36.

⁶⁷AAG, Division of the Missouri to Commanding Officer, Department of the Missouri, June 4, 1886 (COPY), Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 6.

tonment detachments patrolled the northern boundary of the Cheyenne-Arapaho Reservation east to Turkey Creek and west to a point directly north of Cantonment. Other parties scouted the southern boundary of the Cherokee Outlet and the Canadian River, but no patrol reported intruders, unauthorized cattle, or depredations. Three herds were escorted through the reservation, one Indian was arrested for horse stealing, and there were reports of cattle killed on the Dickey lease in the Outlet. Andrews reported in mid August "Everything has been quiet since the Troops have been here, and the Indians and cattlemen seem satisfied." The detached troops were released from service on September 15 and returned to Fort Supply.⁶⁸

Fort Supply was technically relieved of regular monthly scouts while Lieutenant Andrews operated at Cantonment, but on some occasions an extra patrol was necessary. In one case Lieutenant William Black and fifteen mounted men of the Twenty-fourth Infantry scoured the northwest portion of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation south of Fort Supply in June and July, 1886. No intruders were found within forty miles, nor was

⁶⁸Andrews to AAG, Dept. of Mo., August 13, 1886 (COPY), AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Supply, August 13, 1886, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 6; Z. R. Bliss to Andrews, September 15, 1886, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 36.

there evidence of drift cattle from either Texas or the Cherokee Outlet.⁶⁹

Toward the end of July bands of Indians passed between Fort Reno, Cantonment and Fort Supply, killing several steers pasturing on the Cherokee Outlet. Officers at Fort Supply were ordered to patrol the southern Cherokee Outlet in order to prevent a recurrence of the alleged depredations, and any Indians found in the Outlet were to be arrested and confined.⁷⁰ Lieutenant Black left Fort Supply August 6 with nineteen men and marched down the Canadian to Persimmon Creek, sending patrols into the sandhills and beyond.

Lieutenant Andrews at Cantonment was also informed of the situation and he formed a regular patrol of the Cherokee Outlet near the Canadian River.⁷¹ No depredations were observed by Lieutenants Black or Andrews, but Day Brothers' Turkey Track Ranch riders insisted they had lost 100 head of beef to the Indians on their range in the past six months. The Dickey

⁶⁹William Black to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, July 9, 1886, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 6.

⁷⁰AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Supply, July 28, 1886, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 6.

⁷¹Post Adjutant, Fort Supply to Andrews, August 6, 1886, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 36.

Brothers and J. V. Andrews complained of similar losses.⁷²

Under the circumstances the best that could be done was to restrict Indian travel through the Cherokee Outlet by use of passes and to continue the patrols.

A combination of many factors, including the removal of herds from the Cheyenne-Arapaho Reservation, the severe winters and dry summers, overstocked ranges, and the invasion of portions of the cattle domain by homesteaders caused a decline in the range cattle industry.⁷³ The depression began in 1886 and was only one of several influences to link Fort Supply more closely with ranching in western Indian country.

The Old Caldwell Trail carried the greatest cattle traffic in Indian Territory until 1883. In March of that year the Cherokee Strip Live Stock Association gave notice that fences closed that portion of the trail passing over leased lands. Some outfits continued to pick their way across the Outlet, but most herds turned to the Dodge City Trail. Barbed wire in Texas added more restrictions and eventually cattle were shipped by rail from all parts of Texas to Wichita Falls

⁷²Black to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, August 14, 1886, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 6.

⁷³E. E. Dale, The Range Cattle Industry (Norman, 1960), 158.

where the drive began.⁷⁴

A meeting of cowmen from the associations in southern and northern Texas, Kansas and Wyoming was held in Dallas during May, 1885 and several recommendations were made for solving the problem of trails, leases and fences. The only safe and practical trail out of southern Texas was the Dodge City Trail. It was suggested that herds cross Red River at Doan's Store and proceed north to the Washita. At this crossing herds heading for market would cut east to the Old Caldwell Trail, while stock for northern pastures would adhere to the Dodge City Trail. At a point west of Fort Supply herds branched west to the Palo Duro, thence westerly to Coldwater and Buffalo Springs, and finally across the Cimarron into Colorado.⁷⁵

Ranchers did not necessarily follow these guidelines but the use of the Washita as a separation point for herds from southern Texas did become a tradition. Many herds bound for market simply continued up the Dodge City Trail to the Santa Fe Railroad, and those who preferred the north country re-named the Dodge City Trail the Colorado Trail once it pass-

⁷⁴Cheyenne Transporter, May 28, 1883; Gard, Chisholm Trail, 256-258.

⁷⁵Kansas Cowboy, May 30, 1885.

ed the Washita. Other ranchers used the Jones-Plummer Trail which passed fifty miles west of Fort Supply on a direct line over the old Dodge-Elliott road.⁷⁶

With the cattle business increasingly dependent upon the Dodge City Trail, troops from Fort Supply correspondingly devoted more men to the proper conduct of whites and Indians on the trail. From mid May to early September the single most important duty of the post was service to the cattle trade. Herds that survived the elements of 1886 continued to move from Texas, but the reduced volume did not diminish the necessity of remaining on the established trails.

Troops from Fort Supply worked closely with the men at Forts Reno and Elliott in keeping trail herds on the straight and narrow. In 1886 officers at Fort Reno refused to allow herds to pass to the Old Caldwell Trail north of the Washita. The War Department, however, decided to allow those herds bound for market at Caldwell, Kansas to proceed, and Lieutenant Andrews' detachment at Cantonment received such instructions.⁷⁷

⁷⁶Tennant, "Texas Cattle Trails," 98; Bliss to AAG, Dept. of Mo., January 2, May 29, 1887, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 37; AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Supply, August 13, 1886, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 6.

⁷⁷Carpenter to Commanding Officer, Fort Reno, June 15, 1886, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 36.

In the spring of 1887 signs were posted at the Washita indicating the choice of trails for northbound herds.⁷⁸ To help cattlemen make the correct choice, keep them on the trails, and also prevent Indian intrusions, Fort Supply kept a small detachment at the Washita during the summer of 1887. Ordinarily a sergeant, ten privates and a half dozen or so Indian scouts held the post for a twenty-day period before being relieved.⁷⁹

In May, 1887 Indian authorities at Cantonment and Darlington informed Colonel Zenas R. Bliss at Fort Supply that Indians again were making threats in order to collect beeves from herds, and cattlemen had reverted to the practice of cutting across Indian farms. A ninety-man force was sought from Fort Supply to keep herds on the trail and prevent Indian interference but Colonel Bliss could spare only Lieutenant John Little with ten troopers and ten Indian scouts for a

⁷⁸Bliss to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 23, 1887, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 37. Herds could (1) continue on the Dodge City Trail to (a) Dodge City, or (b) branch off for Colorado, or (2) they could shift to the Old Caldwell Trail to the east for market at Caldwell, Kansas.

⁷⁹Bliss to Inspector General, Department of the Missouri, August 12, 1887, Office of the Inspector General, Letters Received; Post Returns, Fort Supply, May-September, 1887-1889.

twenty-day station at Cantonment.⁸⁰ Other detachments from Fort Supply relieved Lieutenant Little and later troops from Fort Elliott were stationed at the Washita to direct herds.⁸¹

Indian resentment remained and on June 24, Colonel Bliss directed the Cantonment detail to relocate the separation point of the Caldwell and Dodge bound cattle. The new division point at the Canadian crossing allowed herds to move along Deep Creek and intersect the North Canadian crossing with the Caldwell Trail below Sheridan's Roost. Amos Chapman directed the Cantonment detail in laying out the new route appropriately called the Deep Creek Trail.⁸² Colonel Bliss described the changed system to his superior as follows:⁸³

The main Dodge City trail crosses the Washita and South Canadian near Deep Creek. The Colorado branch of the Dodge City Trail separates and goes to the west of Supply. The Caldwell Trail goes along Deep Creek and crosses North Fork of Canadian near mouth of Deep Creek and thence down North Fork to Sheridan's Roost where it comes into the old trail.

⁸⁰Bliss to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 21, 1887, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 37.

⁸¹Post Returns, Fort Supply, May-September, 1887; Post Adjutant, Fort Supply to W. E. Hawkins, June 20, 1887, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 37.

⁸²Post Adjutant, Fort Supply to Hawkins, June 24, 1887, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 37.

⁸³Bliss to AAG, Dept. of Mo., July 17, 1887, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 37.

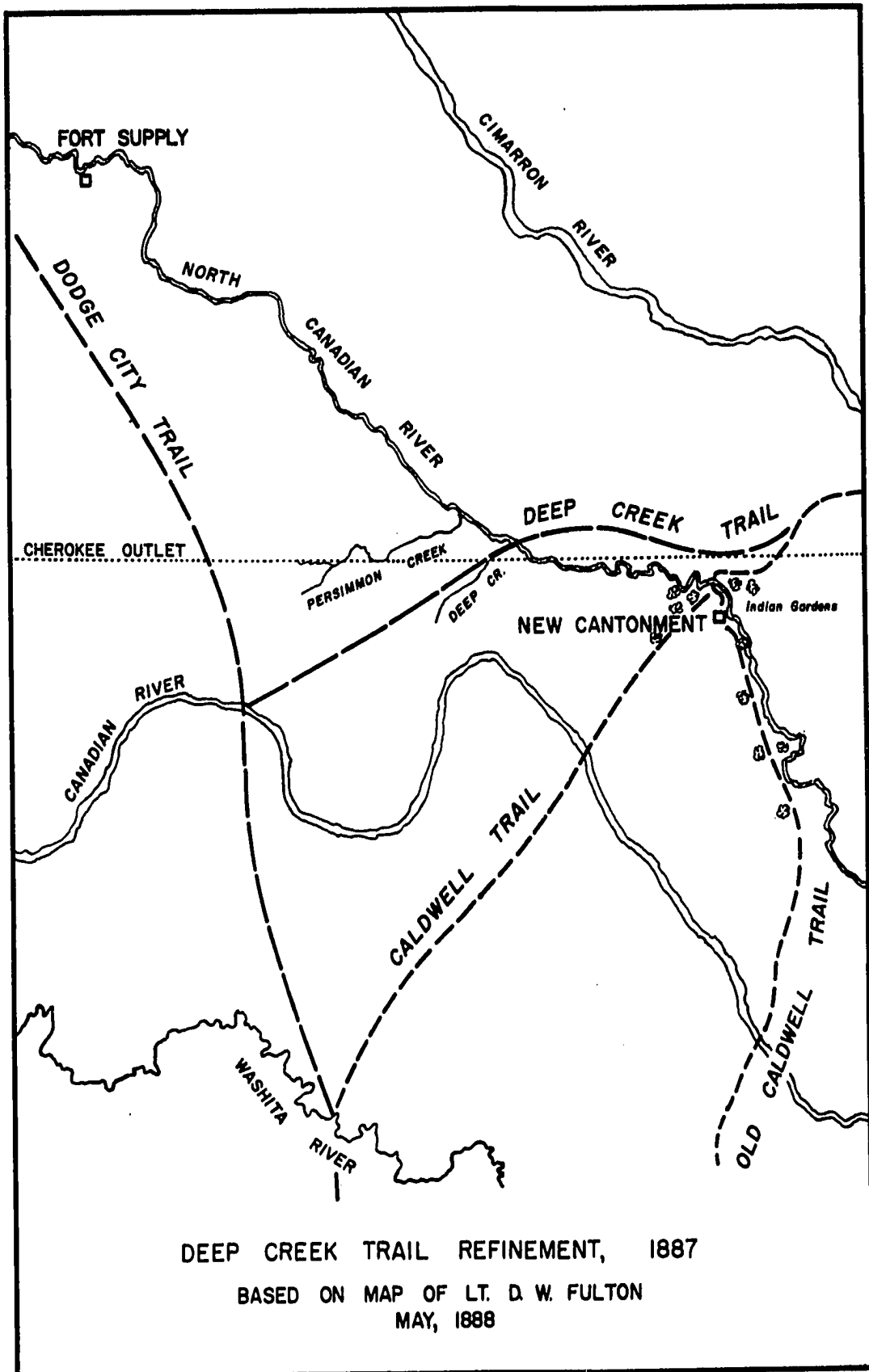
Lieutenant Little was immediately sent to the Washita to direct oncoming herds north to the Canadian to bypass a heavy concentration of Cheyenne farms. The detail from Fort Elliott was withdrawn because the men were as unfamiliar with the new route as were the drovers, and for the remainder of the season Fort Supply furnished escorts to trail herds from the Washita to the Canadian. Other Fort Supply detachments continued the escort at the Deep Creek Trail, and the service extended sometimes to the Cimarron.⁸⁴

Deep Creek Trail proved to be a valuable link in the Indian Territory cattle trail network, and the 1887 season was peaceful. Cattlemen came to favor the practice of escorts for they saved annoyance and loss as they passed through the Indian lands. Some cattle companies made a practice of writing ahead for escorts.⁸⁵

The 1888 cattle drive was expected to operate on the plan of the preceding year. Fort Elliott was ordered to station a detachment of cavalry at the Washita and escort all herds brought north by troops from Fort Sill to the Canadian

⁸⁴Bliss to Commanding Officer, Fort Elliott, July 1, 15, 1887, Bliss to AAG, Dept. of Mo., August 30, 1887, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 37.

⁸⁵C. Guaro, Estado Land and Cattle Company to Bliss, March 18, 1888, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 7.



where the Fort Supply jurisdiction began. Herds would be placed on the Dodge City Trail, or sent east on the Deep Creek Trail cut-off to the Old Caldwell Trail. In this manner Cheyenne herds and farms were avoided and there was no trouble between Indians and drovers.⁸⁶

On April 12, 1888 Sergeant John O'Toole and a detachment of the Fifth Cavalry from Fort Supply were directed to station themselves at the Canadian and escort herds to the North Canadian via the Deep Creek Trail.⁸⁷ A week later it was reported that a fence had been built during the winter across the Deep Creek Trail where it crossed the Cherokee Outlet lease of William Lazarus.⁸⁸ Amos Chapman investigated and substantiated the report. Temporarily the Deep Creek Trail was closed.⁸⁹

⁸⁶Bliss to AAG, Dept. of Mo., April 4, 1888, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 38.

⁸⁷Post Returns, Fort Supply, April, 1888.

⁸⁸William Lazarus of Sherman, Texas leased his range in the Outlet from the Cherokee Nation and others had no authority to trespass on his property. Post Adjutant, Fort Supply to John O'Toole, April 20, 1888, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 38.

⁸⁹Bliss to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 1, 1888, Bliss to David W. Fulton, May 1, 1888, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 38; Bliss to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 13, 1888, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 39; AAG, Dept. of the Missouri to Commanding Officer, Fort Elliott, May 2, 1888, Department of the Missouri, Letters Sent, Vol. 129.

For the time being three herds, numbering 7,300 head, were allowed to separate for Dodge City or Caldwell at Dead Man Creek, ten miles north of the Washita, but still below the Canadian. Lieutenant David W. Fulton gathered the detachment at the Canadian crossing on May 4 and moved to Dead Man Creek where they divided to escort these herds. One party remained to signal oncoming herds.⁹⁰

Under emergency circumstances that portion of the Old Caldwell Trail between Dead Man Creek and the North Canadian was reinstated and Lieutenant Fulton remained there until he was relieved on May 20. The Cheyennes did not approve of this new maneuver by the military for once again Texas herds gathered in their stock or trampled their farms. There were only a few instances of threatened trouble until several influential Cheyennes near Cantonment became inclined to resent the change in trail driving, and another solution was clearly needed.⁹¹

⁹⁰Ibid.; Fulton to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, May 26, 1888, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 7; Bliss to Fulton, May 3, 1888, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 38.

⁹¹Ibid.; Fulton to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, May 3, 8, 11, 12, 13, 15, 1888, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 7; Bliss to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 12, 13, 1888, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 39. In an effort to lift the complications created by the closing of the Deep Creek Trail the agency informally suggested a new trail to run north and east

On May 15, Lieutenant Lester W. Cornish and a detail of the Fifth Cavalry increased the number of men on trail duty to thirty-five.⁹² Before relieving Lieutenant Fulton, however, Cornish was under post orders to carefully investigate the geographic problems involved in conducting trail herds.⁹³

Lieutenant Cornish first studied the Deep Creek Trail as it passed through the Lazarus pasture and then inquired of a trail that passed on the outside of the fence. Apparently it was possible to lay a trail along the south side of the Lazarus fence, but in so doing not one of the three North Canadian entrances to the Old Caldwell Trail was feasible. Cornish's advisement was that the Deep Creek Trail, even though it passed twenty-six of the thirty miles from the Canadian to the North Canadian through the Lazarus lands, was the best route for the cattle traffic to Caldwell.⁹⁴

of Cantonment on the lands of the Arapahoes under the supposition they were more peaceful than the Cheyennes and would not complain if they understood the trail was laid out by the agent and the military authorities. Bliss to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 13, 1888, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 39.

⁹²Bliss to Fulton, May 15, 1888, Bliss to Lester W. Cornish, May 15, 1888, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 39.

⁹³Post Adjutant, Fort Supply to Cornish, May 15, 1888, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 39.

⁹⁴Lieutenant Cornish further recommended that the Deep

Upon receipt of this information, Colonel Bliss proposed to the Adjutant General of the Department of the Missouri the Deep Creek Trail be re-opened through the Lazarus lease, and that permission should be sought from the Department of the Interior or the Department of War.⁹⁵ In the interest of justice to the Indians Colonel Bliss asked for immediate action.

Before word on the Bliss proposal was issued the Twenty-fourth Infantry, stationed at Fort Supply since December, 1880, was transferred to New Mexico Territory, and the Thirteenth Infantry replaced them. The combined garrison of the Thirteenth Infantry and the Fifth Cavalry, at Fort Supply since July, 1885, numbered about 300 men and officers during the rest of the summer.⁹⁶

Creek Trail, once through the Lazarus pasture, keep to the mouth of Deep Creek, turn north to the Cimarron and there rejoin the Old Caldwell Trail. This was a small refinement of the Deep Creek Trail of 1887 which rejoined the Old Caldwell Trail near the North Canadian. The suggestion was not approved. Cornish to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, May 24, 1888, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 7.

⁹⁵Bliss to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 28, 1888, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 39.

⁹⁶Headquarters, Field Staff, Band and Companies B, H and D of the Thirteenth Infantry left Fort Wingate, New Mexico Territory at 5 p.m., June 1, 1888 and marched three miles to the railroad which transported them 1,079 miles to Woodward. A march of 15-3/4 miles brought the regiment to Fort Supply June 4, 1888. Post Returns, Fort Supply, June, 1888.

On June 23, 1888 the Department of the Missouri, with the consent of the Interior Department, directed the Indian Inspector at Ponca Agency to proceed along Deep Creek Trail and open it for the passage of cattle. Faced with higher authority than his Cherokee lease, Lazarus stood aside and the trail that had brought peace to the ranchers and Indians in 1887 was opened again.⁹⁷

Deep Creek Trail remained in use for several years. Forts Elliott and Sill assumed responsibility in 1888 for conducting herds to Deep Creek where Fort Supply detachments took over, and there were only a few unpleasant experiences.⁹⁸ The abandonment of Fort Elliott in 1890 caused Fort Supply to assume a greater portion of the cattle escort details.⁹⁹ This continued until the Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation lands were opened in 1892. After April 23, 1892 Fort Sill troops accompanied all herds on established trails through

⁹⁷AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Supply, June 23, 1888, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 7.

⁹⁸AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Supply, May 14, 1889, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 8; William Bryant to AAG, Dept. of Mo., April 23, 29, May 3, 1889, Post Adjutant, Fort Supply to L. P. Vestal, June 7, 1889, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 39; AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Reno, April 23, 29, Department of the Missouri, Letters Sent, Vol. 131.

⁹⁹Post Returns, Fort Supply, April-September, 1890.

the former Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation and Fort Supply details then escorted the herds through the Cherokee Outlet.¹⁰⁰

The decade of the 1880's also saw several new trails link Fort Supply in a vast transportation and communication network on the frontier. The north-south road to Dodge City, the Dodge-Supply road, and the road from Fort Supply southwest to Fort Elliott both remained well-traveled and in good repair. In the spring and summer of 1885 Fort Supply troops laid a new road northwest to New Kiowa, Kansas and the Southern Kansas Railroad.¹⁰¹ Because Fort Supply stationed troopers at Cantonment in the spring and summer of 1886 the seventy-mile southeastern Cantonment-Supply road was reopened. Telegraphic communication by 1887 included connection with Dodge City, Fort Elliott, Cantonment, Fort Reno and Fort Sill. The arrival of the Southern Kansas Railroad at New Kiowa, in 1886 brought freight and mail over the new

¹⁰⁰AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Sill, April 23, 1892 (COPY), Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 9; Post Returns, Fort Supply, July-September, 1891.

¹⁰¹R. G. Hill to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, April 13, 1885, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 5; Chief Quartermaster, Department of the Missouri to AAG, Dept. of Mo., April 17, 1885 (COPY), Black to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, May 26, 1886, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 6; Potter to AAG, Dept. of Mo., July 31, August 18, 1885, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 34; AAG, Dept. of the Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Supply, June 21, 1886, Department of the Missouri, Letters Sent, Vol. 125.

road, about twenty miles closer than at Dodge City, and in June, 1887 the same rails reached Woodward, about sixteen miles south of the post.¹⁰² Ashland, Kansas, population about 1,000 in 1887, fifty miles north on the Dodge-Supply road, now served as the closest settlement to Fort Supply.

At the close of the decade Fort Supply lent a hand in opening the Oklahoma Lands. Troops from Forts Sill and Reno had patrolled these lands for many months, but as the time for the April 22, 1889 opening neared, fears were entertained for the peace of the country, and additional troops were gathered. Fort Elliott and Fort Supply each furnished several companies of the Thirteenth Infantry, while Forts Reno, Sill and Leavenworth offered all available cavalry troops. Companies B and H Thirteenth Infantry, aggregate of eighty-two men and officers, left Fort Supply April 17, 1889 and helped supervise the land run into the Unassigned Lands from their stations in Guthrie and Kingfisher.¹⁰³ Other detachments from Fort Supply marched the established highways, military roads and cattle trails aiding the homeseekers as

¹⁰²Bliss to AAG, Dept. of Mo., January 2, 1887, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 37.

¹⁰³House Exec. Doc. No. 1, 51 Cong., 1 Sess., 163-164; Post Returns, Fort Supply, April, 1889.

they moved through the Cherokee Outlet to the northern border of the Oklahoma Lands.¹⁰⁴ After the passage of these emigrants Fort Supply detachments ejected all intruders as far east as the Reno-Caldwell road. East of that road Fort Reno troops cleared the Outlet.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Supply, April 13, 1889, Department of the Missouri, Letters Sent, Vol. 131.

¹⁰⁵AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Reno, May 13, 1889, Department of the Missouri, Letters Sent, Vol. 131; AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Supply, May 13, 1889, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 8; Post Returns, Fort Supply, May, 1889.

CHAPTER IX

CATTLE, THE OUTLET AND LEASES, 1880-1892

Cattlemen of the 1880's were as much interested in grazing rights in the Cherokee Outlet as they were in the Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation. Kansas ranchmen succeeded in using the Outlet upon payment of a small head tax to Cherokee government agents.

In 1828 the Cherokee Indians left their lands in Arkansas for a new grant of 7,000,000 acres in northeastern Indian Territory, and an Outlet one degree in width extending west from their reservation as far as the western boundary of the United States, at that time the 100th meridian. The unfortunate Cherokee alliance with the Confederate States of America in 1861 caused the Federal government to dictate a new treaty with the Cherokees. The Treaty of Washington in 1866 allowed the Cherokee Nation to retain possession of the Outlet, but only until other tribes, designated by the government, had moved onto this western reserve. Several tribes,

including Osages, Kaws, Poncas, Otoes and Tonkawas settled in the eastern portion of the Cherokee Outlet, but the western portion remained unused. Cattlemen from Kansas found this area a perfect place to graze their herds. Drovers heading north on the Old Caldwell Trail often stopped for months to fatten their beeves on Cherokee pastures, and by 1880 considerable numbers of cattle used the Outlet.¹

At first the Cherokees were unconcerned with this use of the Outlet, but about 1879 they demanded payment. Tribute was ordinarily paid individual Cherokees who came to the Outlet and took up ranges under assumed headrights.² Cattlemen using the Outlet met at Caldwell, Kansas in the spring of 1880 to discuss this tax, and other problems of common grazing. A loose organization was formed for mutual protection, to plan round-ups, and to settle disputes. That same year the Cherokee Council levied a forty cent head tax on all cattle in the Outlet and collected nearly \$8,000.³

The position of the Department of the Interior was not clear on the tax system. It was admitted the Cherokees had

¹E. E. Dale, "The Cherokee Strip Live Stock Association," Chronicles of Oklahoma, V (March, 1927), 58-62.

²George Rainey, The Cherokee Strip (Guthrie, 1933), 163.

³Dale, "Cherokee Strip Live Stock Association," 62.

possession of the Outlet and they sometimes gave permission to graze, but it was not known if they themselves could settle in the Outlet.⁴ When Cherokees began holding range in the Outlet and privately leasing it in contradiction to permits held by cattlemen for the tax paid the Cherokee Treasury, the matter was brought to the attention of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Under a ruling of the Attorney General, the Cherokee Nation was denied the right to settle its citizens in the Outlet. The Commissioner of Indian Affairs then asked the War Department to send troops and remove all improvements and fences from the Outlet.⁵ Protests from ranchmen and the disinclination of the Secretary of War required the Secretary of the Interior to rescind his removal order while the cattlemen attempted to make an agreement with the Cherokees for the occupation of the Outlet.⁶

Cattlemen, in the meantime, held another meeting at Caldwell in March, 1882 and again in 1883. At the latter conference the Cherokee Strip Live Stock Association was incorporated under the laws of Kansas. E. E. Dale describes this

⁴Price to J. W. Strong, October 11, 1881, Sen. Exec. Doc. No. 54, 48 Cong., 1 Sess., 129.

⁵Price to J. Q. Tufts, December 30, 1882, Ibid., 131.

⁶Dale, "Cherokee Strip Live Stock Association," 66.

peculiar organization:⁷

It was not a corporation in the ordinary sense of the term, since it had no capital stock, and, in consequence, no stockholders. It was an association with a membership composed of individuals, partnerships, and corporations, many of the last named with a heavy capitalization with numerous stockholders. Operating in a region without law or courts, it had little authority for its acts except the general consent of its members and yet for seven years or more this great association, with no property except such as it obtained from assessments of its members was one of the most powerful factors in the history of the development of Indian Territory.

The ultimate objective of the association was accomplished in May, 1883 when the Cherokee council passed a bill giving lease of the entire Outlet to the Cherokee Strip Live Stock Association for a five-year term in consideration of an annual payment of \$100,000. The lease was signed in July and went into effect October 1, 1883. Outlet lands were surveyed, space left for trails and quarantine lands, and about 100 individuals and firms divided the remaining 5,000,000 acres, of grazing land.⁸

Fort Supply troops seldom patrolled the leased portions of the Cherokee Outlet until 1886, feeling the Cherokee police or the lessees themselves were responsible. In 1886 post jurisdiction was expanded to include protection of the Cher-

⁷Ibid., 68.

⁸Ibid., 68-69.

okee Outlet west of a line from Cantonment to Kiowa, Kansas. In cooperation with Fort Reno and a detachment at Chilocco Camp, Fort Supply troops were under orders to remove persons from the Outlet who did not have authority from the association.⁹ The Secretary of the Association, the Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation, and the agent for the Cherokees laid their claim for military removal of non-association persons on article twenty-seven of the 1866 treaty, whereby the United States guaranteed the protection of Cherokee property from trespass and, upon the recommendation of the Cherokee agent, unlawful persons would be removed.¹⁰

Timber cutters in the Outlet were considered in illegal trespass and details from Fort Supply scouted that portion of the Outlet under post jurisdiction, with particular emphasis on the cedar canyons near the Cimarron. Citizens of Kansas usually moved into the wooded section of the Outlet over the Kiowa, Kansas road, or they used the Cimarron crossing below the Salt Plains. One scout of the Outlet in late July, 1886

⁹AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Supply, January 28, 1886, Department of the Missouri, Letters Sent, Vol. 125; Robert L. Owen to Commanding Officer, Fort Supply, October 23, 1886, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 6.

¹⁰Owen to Bliss, May 24, 1887, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 6; Kappler, Indian Affairs, II, 942.

stopped twenty-one Kansans, ten with cedar logs in their wagons. Frequent patrols of the Outlet were from that time ordered by the Department of the Missouri.¹¹

Constant patrols of the Cimarron country in 1886 and 1887 indicated the timber thieves were closely connected with the Southern Kansas Railroad working its way from Kiowa to Woodward, Indian Territory. Freighters hauling supplies to the railroad crews in Indian Territory usually returned to Kansas with cedar logs rather than empty wagons. In February, 1887 it was estimated an entire company of cavalry would be needed to curb this traffic, as the railroad was still seventy-five miles distant from the post.¹²

Several thieves were arrested in March, 1887, relieved of their possessions and escorted to Kansas on the Dodge-Supply road. Only after the railroad announced that employees who cut Indian Territory timber and delivered it to Kansas would

¹¹Bliss to AAG, Dept. of Mo., August 7, 1886, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 36; Read to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, August 5, 1886, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 6; AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Supply, August 12, 1886, Department of the Missouri, Letters Sent, Vol. 125.

¹²Bliss to AAG, Dept. of Mo., February 25, 1887, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 37; AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Supply, March 1, 1887, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 6.

be discharged, did this cease.¹³ Small scale, individual cutting continued for some years, and after the railroad was completed several lumbermen used boxcars to transport the stolen timber.¹⁴

The ejection of timber cutters as well as hunters in the Outlet was of questionable legality. The Department of the Interior was not clear on its policy regarding the Cherokee Outlet in 1887, and as a result the War Department was not consistent in its actions regarding trespassers. A self-defeating system of arrests, confiscations and acquittals developed.

The practice at Fort Supply regarding intruders in the Outlet had been merely to arrest them, take their lumber or game, and release them outside Indian Territory. When timber violations increased in late 1886 Colonel Zenas R. Bliss asked for a clarification of law regarding the ejections. According to Department of the Missouri officials, military force could be employed in apprehending intruders in Indian Territory when

¹³Post Returns, Fort Supply, February, March, 1887; Bliss to AAG, Dept. of Mo., March 5, 1887, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 37.

¹⁴Montgomery Bryant to United States District Attorney, March 6, 1890, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 39.

in violation of law, and they should be directed to the nearest civil authority.¹⁵ Fort Supply officers thereupon began to send captives to the United States Commissioner at Ashland, Kansas. Still, there was no specific prohibition against cutting timber, as there was, for example, against manufacturing liquor, and hunters could be arrested only when found with game in their possession.¹⁶

At Ashland hunters and timber cutters were usually freed for lack of evidence on the plea there was no clear law forbidding trespass on the Indian lands. The vagueness of statutes caused the United States Commissioner to agree with the defendants that they were not "foreigners" to Indian Territory any more than employees of ranches on leased property, travelers, or one of the hundreds of railroad employees daily coming and going in the Outlet. Timber thieves also protested the fence at the Kansas line was not accurate and therefore a man arrested inside the Outlet fence might still be within Kansas.¹⁷

¹⁵AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Supply, December 2, 1886, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 6.

¹⁶Bliss to AAG, Dept. of Mo., January 17, 1887, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 37.

¹⁷Bliss to AAG, Dept. of Mo., January 19, 1887, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 37.

No official reaction to these events was recorded at Fort Supply and the post continued to scour the countryside in pursuit of hunters and timber cutters, arresting them when found and turning them over to the Commissioner, who ordinarily acquitted them. Hunters, too, shipped their evidence out of Indian Territory on the railroad, preferring to return to Kansas disguised as travelers.¹⁸ After the closing of the Outlet to ranchers, hunters continued to poach in Indian Territory, knowing the United States District Attorney at Topeka disapproved bringing proceedings to court as it cost the government more than could be obtained from the defendants.¹⁹

In 1888 a new lease was negotiated by the Cherokee Strip Live Stock Association with the Cherokee Nation for another five year period, but this time for \$200,000 a year. On the surface it appeared the association had a bright future, but in Washington measures were taking place that would scuttle the organization in two years.

¹⁸Bryant to AAG, Dept. of Mo., November 3, December 2, 1889, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 39.

¹⁹H. Soper to Bryant, December 6, 1889, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 7; Post Adjutant, Fort Supply to Deputy U. S. Marshal, Woodward, I.T., October 21, 1892, Fort Supply, Letter Sent, Vol. 41; Bryant to AAG, Dept. of Mo., December 20, 1890, Bryant to Horace Speed, February 8, 1892, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 40.

Congress, in March, 1889 created a commission of three persons to negotiate with the Cherokees and other tribes relative to the cession of the Outlet. The act creating the Cherokee Commission offered \$1.25 an acre for the Outlet, and if accepted, the area would be opened to settlement just as the Oklahoma Lands would be the following month.²⁰ The commission understandably made little progress for as far back as 1886 a syndicate of cattlemen offered \$3 an acre for the same land.²¹ The determination of the government, however, would not be denied. Secretary of the Interior John W. Noble believed the Cherokee title to the lands they were now leasing was void, and the offer of \$1.25 an acre was munificent. He recommended the President sweep the Outlet of these leases and the government should not hesitate to take the lands if the American people should require it.²²

The policy of Secretary Noble was clear. The Cherokees refused to sell the Outlet lands at his price and in consequence they would be deprived of any benefit of it by leasing until they approved the offer. At the same time the depart-

²⁰Dale, "Cherokee Strip Live Stock Association," 72.

²¹Ibid., 71.

²²John W. Noble to Lucius Fairchild, October 26, 1889, House Report 3768, 51 Cong., 2 Sess., 9-16.

ment threatened to take the lands by force.²³

Squeezed between the stubborn Cherokees and the relentless Federal government the Cherokee Strip Live Stock Association was the ultimate loser. The Department of the Interior, yielding to the demands of homeseekers, encouraged by the Run of '89, determined to open the Outlet to settlement. President Benjamin Harrison, advised by the Attorney General that the lease of the Outlet was without legal force, issued a Presidential Proclamation on February 17, 1890 forbidding all grazing in the Outlet and ordering all cattle removed by October 1, 1890.²⁴

Dale believes the proclamation was unjust to the cattlemen: "When we consider that these lands were not opened to settlement until September, 1893, or almost three years later, it must be obvious that the purpose here was not to prepare the lands for settlement but that this was a political move directed against the Cherokees to force a cession of the lands."²⁵

Fair or not the Presidential Proclamation was given to the Secretary of War and troops were ordered to clear the

²³Dale, Range Cattle Industry, 143.

²⁴Kappler, Indian Affairs, II, 946.

²⁵Dale, Range Cattle Industry, 144.

Cherokee Outlet. The first step was to stop herds bound for the Outlet and detachments of Indian scouts from Fort Supply guarded the Dodge City Trail, the Deep Creek Trail and all routes leading to the Outlet from the Texas Panhandle. Troops from Fort Elliott cooperated. Fort Sill closed the Dodge City Trail at Doan's Store and Fort Reno troops patrolled the Old Caldwell Trail and all its approaches from Texas.²⁶

The public misunderstood the situation and settlers began to move toward the Outlet expecting another land opening. President Harrison issued another Proclamation on March 15, 1890 stating the Cherokee Outlet was not open for settlement and entrance upon the lands was unlawful.²⁷ Troops from Forts Supply and Reno were therefore ordered to take the field and remove all herds still in the Outlet, plus intruding settlers. Two separate troops of the Fifth Cavalry left Fort Supply, March 17, under Captain George H. Paddock and Lieutenant E. P. Andrews to operate west of Medicine Lodge Creek, north and south through the Outlet. Fort Reno similarly sent

²⁶Indian scouts were used to patrol the lines of the Outlet but only troops could turn back herds. AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Supply, February 28, 1890, Department of the Missouri, Letters Sent, Vol. 133; House Exec. Doc. No. 1, 51 Cong., 2 Sess., 196-197.

²⁷Presidential Proclamation, March 15, 1890 (COPY), Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 8.

two troops of cavalry to clear the Outlet east of Medicine Lodge Creek.²⁸

In the suddenness of the President's Proclamation of mid February, several herds were caught on cattle trails. The understanding by Department of the Missouri officials was that the order did not forbid driving cattle through the Cherokee Outlet, so these herds, and other following, were allowed to pass into Kansas. Fort Sill troops accompanied the herds to the Washita crossing of the Dodge City Trail where they were met by a detachment from Fort Supply who accompanied the outfits to the northern limit of the Outlet.²⁹

Ten days after the return of Captain Paddock's troop on April 8, Captain Jacob A. Augur took Troop A, Fifth Cavalry into the field as a replacement.³⁰ Little time was allotted to patrol for intruders or cattlemen as the escort of several trail herds required immediate attention. One non-commis-

²⁸Post Returns, Fort Supply, March, 1890; AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Supply, March 16, 1890, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 8.

²⁹AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Sill, March 13, 1890, AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Supply, March 13, 1890, Department of the Missouri, Letters Sent, Vol. 133; Memorandum "B," "Papers Relating to the Cattle Business," Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 9.

³⁰Post Returns, Fort Supply, April, 1890.

sioned officer and six privates were located on the Washita to receive herds from Fort Sill. Amos Chapman and his scouts were stationed at Trail Creek, and a third detachment camped near the Cimarron. All herds on the Old Caldwell Trail were kept moving and once into Kansas the last escort detail remained on the border one full day to see they did not return.³¹

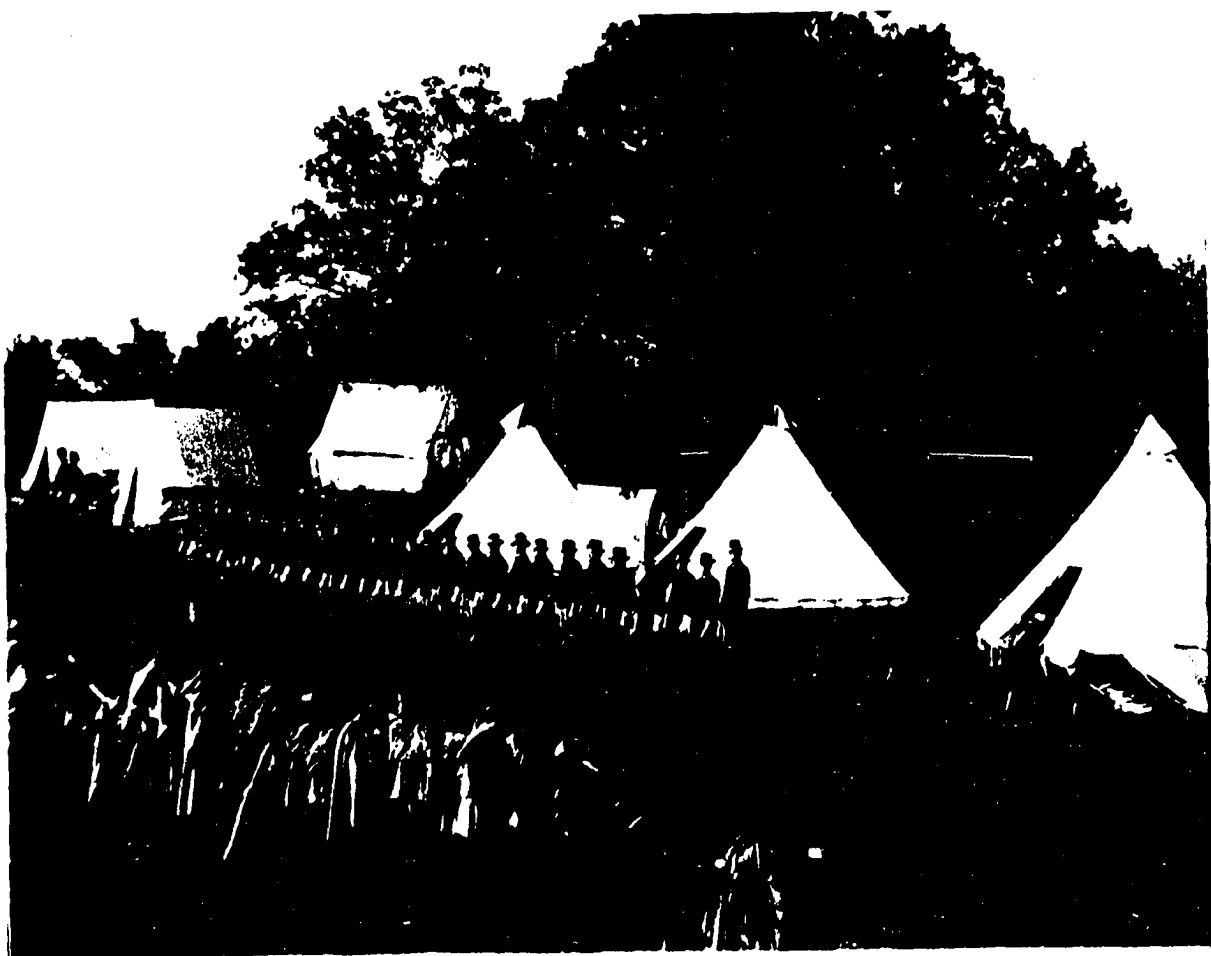
Providing escort details for herds to Kansas was a large order in itself, but Augur was further extended. Some outfits in the Outlet headed for Oklahoma City and others chose to use the Colorado Trail west of Supply, and in both cases Augur was ordered to furnish escorts.³² Captain Augur's troop returned to Fort Supply, May 31, leaving Lieutenant Andrews and Troop I, Fifth Cavalry in the field after May 22 to escort the beeves.³³

Ranchers in the Outlet secured an extension of the withdrawal date to December 1, 1890 but even then there was

³¹Augur to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, April 20, 30, 1890, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 8; Post Adjutant, Fort Supply to Augur, April 23, 1890, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 39.

³²Augur to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, April 30, May 5, 9, 15, 1890, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 8; Post Adjutant, Fort Supply to Augur, May 1, 15, 1890, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 39.

³³Post Returns, Fort Supply, May, June, 1890.



Cavalry inspection at Fort Supply in early 1890's.
Woodward County Collection, University of Oklahoma Library.

doubt about their complete removal.³⁴ Fort Supply and Fort Reno personnel were too busy escorting herds through the Outlet in the summer of 1890 to allow time for inspection of the ranches. As a result, complaints were directed to the Secretary of the Interior from various sources that trespassing cattle were not completely removed from the Outlet. J. M. Larison of Caldwell reported on May 18, 1891 that several thousand head of ejected cattle returned in 1890 to winter on the Outlet, and in the spring Texas herds, mostly owned by men who formerly rented the Outlet, returned in force. "I feel safe in saying," wrote Larison, "that there are more cattle immediately South, between here and Oklahoma than have been there at any time for two years, and more coming, . . .". The concern of the Kansas farmers and ranchers was that the marketable Texas and Territory cattle, being lower in cost because they paid no Kansas tax or Cherokee rent, was the main cause for hard times in Kansas.³⁵

Robert B. Ross, Treasurer of the Cherokee Nation, and L. B. Bell, President of the Cherokee Senate, were equally con-

³⁴Presidential Proclamation, September 19, 1890 (COPY), Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 9.

³⁵J. M. Larison to Secretary of Interior, May 18, 1890 (COPY), R. V. Belt to Secretary of Interior, June 4, 1891 (COPY), Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 9.

cerned. Unable to lease the lands by Presidential order, yet unwilling to sell to the government for some \$10,000,000 less than the cattle syndicate was willing to pay for the Outlet, the Cherokees saw ranchers using their lands free of any charge. Investigating the matter in person, Treasurer Ross estimated in early June, 1891 there were being grazed in the Outlet south of Arkansas City, Caldwell, Kiowa and Hunnewell, Kansas upwards of 50,000 head of cattle by intruders.³⁶

William Grimes, United States Marshal at Guthrie, Oklahoma Territory substantiated Ross and even suggested his figure was low. Apparently the cattlemen had not exhausted their bag of tricks. Leases were acquired for the Ponca Reserve, not included in the government's action against the Cherokees, and train after train unloaded thousands of beeves at Ponca Switch, the underlying intention being to allow the herds to drift into the Outlet.³⁷

Fort Supply troops scouted the Outlet for cattle in February, March, and April, 1891 but with no great success as most herds were on the far eastern side near the Ponca Re-

³⁶Robert B. Ross to Noble, June 15, 1891 (COPY), Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 9.

³⁷William Grimes to W. H. H. Miller, June 8, 1891 (COPY), Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 9.

serve.³⁸ In March orders were received to continue escorting herds through the Outlet on the 1890 agreement with Fort Sill.³⁹ Captain Augur and Troop A, Fifth Cavalry proceeded to take stations on the established trails, and Captain George Paddock with Company F, Fifth Cavalry, performed ejection duty in the Outlet in cooperation with Fort Reno.⁴⁰ A detachment of the Augur command remained for the summer at the Washita crossing, and the remaining troops moved herds south and southeast of Fort Supply. Captain Paddock pushed one herd of 2,000 cattle and several stray bunches of twenty to fifty head from west of Fort Supply into the Oklahoma Panhandle and then moved south to scout the Canadian country.⁴¹

Cattlemen were not easily removed from the Outlet and at one point Jacob Guthrie brought suit in United States Dis-

³⁸Post Returns, Fort Supply, February, 1891; Bryant to AAG, Dept. of Mo., July 26, 1891, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 40.

³⁹AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Supply, March 27, 1891, AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Sill, March 27, 1891 (COPY), Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 8.

⁴⁰Post Returns, Fort Supply, March-June, 1891; AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Reno, June 15, 1891 (COPY), Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 8.

⁴¹Paddock to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, July 13, 26, August 5, 1891, Augur to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, July 30, 1891, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 9; Bryant to AAG, Dept. of Mo., July 26, 1891, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 40.

trict Court for an injunction against Captain William P. Hall to restrain him from performing orders of the Secretary of War relative to ejecting cattle and people from the Cherokee Outlet. The injunction was denied in July, 1891 and Captain Hall proceeded out of Kingfisher, Oklahoma Territory to continue the removal.⁴²

The Cherokee Nation then brought suit against the Cherokee Strip Live Stock Association for full payment of the lease money, in an effort to compel the cattlemen to stand with them. Horace Speed, United States Attorney at Guthrie, advised the United States Attorney General that "If it is possible, I think the Government should order these suits discontinued as we do not want cattlemen to act in connection with the Cherokees at all, and do not want the Cherokees to obtain one cent of lease money from the Strip hereafter or have any hope that they can do so."⁴³

Speed further observed that since the quarantine laws of Kansas, Oklahoma Territory, the Osage Reservation and other tribes east of the Outlet would not permit the driving

⁴²Speed to United States Attorney General, July 7, 1891 (COPY), Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 9.

⁴³Ibid. Eventually the Cherokees lost their case against the ranchers in the courts of Kansas.

of cattle into these areas, only Texas remained. In this case, he suggested, cattlemen should be notified "that every steer that cannot be driven out legally and quietly will be killed."⁴⁴

More pressure to sell was put on the Cherokees when Acting Secretary of the Interior George Chandler asked the Secretary of War for help in removing Cherokee Indians and their property from the Outlet. Interior Department policy held that the Cherokees acquired only an easement to the Outlet and therefore occupation by any Cherokees of this land without the consent of the United States was a trespass. Only the intercession of President Harrison on behalf of the Cherokees with permanent settlements and farms in the Outlet stopped the Indians from being driven out.⁴⁵

By August, 1891 the Department of the Interior stepped up its campaign to completely clear the Cherokee Outlet of an estimated 150,000 head of cattle.⁴⁶ Captain Paddock was moved from his scout near the Canadian to Kiowa, Kansas, under

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵George Chandler to Secretary of War, August 4, 1891 (COPY), Benjamin Harrison to Secretary of Interior, August 12, 1891 (COPY), Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 9.

⁴⁶Chandler to Secretary of War, August 4, 1891 (COPY), Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 9.

orders to drive out several large herds reported to be there, or else see them shipped out by rail. Troops from Fort Reno were sent to aid in dispatching these herds.⁴⁷ Merely putting the cattle into Kansas was not enough, they were warned, for herds often had the habit of reappearing. If necessary the troops could wait for herds to be shipped to market before leaving.⁴⁸

Paddock worked his way west of Kiowa and found several large herds, totaling about 9,000 head not far from Supply. Intruding ranchmen were forced to push their stock into Kansas or ship them at Woodward. If cattlemen insisted upon going back to Texas they were not allowed to cut across the Outlet and into the Panhandle, but rather paid a penalty and followed the Dodge City Trail south to the Washita where Fort Sill troops would pick them up and escort them to the Red River.⁴⁹

⁴⁷In this renewed effort to evict illegal herds the commanding officer at Fort Reno was ordered to work closely with Fort Supply and "both posts /should/ energetically cooperate in removing all intruders from the Cherokee Outlet, regardless of their location with respect to the /Rock Island/ railway, or other dividing lines between the two posts." AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Reno, August 7, 1891 (COPY), Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 9.

⁴⁸Bryant to Paddock, August 5, 1891, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 40.

⁴⁹Post Adjutant, Fort Supply to Paddock, August 8,

Captain Augur was released from escort duty and moved to Pond Creek on August 7 where he sent scouts to the west, southwest and south. Two days later two troops of the Fifth Cavalry from Fort Reno met Augur at Enid, Indian Territory and the combined force policed the countryside. Three herds, totaling about 3,500 head were ordered to ship from Enid and another herd of 4,000 was observed heading for Kiowa, where it was expected to ship out. Two additional outfits, totaling about 7,000 head, were discovered and promptly directed toward Enid. In all nearly 15,000 head moved or were moving in the Pond Creek area by August 15, 1891.⁵⁰

An advance party from Augur scouted north toward Caldwell to report on cattle in that vicinity and a few days later the Fort Supply command detached from the Reno troops and continued to the Kansas line, intending to work west from Caldwell to Kiowa. About 1,500 head, mostly domestic cows of Kansas farmers, were hastened on their way and the advance

1891, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 40; Paddock to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, August 10, 11, 14, 1891, AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Supply, August 17, 1891, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 9; Post Returns, Fort Supply, August, 1891. The Fort Sill troops were not holding station at the Washita, but would be informed in advance of the herd by telegraph.

⁵⁰Augur to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, August 15, 1891, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 9.

party was sent to Kiowa.⁵¹ The company march to Kiowa found only one small herd of calves and the man in charge was given three days to remove. Another herd of 2,000 was ordered to commence shipping the next day. Camp was made five miles from Kiowa on August 25 and scouts were sent in several directions.⁵²

Near Kiowa several more herds were located during the end of August. All pleaded they were heading for Kansas but were temporarily detained by the quarantine laws. Augur found this excuse not to his liking and thought it to be a subterfuge of "through" cattle to pasture on the Outlet until ready to ship. After inspecting the cattle he ordered the Grimes and Ewing herds to the Kiowa stockyards, but the Wilson and Short Brothers herds were found to have sick animals, and were allowed to remain.⁵³

Captain Augur's judgment on these sick herds was secretly contested by the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Live Stock Agent, F. P. Morgan, in a letter of September 2, 1891. Morgan

⁵¹Augur to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, August 17, 18, 1891, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 9; Post Adjutant, Fort Supply to Augur, August 20, 1891, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 40.

⁵²Augur to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, August 25, 1891, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 9.

⁵³Augur to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, August 26, 29, 1891, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 9.

reported to Colonel Montgomery Bryant:⁵⁴

After making a thorough investigation of cattle at and near Kiowa on the Cherokee Strip, I find that there are two herds held on account of quarantine, claiming they are sick. Stock men in that vicinity are really laughing over the matter on the grounds above mentioned. Captain Augur is doing good work in getting cattle all out of the country as fast as possible, unless it is this exception. . . . The cattle mentioned belong to Abner Wilson, Young Short, and a man by the name of Goodly. I am perfectly satisfied that there is no sickness among these herds.

Augur checked the herds once more upon orders from Fort Supply, but held the two herds should not be moved because of fever. Just before pulling out of his camp on Medicine Lodge Creek, near Kiowa, on September 8, a third herd was allowed to temporarily remain in the Outlet because of sick animals. Captain Augur was otherwise satisfied all intruders were gone.⁵⁵

The struggle of cattlemen to remain inside the Outlet caused post commander Bryant to seek a clarification of quarantine regulations from the Secretary of Agriculture. The policy of the Department of Agriculture in regard the driving

⁵⁴F. P. Morgan to Bryant, September 2, 1891, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 9. Morgan concluded his letter saying, "I will kindly ask you to make this a strictly personal matter, as it would not do for the cattlemen to get hold of this, as it would injure our line, and I wish to give you all the information I can in order to help you out."

⁵⁵Augur to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, September 1, 5, 1891, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 9.

of cattle from south of the quarantine line to any point north was that:⁵⁶

Cattle from south the quarantine line can not be driven to any point north whether intended to be shipped by rail from said point for immediate slaughter or otherwise. The cattle south of the quarantine line may be shipped north for immediate slaughter provided they are loaded on cars within the infected area.

In essence, then, Fort Supply troops were not authorized when they ordered market cattle shipped from Caldwell or Kiowa because that was across the quarantine line. Rail stations at Woodward, Pond Creek or Enid, however, were acceptable. Right or not Captains Augur and Paddock cleared the Outlet from south, north, and west of Fort Supply, to the satisfaction of Colonel Bryant.⁵⁷

Captain Paddock remained in the field during August and split his Fifth Cavalry into three parties, one operating on the Washita, another on Persimmon Creek, and a third scouting between Fort Supply and the 100th meridian. Augur and Paddock returned to Fort Supply in mid September, 1891 and a final scout by a junior officer two weeks later assured

⁵⁶Instructions of Secretary of Agriculture, September 4, 1891, Memorandum "G", "Papers Relating to the Cattle Business," Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 9.

⁵⁷Bryant to Commanding Officer, Fort Reno, September 1, 1891, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 40.

Colonel Bryant all herds within his post jurisdiction had been removed.⁵⁸

Late in 1891 the Cherokee Nation gave in to the inevitable and sold the Outlet to the Federal government for slightly more than \$8,500,000, or about \$1.40 an acre. They could see the government was determined to open the Outlet to settlers.⁵⁹

Except for a month-long detached service in opening the Cheyenne and Arapaho lands in April, 1892,⁶⁰ the patrol of the Cherokee Outlet remained the major duty of Fort Supply troops. Captain Paddock and Troop F, Fifth Cavalry resumed their duty in the Outlet on May 19, 1892.⁶¹ Nearly 5,000 head of cattle belonging to Wilson, Stout and others, left on the Outlet by Augur in September, 1891 because of sick animals, had moved to Kiowa. Colonel Bryant reported on May

⁵⁸Post Adjutant, Fort Supply to Augur, September 25, 1891, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 40; E. B. Winans, Jr. to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, September 27, 1891, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 9; Post Returns, Fort Supply, September, 1891.

⁵⁹Kappler, Indian Affairs, I, 490.

⁶⁰Post Returns, Fort Supply, March, April, 1892; Augur to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, April 2, 3, 1892, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 9.

⁶¹Post Returns, Fort Supply, May, June, 1892; Bryant to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 8, 1892, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 40.

31, "Since these cattle were driven to the line, J. C. Guthrie has bought them. The purchase is probably fictitious, but, as the articles of agreement are duly executed, I am powerless to do anything more toward their removal from the Outlet, . . ." Paddock was ordered back to Fort Supply, arriving June 8.⁶²

Jacob Guthrie, a Cherokee by blood, had held land in the Cherokee Outlet for eight years and was grazing about 3,000 head of cattle. Although he had been evicted by Fort Supply troops more than once, and prior to that had brought suit for an injunction against Captain Hall in July, 1891, Guthrie was permitted to remain on the Outlet because President Harrison, in August, 1891, allowed Cherokees with permanent settlements to stay.⁶³ It was an open secret the cattlemen were being hard pressed by the Department of the Interior and willing to pay handsomely to keep their herds on the Outlet. Apparently Guthrie made agreements with the ranchers to hold their cattle as his property.⁶⁴

⁶²Bryant to AAG, Dept. of Mo., May 31, 1892, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 40.

⁶³Berlin B. Chapman, "The Enid 'Railroad War': An Archival Study," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XLIII (Summer, 1965), 132.

⁶⁴The Kansas quarantine law was applicable only from March 1 to December 1.

Kansas stock raisers still blamed the Outlet cattle for keeping beef prices low and Congressman Jerry Simpson charged the Department of the Interior and the War Department with conspiracy. On July 18, 1892 Simpson introduced a letter of Henry S. Landis, Medicine Lodge, Kansas before the United States House of Representatives. According to Landis, Guthrie arrived at Kiowa with letters of reference from persons in high government positions, including the Secretary of the Interior, and promised protection of herds in the Outlet until December 1, 1892. For his services Guthrie accepted payment of twenty-five cents per head cash, and notes for twenty-five cents per head payable on December 1, a total of near \$16,000.⁶⁵

While the troops under Captain Paddock were trying to get the cattle out this man Guthrie interfered so that Capt. Paddock telegraphed the Department about his, Guthrie's, claims of authority and his importance, and received a telegram in reply telling him, Capt. Paddock, that Guthrie had full authority and that he must recognize Guthrie's wishes. All the cattle on the Strip were transferred to this man Guthrie, and within an hour were transferred back to the actual owners. The one transfer to be used with the Department and the other for the protection of the owners in case Guthrie should be disposed to act unfairly.

⁶⁵Congressional Record, 52 Cong., 1 Sess., Vol. XXIII, 6341. Secretary of Interior Noble naturally refuted the charges and his argument is carried in Noble to S. B. Elkins, July 21, 1892 (COPY), Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 9.

Incensed by the adverse publicity, Secretary of the Interior Noble and Secretary of War Samuel B. Elkins waged an unyielding war on the cattlemen. Troops from Fort Reno were directed to prevent the invasion of the Outlet by cattlemen, and, if necessary, to call upon Fort Riley, Kansas for additional cavalry. Fort Supply sent Troops A and F, Fifty Cavalry under Captain Augur to the field in August, 1892.⁶⁶ Nearly 16,000 head of cattle were found on the Outlet close to Kiowa and cattlemen were presented with the option of shipping by August 31 or being sent to No Man's Land. In order to avoid conflict with the quarantine laws established by the Department of Agriculture, herds were moved only to the Kansas line and then pushed west.⁶⁷

Officials in the Department of the Missouri, anxious to clear the Outlet before Guthrie's so-called protection date of December 1, spurred on Augur. By September 4 all cattle near Kiowa had been shipped, put to pasture in Kansas, or were in motion for Texas. In addition, that portion of

⁶⁶AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Reno, July 29, 1892, Department of the Missouri, Letters Sent, Vol. 138; Post Returns, Fort Supply, August, 1892.

⁶⁷Augur to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, August 20, 27, 1892, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 9; Post Returns, Fort Supply, August, 1892; Bryant to AAG, Dept. of Mo., August 27, 1892, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 40.

the Outlet immediately south of Fort Supply, another troubled area, was rapidly being cleared of three herds at Woodward.⁶⁸ Augur returned to Fort Supply on September 14.

Colonel Bryant assured his superiors "that the portion of the Outlet assigned to this post for police has been thoroughly cleared of cattle," Yet, persistent reports of new invasions caused Captain Henry G. Cavanaugh and Company B, Thirteenth Infantry to take the field in mid October. Upon this confirmation of herds near the old Day Brothers Ranch, Captain Augur left post October 15. The Pond Creek and Alva, Indian Territory areas yielded several small herds, and the old offenders were brought to Fort Supply where they were then released. Others were warned that if caught again they too would be sent to Fort Supply and then forced to ship at Woodward. By November 16, 1892 the Fifth Cavalry at Fort Supply was able to report that no cattle were grazing on the Outlet within scouting distance of the post.⁶⁹

⁶⁸Augur to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, September 4, 1892, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 9; Bryant to AAG, Dept. of Mo., September 5, 1892, Post Adjutant, Fort Supply to Augur, September 4, 1892, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 40.

⁶⁹Post Returns, Fort Supply, October, November, 1892; Augur to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, November 1, 6, 1892, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 9; Francis Moore to AAG, Dept. of Mo., November 16, 1892, Fort Supply, Letters Sent,

Fort Supply troops tried diligently to rid the Cherokee Outlet of trespassers but with only varying degrees of success. Ranchmen did not respect the Presidential Proclamation and certain outfits continued to play hide and seek with Fort Supply patrols, especially in the Kiowa area. As late as November 10, 1892 Captain Augur and his command from Fort Supply pushed herds out of the Outlet. Still, a January, 1893 scout by Captain Paddock showed herds had returned.

Captain Paddock and forty enlisted men of Troop I, Fifth Cavalry left Fort Supply on January 6, proceeding in a northwesterly direction, carefully inspecting the country for cattle. None was found until they were west of the Cimarron, and between that stream and the Salt Fork of the Arkansas, three herds of native Kansas stock were discovered, and pushed into Kansas. Sixteen miles west of Kiowa a herd of 3,000 head was found scattered twenty-five miles along the creeks that flow into the Cimarron. Captain Paddock drove these steers until dark as a means of convincing the owners that if they attempted to evade the restricting orders, their cattle would have to suffer. Later the beeves were gathered and driven across the Outlet boundary by the owners. East of

Vol. 41. Captain Augur returned to Fort Supply on November 10.

Kiowa a smaller, mixed-brand herd ~~was~~ also put out of the country.⁷⁰

Leaving two detachments in this area to track and observe the herds, Captain Paddock and the remaining troops proceeded to a point near Alva, established a camp and scouted the country south and east as far as was usual by Fort Supply patrols. No cattle were found east, but one herd of 4,000 was found south of Alva. The cattle were moved by the owner on January 19 and crossed into Kansas pursued by troopers. Paddock felt this patrol had been attended with heavy loss to the owners, the animals already worn and in poor condition from continuous storms and cold weather. Having completed his duties by January 22 the command started for Fort Supply, reaching it January 26.⁷¹

⁷⁰Paddock to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, January 26, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10; Post Returns, Fort Supply, January, 1893.

⁷¹Ibid.

CHAPTER X

OPENING THE OUTLET AND CLOSING THE POST, 1893-1894

After a preliminary agreement to sell the Cherokee Outlet in December, 1891 the Cherokee National Council and the Cherokee Commission ran into difficulties. It was not until March 3, 1893 that the final sale was approved by the United States Congress. The agreement included the intent of the Federal government to open the Outlet for settlement within six months after approval by the Cherokee Nation.¹

Potential residents demanded an equal right to the land with cattlemen, and showed intentions of colonizing without permission. The Department of the Missouri placed Colonel James P. Wade, Fifth Cavalry, commanding Fort Reno, in charge of military measures to prevent unauthorized occupation of the

¹Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for The Year 1893, 33; Berlin B. Chapman, "Opening the Cherokee Outlet: An Archival Study," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XL (Summer, 1962), 158-163.

Outlet.² Captain Jacob A. Augur was temporarily detached from Fort Supply on March 4 and acted under orders from Colonel Wade until March 29, 1893.³

In May, Secretary of the Interior Hoke Smith was again deluged with reports of cattle grazing on the Outlet. That portion of the Outlet below Kiowa, Kansas, headquarters for never-say-die cattlemen, was supposed to be supporting 10,000 head.⁴ The Secretary of War was charged anew with the removal process.

Ever since the accusations of the Landis Letter in July, 1892 the General Land Office and the Department of the Interior suspected an alliance of the military and ranchers. When great herds were reported in the Outlet, just as the Department was preparing it for opening, General Land Office Inspector George W. Andrews filed a letter of protest.⁵

²AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Reno, February 24, 1893 (COPY), Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10; AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Reno, March 1, 1893, AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Supply, March 1, 1893, Department of the Missouri, Letters Sent, Vol. 139.

³Post Returns, Fort Supply, March, 1893

⁴Silas W. Lamoreaux to Secretary of Interior, May 26, 1893 (COPY), Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10.

⁵George W. Andrews to Commissioner of the General Land Office, May 25, 1893 (COPY), E. A. Bowes to Secretary of In-

It seems quite common talk among the few interested in cattle, that the cattlemen will have the benefit until Fall. They have continually herded this strip for two years. The soldiers were one year ago directed to drive out the cattlemen, and would only drive them toward the border and the cattlemen immediately follow them back. From what I learn of their carrying orders there is a tacit understanding between the cow-boys and the soldiers that these orders from the Department will not be rigidly enforced and the soldiers or their officers in charge have, it is believed, received benefits from the owners of herds to immediately retrace their steps when nearing the borders in order to let the cow-boys return at once to the strip with their herds.

Colonel Dangerfield Parker, commanding Fort Supply since January, 1893, denied any conspiracy. He asked in return if the Department of the Interior was aware of the legal handicaps officers faced in the performance of their duties. Different state and territorial quarantine laws, he said added to the policing problem and often prevented them from putting herds across the Outlet. In most cases officers were liable to civil suit.⁶

Drought conditions on the plains in the spring and summer of 1893 made it easy for troops from Fort Supply to patrol the Outlet. There were only a few areas with enough

terior, June 2, 1893 (COPY), Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10.

⁶Dangerfield Parker to AAG, Dept. of Mo., June 19, 1893, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 41.

water to hold cattle, so the infantry was ordered to perform the patrol duty. Lieutenant Marion B. Saffold and a company of the Thirteenth Infantry left Fort Supply June 11 and proceeded to camp near Alva, where regular scouts were performed twenty-five miles west along the Kansas line. Two herds were found the first week, one of which shipped out because it had nowhere to go. The other was a herd of Kansas animals, and was forced back.⁷

Several small herds belonging to Kansas stockmen were located in the days following. Most herds ran fifty head or thereabouts, but nowhere near the 10,000 head quoted by Inspector Andrews. Kansas ranchers, not easily discouraged, boldly ran herds onto the Outlet even with the knowledge that troops were nearby. When confronted by Lieutenant Saffold they agreed to return to Kansas but said they did not have enough men to make a speedy withdrawal. Saffold recommended that "it would be well if authority could be obtained to, in such cases, kill several head of cattle," to indicate the earnestness of the military.⁸

⁷M. B. Saffold to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, June 19, 1893, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10.

⁸Saffold to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, June 26, 1893, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10.

After these incidents none but a few head were found along the Kansas border and Saffold departed for Fort Supply, leaving Lieutenant H. L. Thelkeld and a company of the Thirteenth Infantry to keep watch after July 19.⁹ Large herds temporarily refrained from crossing onto the Outlet, but the Kiowa town herd and small groups of horses and cattle were impossible to keep out.¹⁰ Realizing this was a job for cavalry, Colonel Parker on July 20 positioned a small detachment of the Third Cavalry near Kiowa Creek to remove any elusive intruders or cattle. No trespassers were found, but two herds of cattle, one about 1,500 head, the other near to 900 head, were located and dispatched. The party returned to post four days later.¹¹ Lieutenant Thelkeld, meantime, was not idle and himself found and drove out almost one small herd each day for the week prior to July 24.¹² Some ranchers shipped out rather than continually move their herds back and

⁹Saffold to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, July 6, 1893, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10.

¹⁰H. L. Thelkeld to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, July 17, 1893, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10.

¹¹E. P. Kraus to Commanding Officer, Fort Supply, July 24, 1893, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10.

¹²Thelkeld to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, July 24, 1893, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10.

forth across the line, but those that could not sell out during the period of abnormally low market prices found entering the Outlet a necessary risk because it seemed the only place their herds could water.¹³

Thelkeld and the infantry withdrew on August 1 and Lieutenant Kirby Walker, Third Cavalry, assumed control of the Kiowa area. Several herds of about 150 head were tended, yet dozens of small herds crossed the Outlet lines daily to water and graze the Outlet for a day or two at a time and there was almost no way to stop them.¹⁴

The Interior Department, about July 1, 1893, suddenly came to realize that thousands of homesteaders were crowding the Kansas line waiting for word of the exact date of the opening. Alfred P. Swineford, former governor of Alaska, was appointed on July 6, 1893 an Inspector of Surveys General and District Land Offices by Secretary of the Interior Smith, and directed to proceed to the Outlet and locate land offices and county seats, and generally lay the groundwork for the Outlet opening.¹⁵

¹³Thelkeld to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, July 31, 1893, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10.

¹⁴Kirby Walker to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, August 8, 1893, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10.

¹⁵Joe B. Milam, "The Opening of the Cherokee Strip,"

In August the Department of the Missouri became concerned over the small number of troops available near the Outlet to keep peace. Upon the request of General Nelson A. Miles, the cavalry troops at Forts Supply and Reno were reinforced by four troops of the Third Cavalry from Fort Riley.¹⁶ Colonel Parker was at the same time placed in command of the force concentrated to remove all unauthorized persons and to open the Cherokee Outlet in an orderly manner. On August 19 President Cleveland affixed his signature to the official Proclamation opening the Cherokee Outlet at noon, September 16, 1893.¹⁷

The Proclamation divided the Cherokee Outlet into seven counties, lettered "K" through "Q", each of which was open to settlement. The only reserved land in the Outlet were certain Indian assignments belonging to the Osage, Kaw, Ponca, Otoe-Missouri, Tonkawa and Pawnee tribes and the

Chronicles of Oklahoma, IX (September, 1931), 280; Chapman, "Opening the Cherokee Outlet," 169.

¹⁶Miles to Secretary of War, August 7, 1893, Department of the Missouri, Letters Sent, Vol. 139; AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Parker, August 12, 1893, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10.

¹⁷AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Parker, August 12, 28, 1893, Department of the Missouri, Letters Sent, Vol. 139; James D. Richardson, Messages and Papers of the Presidents (Washington, 1899), Vol. IX, 406-427.

Chilocco School Reservation plus the Fort Supply Military Reservation. Four land offices, representing land districts set up by Swineford, covering seven counties, were provided at Alva, Enid, Woodward and Perry, within the Outlet.¹⁸

Almost every conceivable detail of registering and running for a claim was outlined in the President's orders. A strip of land a hundred feet wide all around and immediately within the Outlet at nine points on the Outlet boundary line was reserved for registration booths.¹⁹ At these places 115,000 persons completed one of three forms for a homestead entry, a town lot, or a soldier's declaratory statement.

The task of ejecting "sooners" from 9,000 square miles of territory with 400 miles of northern and southern border, plus guarding four land offices and nine registration booths fell to Colonel Parker. After receiving a copy of the Proclamation of August 19, 1893, Parker began to assemble his force. Forts Supply, Reno and Riley furnished eight troops of the Third Cavalry, and Forts Supply, Reno and Sill pro-

¹⁸Richardson, Messages and Papers of the Presidents, IX, 406-427.

¹⁹Ibid.; Booths were placed in Kansas on the northern border at Arkansas City, Hunnewell, Caldwell, Cameron and Kiowa City, and in Oklahoma Territory at Stillwater, Orlando, Hennessey, and Goodwin.

vided four companies of the Thirteenth Infantry.²⁰ The purpose of the military, Parker believed, was to preserve the peace, protect government property and mails, and guard the people from lawlessness and disorder. Four military districts, distinct from the land districts, were established for the scouting details.²¹

Securing the First District on the east was Lieutenant F. M. Caldwell and Troop C, Third Cavalry at Chilocco; on the west Captain O. Elting, Troop E, Third Cavalry near Bluff Creek; and Captain J. B. Johnson, Troop B, Third Cavalry at Orlando on the south. District Two was guarded north and south by Captain G. A. Dodd, Troop F, Third Cavalry at Pond Creek and Captain C. A. Hedekin, Troop A, Third Cavalry at Enid. The Third District was patrolled by Captain F. H. Hardie and Troop G, from Alva, and Captain G. Hunter, Troop K, near Woodward, both of the Third Cavalry. Lieutenant Kirby Walker, Troop D, Third Cavalry, singularly cleared the Clear Creek area, District Four.

²⁰Medical History of Fort Supply, Vol. 170, 14; Commanding Officer, Fort Riley to Parker, August 29, 1893, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10; AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Parker, September 5, 1894, Department of the Missouri, Letters Sent, Vol. 139.

²¹E. M. Heyl to AAG, Dept. of Mo., October 19, 1893, House Exec. Doc. No. 27, 53 Cong., 1 Sess., 4.

Lieutenant Frank M. Caldwell and forty men of Troop C, Third Cavalry arrived the First District from Fort Riley via the Santa Fe Railroad on August 31. The following day camp was made within five and a half miles of Arkansas City, Kansas.²² In accordance with orders from Colonel Parker, Caldwell directed his men in patrolling nearly seventy miles of Outlet border: fifteen miles on the north along the Kansas line, thirty-two miles on the east following the Arkansas River, and twelve miles each along the northern and western boundary of the Ponca Reservation.²³

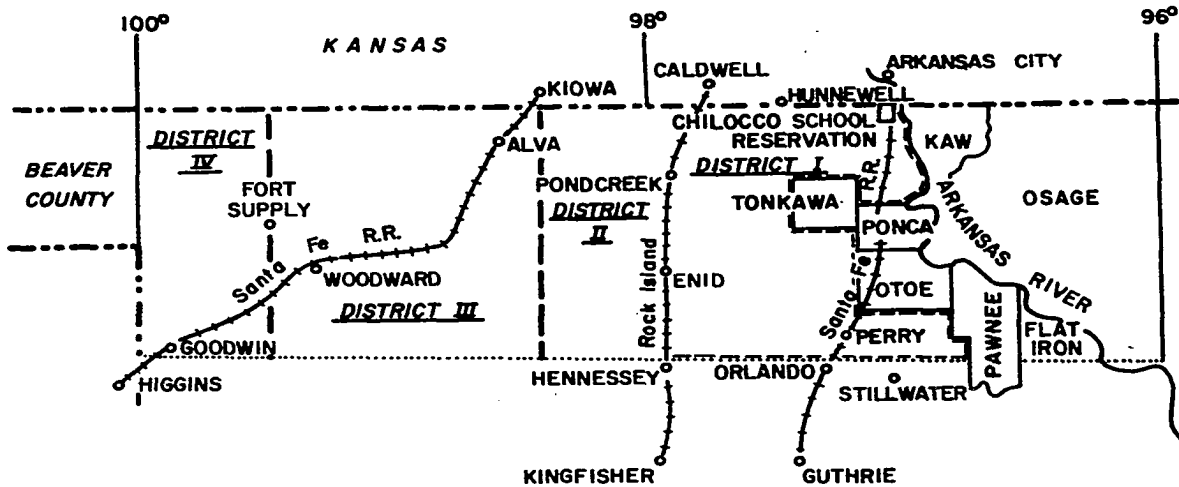
Guards were also directed to the registration booth at Arkansas City on September 5 to control about 10,000 impatient registrants. After the booth opened on September 10 crowdors and troublemakers several times threatened the use of force.²⁴

Scouts continued between September 5 and 13 and some

²²F. M. Caldwell to Parker, September 24, 1893, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10; Heyl to AAG, Dept. of Mo., October 19, 1893, Caldwell to J. M. Lee, October 11, 1893, House Exec. Doc. No. 27, 53 Cong., 1 Sess., 5, 13.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Caldwell to Parker, September 24, 1893, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10; Caldwell to Lee, October 11, 1893, Statements of Louis P. Conway, Edward Murphy and George Morris to Lee, October 2, 1893, House Exec. Doc. No. 27, 53 Cong., 1 Sess., 14, 36-39.



MILITARY DISTRICTS FOR OPENING THE CHEROKEE OUTLET

thirty families were conducted to the north line of the Cherokee Outlet. Twenty-five or thirty teams were also turned back at the north line of the Ponca Reservation. In spite of these efforts Lieutenant Caldwell was convinced there were many sooners in the Outlet at the time of the opening, mostly off the Kaw, Osage and Ponca lands.²⁵

The western part of the First District²⁶ was likewise intensely scouted after September 2. Two herds of cattle and several sooners were ejected by Captain Oscar Elting, Troop E, Third Cavalry, also from Fort Riley. Patrols moved along nineteen miles of northern Outlet border, and in addition Troop E guarded registration booths at Caldwell and Hunnewell. The morning of the opening found Elting's mounted sentinels at a distance of 800 to 1,000 yards apart, holding back more than 26,000 registered homeseekers.²⁷

²⁵Caldwell to Parker, September 18, 24, 1893, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10; Caldwell to Lee, October 11, 1893, House Exec. Doc. No. 27, 53 Cong., 1 Sess., 13.

²⁶The First District consisted of that portion of the Outlet bounded on the east by the Arkansas River; on the west by the Rock Island Railroad; on the south by the Oklahoma Territory line, and on the north, of course, by the northern boundary of the Outlet. Parker to Caldwell, August 28, 1893, House Exec. Doc. No. 27, 53 Cong., 1 Sess., 18.

²⁷O. Elting to Parker /September 20, 1893/, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10; Heyl to AAG, Dept. of Mo.,

The remaining section of the First District, "that portion of the Cherokee Outlet east of Rock Island RR and south of the continuation of the line dividing the Otoe and Ponca reservations," was protected by Captain John B. Johnson and Troop B, Third Cavalry. Captain Johnson's command entered the Outlet after June 26, pursuant to orders from Fort Reno and joined the command for the opening when Colonel Parker took authority. Camp was made September 1 about three miles north of Orlando, Oklahoma Territory and patrols continued through September 14 removing violators.²⁸ During this period about 19,000 head of cattle, horses and mules, plus 154 men were driven out of the Outlet into Oklahoma and Kansas.²⁹

Detachments also guarded the Perry Land Office and the Stillwater and Orlando registration booths. At these places troopers succeeded in managing immense crowds of the roughest classes without riot or bloodshed. On September 14

October 19, 1893, Statements of Elting, and T. R. Rivers, October 2, 1893, House Exec. Doc. No. 27, 53 Cong., 1 Sess., 6, 46-48.

²⁸Statements of J. B. Johnson, October 7, 1893, Harry Colt and E. E. Westervelt, October 5, 1893, House Exec. Doc. No. 27, 53 Cong., 1 Sess., 48-49, 64-65.

²⁹Ibid.; Johnson to Parker, September 23, 1893, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10.

Captain B. H. Rogers and a company of infantry assumed command of the Perry Land Office and townsite. Johnson then withdrew to Orlando and Stillwater where he effected the opening two days later.³⁰

The Second Military District of the Cherokee Outlet was covered by Captain George A. Dodd and Lieutenant Charles A. Hedekin. The northern half of this district was, perhaps, the busiest and most far reaching assignment considering the past history of the Outlet below Kiowa. Captain Dodd, commanding Troop F, Third Cavalry, out of Fort Riley, took station at Pond Creek, within the Outlet, on August 29.³¹ Immediately lookouts were located on hills with field glasses to spy on intruders. When a trespass was sighted, men mounted bareback for greater speed rode out to make the arrest. Captain Dodd's patrol district "was bounded on north (56 miles) by southern line of Kansas; on east (32 miles) by Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railway; south (36 miles) by sixth standard parallel; west (29 miles) by north and south line passing through Kiowa." Covering 153 miles of border and an area of 1,624 square miles, Troop F was remarkably successful

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Statements of George A. Dodd, October 8, 1893, House Exec. Doc. No. 27, 53 Cong., 1 Sess., 49.

in removing fifty-nine intruders, about 1,600 cattle, 121 horses and mules, and forty wagons.³²

Before September 16 dawned the forty-five men under Dodd had constantly scouted four major trails between the Kansas border and Hennessey, Oklahoma Territory, and cleared their jurisdiction of sooners in marches that totaled 1,626 miles. On the morning of the run the command stood guard over three Rock Island railroad bridges, the townsites of Pond Creek and Round Pond, a registration booth at Cameron, Kansas, and the Outlet border between Caldwell and Kiowa.³³

The southern portion of the Second District, that portion of the Outlet south of the sixth standard parallel between the Rock Island tracks and the Kiowa line, was supervised by Lieutenant Charles A. Hedekin, Troop A, Third Cavalry, from Fort Reno. Every effort was made to clear the sooners near Enid, but 15,000 home seekers on the southern line of the Outlet kept most of the troopers busy at the Hennessey registration booth. Enid townsite was later protected by Captain William W. Waterbury and the infantry, and Hedekin stretched his command at three-quarter mile intervals

³²Dodd to Parker, October 5, 1893, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10.

³³Ibid.

along thirty miles of border west of Hennessey.³⁴

Captain Francis H. Hardie and forty-three men of Troop G, Third Cavalry, out of Fort Riley, took station at Alva, eighteen miles south of the Kansas line, on August 31. District Three, comprised a large area, but the property was less valuable than the first two areas and there were fewer entrants. Hardie patrolled the northern half of a section of the Outlet bounded on the east by a line running north and south through Kiowa, on the west by a line running north and south through Fort Supply and on the north and south by the limits of the Outlet.³⁵ The townsite at Alva was policed until the arrival of Lieutenant Marion B. Saffold and the Thirteenth Infantry. Troop G also took a position at the Kiowa registration booth but the main duty was regular patrols of the Outlet border twenty-five miles west of Kiowa.³⁶

The southern half of the Third District was patrolled by Captain George K. Hunter and Troop K of the Third Cavalry.

³⁴Heyl to AAG, Dept. of Mo., October 19, 1893, Statement of C. A. Hedekin, October 6, 1893, House Exec. Doc. No. 27, 53 Cong., 1 Sess., 51; Hedekin to Parker, September 19, 1893, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10.

³⁵Heyl to AAG, Dept. of Mo., October 19, 1893, Statement of F. H. Hardie, October 2, 1893, House Exec. Doc. No. 27, 53 Cong., 1 Sess., 7-8, 52-53; Hardie to Parker, September 4, 1893, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10.

³⁶Ibid.; Hardie to Parker, September 19, 23, 1893, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10.

Leaving Fort Reno on August 29 Captain Hunter entered the Outlet near Hennessey on September 2, and proceeded west to the Third District. Two intruders were discovered and ejected on September 3 and one on September 10. After taking station near Waynoka, scouts found several Texans in the Outlet, ejected them, and continued to police a six-mile length of southern border. On September 13 the command moved to Woodward to observe the northern portion of the southern half of the district, and there met Captain Henry G. Cavanaugh and the infantry stationed at the Land Office. Captain Hunter started 1,000 persons into the Outlet from the Oklahoma Territory border at noon, September 16, 1893.³⁷

As part of Fort Supply's regular patrol of the Cherokee Outlet, Lieutenant Kirby Walker and a ten-man detachment of the Third Cavalry examined the Alva area from late July until the arrival of Captain Hardie. The detail then joined the remainder of Troop D, Third Cavalry from Fort Supply, in the field since September 1, to maintain the Goodwin, Indian Territory booth. Scouting and escorting the Clear Creek vicinity for more than 1,000 miles in the weeks preced-

³⁷G. K. Hunter to Parker, September 14, 1893, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10; Statement of Hunter, October 7, 1893, House Exec. Doc. No. 27, 53 Cong., 1 Sess., 57.

ing the opening the troop completely cleared their section of the Outlet. The run on September 16 was made by thirty men on horses and about 300 persons on Santa Fe cars out of Higgins, Texas.³⁸

Land Offices were operated by government officials, but secured by the officers and men of the Thirteenth Infantry. Captain Henry G. Cavanaugh and Troop B marched from Fort Supply to take station at Woodward on September 14 and remained on the townsite guarding government property until September 23. Lieutenant Marion B. Saffold and Company E followed Troop B to Woodward on September 14 and then took the Santa Fe to Alva where they performed like duty.³⁹

Fort Reno officers stationed Company C, Thirteenth Infantry under Captain William Waterbury at Enid and Fort Sill sent Company G, Thirteenth Infantry under command of Captain Benjamin H. Rogers to the Perry Land Office and townsite. In only one instance, on the morning of the opening

³⁸Post Returns, Fort Supply, July-September, 1893; Heyl to AAG, Dept. of Mo., October 19, 1893, Statements of J. Walker, I. P. Ware, October 13, 1893, Henry Holden, October 10, 1893, House Exec. Doc. No. 27, 53 Cong., 1 Sess., 57-59, 8.

³⁹Post Returns, Fort Supply, September, 1893; Statements of H. G. Cavanaugh, October 10, 1893, Saffold, October 18, 1893, House Exec. Doc. No. 27, 53 Cong., 1 Sess., 59-61.

at Perry, did any of these troops have trouble. Apparently most of the rowdyism occurred at the registration booths, for when the homesteaders reached these four townsites to file their claims no disturbances occurred. Soldiers remained at the Land Offices until September 28 when they returned to their posts.⁴⁰

The small number of homeseekers in the southern part of the Third District and the entire Fourth District made the runs in those areas orderly and easily controlled. The remaining six cavalry officers, however, had a good share of trouble. Lieutenant Caldwell, in the eastern portion of the First District posted troops along all railroad crossings and the west bank of the Arkansas River to keep people from running from the Osage Reservation.⁴¹ Possibly 30,000 persons from the Kansas state line east and west of the Chilocco Reservation and along the southern line of the School Reservation were fairly discharged, but the line west of the Chilocco Reservation on the Kansas border stampeded about

⁴⁰Statements of William Waterbury, October 8, 1893, Benjamin, H. Rogers, October 4, 1893, House Exec. Doc. No. 27, 53 Cong., 1 Sess., 62-66.

⁴¹In this manner persons along the south line of the reservation were actually three miles below those along the Kansas border.

11:56 a.m. at the sound of a false shot. Mr. J. R. Hill of Keansburg, New Jersey was shot and killed by troopers for breaking the line, but he was so closely followed by eager thousands that the start was uneven.⁴²

Captain Elting guarded the Rock Island crossing into the Outlet south of Caldwell from his position in the First District. Fifteen thousand or more persons below Caldwell were sent on their mad way promptly at noon by Captain Elting, but Lieutenant Tyree R. Rivers, acting for Elting at the start below Hunnewell, could not stop a man who broke through the line at full gallop one minute before twelve, and thousands followed. Recognizing the hopelessness of the situation Rivers fired his pistol to start the others.⁴³

Captain Johnson at the south end of the First District spread his troops along the Oklahoma Territory border, confidently holding an estimated 22,000 persons between Orlando and Stillwater. Two men spooked just before noon, but were

⁴²Caldwell to Parker, September 18, 1893, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10; Twenty-nine eyewitness statements regarding the killing of J. R. Hill may be found in House Exec. Doc. No. 27, 53 Cong., 1 Sess., 12-40.

⁴³Elting to Parker September 20, 1893, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10; Statements of Elting, and Rivers, October 2, 1893, House Exec. Doc. No. 27, 53 Cong., 1 Sess., 46-48.

immediately cut off and arrested. The spirit of the crowd, however, was not broken and about three minutes before 12 o'clock someone fired a shot and the rush was on.⁴⁴ Thus, in each of the three commands of the First District there was some starting mishap.

Farther west along the southern Outlet boundary, at Hennessey, 15,000 homesteaders assembled near the Rock Island tracks. About 11,000 rushed into the Outlet at 11:55 a.m., but Lieutenant Hedekin, although unable to restrain the break, refused to give the signal early. Approximately 4,000 citizens stood fast until the proper sign was given at precisely noon.⁴⁵

Of the first two military Districts only Captain Dodd, in the northern half of District Two, was able to enact an absolutely fair start for the homesteaders. Because Dodd had to extend his force between Caldwell and Kiowa, command a registration booth, two townsites and three railroad bridges, aid was sought from Captain Hardie in the northern portion of District Three. Hardie obliged by pulling his

⁴⁴Statement of Johnson, October 7, 1893, House Exec. Doc. No. 27, 53 Cong., 1 Sess., 48-49.

⁴⁵Statement of Hedekin, October 6, 1893, House Exec. Doc. No. 27, 53 Cong., 1 Sess., 51-52.

command ten miles east of Kiowa, thus allowing Dodd to close ranks. Dodd's signal was given at exactly high noon from watches set by telegraphic communication, and every homesteader had an equal chance for land.⁴⁶

Captain Hardie in District Three initially spread his troops fifteen miles west of Kiowa, and later ten miles east. The run, though, was allowed to begin at only one four-mile section. About four minutes before the starting time someone discharged a pistol in the assembled horsemen and 5,000 persons leaped forward. Hardie, seeing it was impossible to stop the rush, fired his pistol, which was promptly answered along the line, so that the start was practically simultaneous. The first man to break was captured by a trooper, but Captain Hardie said "The killing of three or four would not have stopped the avalanche of people in their mad rush."⁴⁷ In the final count only three of the eight sections, in four districts, had fair starts, and the opening was marred by false and premature starts in five of six portions with crowds larger than 5,000.

Colonel Parker reviewed the Outlet Opening from the

⁴⁶Dodd to Parker, October 5, 1893, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10.

⁴⁷Hardie to Parker, September 23, 1893, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10.

Chilocco School Reservation, returning to Fort Supply on September 17. Newspapers charged malfeasance by the military, indicated bribes were accepted, drunkenness was common among officers and men, and soonerism was everywhere. Public officials, local and Federal, for the most part disagreed and in the end Colonel Parker and his officers were congratulated for the direction of such a large land rush with so small a command.⁴⁸ Parker retained command of the troops in the field until October 5 when all but Captain Dodd's troop returned to their posts. Captain Dodd lingered in the Pond Creek area through the first week of October in an effort to avert trouble between the townsites of Round Pond and Pond Creek.⁴⁹

Opening the Cherokee Outlet lands to occupation ended nearly three years of patrol duty for Fort Supply. Men at the post subsequently led a less active life, performing only the usual garrison duties. The monotony of practice marches and visitor escorts was broken on November 26 when a letter was received from the citizens of Cheyenne, Oklahoma Territory

⁴⁸The action of the eight cavalry and four infantry officers in the opening of the Cherokee Outlet is evaluated by citizens and officials in testimony collected in House Exec. Doc. No. 27, 53 Cong., 1 Sess., 1-86.

⁴⁹Dodd to Parker, October 5, 1893, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10.

asking for protection. Wolf Hair, a Cheyenne, came into Cheyenne to buy provisions on November 20, and there met Tom O'Hare, a drunken Texan, who amused himself by drawing his gun to frighten the Indian. Wolf Hair left town in his wagon to avoid trouble, but O'Hare mounted his horse and followed. He was seen by school children gun in hand, pursuing the Indian over the hills southeast of town where view was cut off. Two shots were fired in that direction and O'Hare returned to give himself up to the sheriff, admitting he had killed the Indian. People were angry over the crime and O'Hare was ordered brought to trial by a coroner's jury.⁵⁰ The next day eighty-five Indians rode into town, went to the jail and demanded the prisoner. The sheriff refused to release the white man and the Indians reacted by firing their guns in the air before reluctantly returning to their camps.

Colonel Parker immediately dispatched Lieutenant Walker with Troop D, Third Cavalry and scout Amos Chapman to the scene of the trouble. The arrival of Chapman at the Cheyenne camp was more important than the cavalry for the Indians,

⁵⁰J. H. Hammon to Commanding Officer, Fort Supply, November 25, 1893, Amos Chapman to Commanding Officer, Fort Supply, November 25, 1893, Memorandum of Citizens of Cheyenne, O. T. to Amos Chapman, November 26, 1893, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10.

by this time, had no fear of troops.⁵¹

Lieutenant Walker stationed his troops at Cheyenne and proceeded with an interpreter to meet Chapman at the Indian camp. Walker remained the night with the Indians, having a long talk with three chiefs, Spotted Horse, Red Moon, and White Shield. It was soon clear that this disturbance was more than the murder of an Indian by a white. The chiefs made several complaints to Lieutenant Walker and he believed they spoke the truth.⁵²

First in regard their lands, they complain that for years the whites have been closing in on them from all sides and now although their lands are small they are pressed further and further. The whites pasture cattle and horses on their lands and the Indian can get no redress. They feel that although they are citizens they do not obtain the same rights as white citizens. Again, they are hungry and half naked. They do not get their full ration and what they do get is of inferior quality and often times not fit for dogs to eat. The issue of blankets and clothing heretofore has not been made at the beginning of the winter when needed, but in the spring. They feel they are unjustly treated in these and other ways.

The good influence of Chapman, the understanding of Lieutenant Walker and prompt and just action by the citizens

⁵¹Ibid. Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, to Walker, November 29, 1893, Parker to AAG, Dept. of Mo., November 29, 1893, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 41; Post Returns, Fort Supply, November, 1893.

⁵²Walker to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, December 6, 1893, Letters Received, Box 10.

of Cheyenne averted trouble. Colonel Parker was concerned about the dissatisfaction among the Cheyennes and brought this to the attention of his superiors.⁵³

The rush of civilization that suddenly surrounded Fort Supply in September, 1893 brought renegades as well as pioneers. Before the end of the year two men named McDonald and Hall located a saloon, brothel and gambling establishment three miles northeast of Fort Supply lands. The near 200 men of the Third Cavalry and Thirteenth Infantry stationed at the post found this ranche an all too interesting entertainment, and the number of enlisted men guilty of absence without leave rose rapidly.

Woodward authorities closed the brothel and gambling house, but since the necessary liquor license was in possession of the proprietors the saloon remained open. Colonel Parker hoped to dispossess the owners of their saloon by proving they had taken up a claim with a declaration the land would be used for agricultural or grazing purposes, but this was not the case. At last in March, 1894 Colonel Parker felt that only a General Courts Martial with a view to dishonorable discharge would stop the flight of enlisted men.

⁵³Parker to AAG, Dept. of Mo., December 9, 1893, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 41.

Punishment, he said, had not worked, "there being no 'privileges' etc. at this Post of which to deprive the men."⁵⁴

On March 12, 1894 bandits stole the United States Army payroll at Woodward. Lieutenant Walker and the Third Cavalry, aided by the deputy marshals, took up the robbers' trail but lost it after only one day. Even the Indian scouts could do nothing, and after three fruitless days searching the rough country between the North Fork and the Canadian rivers, the command was forced to return to Fort Supply.⁵⁵

Summer of 1894 was the last time Fort Supply served the citizens of Oklahoma Territory. Prior to the opening of the Cherokee Outlet the Secretary of the Interior, in accordance with the act of Congress, laid out two county-seat towns, Round Pond and Enid, on the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad line. Captain George Dodd, after opening his portion of District Two, remained in that vicinity to prevent hostilities between citizens of the two townsites and the railroad.⁵⁶

⁵⁴Parker to County Attorney, Woodward, O. T., January 22, 1894, Parker to AAG, Dept. of Mo., March 23, 1894, Fort Supply, Letters Sent, Vol. 41.

⁵⁵Post Returns, Fort Supply, March, 1894; Walker to Post Adjutant, Fort Supply, March 16, 1894, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 10.

⁵⁶Dodd to Parker, September 23, October 5, 1893, Fort

The following year a battle developed that involved seven Cherokee allotments and Rock Island ownership of land at Round Pond and Enid. The Secretary of the Interior, in an effort to restore peace, established two new townsites three miles south of these old stations, at Pond Creek and South Enid. Citizens of South Enid and Pond Creek brought great pressure to bear against the railroad in Congress, Oklahoma Territory government, and the courts, but still they failed to secure action requiring the Rock Island to establish depots at their towns.⁵⁷

The towns passed city ordinances to force trains to slow down to "walking speed" as they passed through Pond Creek and South Enid, but the engineers refused, saying that if they did so they would be pulled from the train.⁵⁸ Citizens used red lanterns, dynamite caps, gunfire, a frame house and even a stuffed effigy to stop the locomotives, but all without success. By the end of June, 1894 stronger measures were in order and citizens of Pond Creek blew up several bridges, tore up about 100 yards of track, derailed a freight express

Supply, Letters Received, Box 10.

⁵⁷Chapman, "Enid 'Railroad War,'" 126-127; Rainey, The Cherokee Strip, 366-386.

⁵⁸Chapman, "Enid 'Railroad War,'" 170.

and stopped two mail and passenger trains.⁵⁹ When the final legal appeal of these towns to stop the trains was rebuffed by the Supreme Court of Oklahoma Territory on July 12, 1894, the towns looked to more violent efforts.

Bridge supports of a trestle, weakened by sawing, wrecked a fifteen car train at dawn Friday the Thirteenth of July and Marshal E. D. Nix at Guthrie was promptly dispatched to the scene to protect government mail and interstate commerce.⁶⁰ In addition to Marshal Nix, who went alone by his own choice to Pond Creek, troops of the Third Cavalry from Fort Reno were sent by train directly into Pond Creek and Enid. Railroad employees patrolled tracks and bridges, but, undaunted certain citizens burned two bridges near Pond Creek on July 16 and attempted to dynamite the Enid bridge.⁶¹

At this point Company H, Thirteenth Infantry from Fort Supply was ordered out. Forty-eight men under Captain William Aurman and Lieutenant Arbraham P. Buffington left Fort Supply at 7 a.m., July 18 to move by wagon fifteen miles to the Santa Fe station at Woodward. From there they were

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Ibid.; E. D. Nix, Oklahombres (n.p., 1929), 159-160.

⁶¹Chapman "Enid 'Railroad War,'" 178.

transported to Enid, arriving at 10:30 p.m. Lieutenant Buffington and eighteen men were detached at Pond Creek while enroute to guard bridges between that point and Enid. The remainder of the company encamped near Enid to guard the bridges and rails to South Enid. In all, the Thirteenth Infantry patrolled a twenty mile strip.⁶²

Cooperating with the staff of the Commander of the Department of the Missouri, the force from Fort Supply proceeded to Round Pond on July 22 where they supported deputy marshals in making arrests of citizens who had depredated against the railroad. After returning to their posts later that day the command continued to guard the railroad bridges until July 28 when Captain Frank D. Baldwin of General Miles' staff assembled them again at Pond Creek. They left that station for Fort Supply on July 30.⁶³

Companies B and E, Thirteenth Infantry, consisting of four officers and ninety-one men had marched to Woodward Station on July 24 holding themselves in readiness to proceed at once to Enid. They were released to return to post on July 29 when the situation appeared to be well in hand.⁶⁴

⁶²Post Returns, Fort Supply, July, 1894.

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴Ibid.

In the weeks to follow Congress stepped into the "Railroad War" and South Enid and Pond Creek won their right to have depots on the Rock Island line. The Cherokee Outlet was far from tame, but this incident demonstrated the great mobility railroads provided troops in the Outlet. Distant posts either inside or outside Oklahoma Territory could rush troops to trouble spots in a very short time. It was no longer necessary, it seemed, to keep a post in the most isolated and sparsely settled part of Oklahoma Territory when the railroad could speed troops to almost any point. The War Department talked of abandoning Fort Supply and this time there was no reprieve.

Under orders of the Headquarters of the Army dated September 15, 1894, the garrison of Fort Supply, first the Third Cavalry, then the Thirteenth Infantry, left the post in October, 1894. A skeleton crew remained at the post disposing of all equipment to Fort Sill, until Lieutenant F. E. Lacy, Tenth Infantry, placed Fort Supply in the custody of the Department of the Interior, February 26, 1895.⁶⁵

⁶⁵General Orders No. 45, Headquarters of the Army, September 15, 1894, AAG, Dept. of Mo. to Commanding Officer, Fort Supply, November 23, December 14, 1894, Fort Supply, Letters Received, Box 11; Post Returns, Fort Supply, October-December, 1894, February, 1895.

CHAPTER XI

CONCLUSION

Fort Supply was operational for more than a quarter-century. The post served as a base for launching the first wave of soldiers onto the Southern Plains to tame the wild tribes in 1868 and remained a strategic military station until the Cherokee Outlet became part of Oklahoma Territory. Troopers from Fort Supply participated in three Indian wars, guarded two cattle trails and supervised a land opening. The first Upper Arkansas Agency for the Cheyennes and Arapahoes in Indian Territory was located at Fort Supply. Patrols from this post sought to check the whiskey traffic and protected Indians on winter hunts. In the decade of the 1880's cattlemen leased ranges near the post, Boomers threatened entry to unassigned lands and timber thieves plundered the Outlet. Almost all events in western Indian Territory from 1868 to 1894 came under the eye of Fort Supply.

Established as a temporary supply depot for Sheridan's

1868 winter campaign, Fort Supply increased in importance for Southern Plains military operations and eventually achieved permanent status. The post was situated deep in the Indian country, almost 100 miles from Fort Dodge. Its forward location provided the army a striking point close to the wild tribes' winter camp grounds. One of the most devastating blows ever struck the Plains Indians, the Battle of the Washita, was launched from Fort Supply. After this campaign, as the hostiles surrendered, the post served as a temporary collection point for the Cheyennes and Arapahoes before they entered the Medicine Lodge Treaty assigned reservation.

Between May, 1869 and May, 1870 Fort Supply gathered, fed and relocated the Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians. The Presidential Proclamation of August, 1869 changed the Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation from east of the post to south, and the agency was moved 125 miles south on the North Fork of the Canadian River. These tribes, however, preferred the Fort Supply area and for several years made their camps and winter hunts in that vicinity.

In the troubled years that followed, Fort Supply controlled Indian and non-Indian movements south of Kansas and east of the 100th meridian. The main concern of the post was to guard against further raids by the Indians, and, at

the same time, halt non-Indian infiltration of Indian country. Kiowas and Comanches frequently stirred the Cheyennes to action within sight of Fort Supply. Buffalo hunters and whiskey runners produced an equally ugly attitude among the Cheyennes, and in 1874 war once again swept the plains. Operations from Fort Supply were of fundamental significance in making General Nelson A. Miles' Indian Territory Expedition a success. Fort Supply furnished troops, supplied Miles' army in the field, and the post itself served as the northernmost boundary of campaigning. Supplying Miles' command was a difficult duty, complicated by a personal feud between Miles and General Pope of the Department of the Missouri. In spite of a serious shortage of freight vehicles, Fort Supply equipped the Indian Territory Expedition and completely outfitted the cantonment on Sweetwater Creek, Texas. Some of the most courageous and exciting events in the 1874 outbreak involved Fort Supply troops who served as scouts, engaged the Indians, reported field intelligence to the Department commander, and offered escorts. The end of the outburst in 1875 resulted in the establishment of Fort Reno to the southeast of Fort Supply, and Fort Elliott, Texas to the southwest to share responsibilities for keeping peace on the Southern Plains.

Shortly after the Southern Cheyennes were subdued the

Northern Cheyennes arrived in Indian Territory. These Northern Plains Indians rejected the Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation after only a few months. The operations of several organized bands of horsethieves increased tension. The disaster of the 1877-78 buffalo hunt and short rations at Darlington Agency increased the threat of another major outbreak. In the fall of 1878 a large body of Northern Cheyennes tested the mettle of the troops in and around the Indian Territory when they broke for the Northern Plains. The ensuing chase skirted Fort Supply, then moved directly north across Kansas and into Nebraska. Fort Supply troops participated in the round-up of the Dull Knife band and after these Indians were returned to Indian Territory the post remained on constant alert.

Rumors of the abandonment of Fort Supply began in 1870 and continued until permanent status was bestowed late in 1878. Less than two years later the post was again singled out for abandonment, but it was spared through the personal intervention of General of the Army Sheridan. The longer the post survived, the greater its value became to the federal government. Forts Dodge and Wallace in Kansas were abandoned in 1882, but Fort Supply endured.

Texas cattle began moving through western Indian Terri-

tory in the late 1870's and before long the Old Caldwell Trail and the Dodge City Trail were major highways to Kansas cowtowns. Forts Supply, Elliott, Reno and Sill joined in controlling this traffic. Drivers frequently aroused Indian resentment in passing over cultivated lands, and in 1886 and 1887 trouble between "pilgrim cattle" and Cheyenne livestock was averted by laying out the Deep Creek Trail, a minor alteration of the two major trails.

Cattle leases negotiated for use of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation and the Cherokee Outlet were followed by the opening of huge ranches near Fort Supply. Regularly troops from this post were called upon to maintain peace between the ranchers and the Indians. When President Grover Cleveland ordered the removal of fences from the Cheyenne-Arapaho country, Fort Supply troops helped enforce this decree. The Cherokee Strip Live Stock Association was ordered to vacate the Outlet ranges in February, 1890.

Troops from Fort Supply spent nearly three years evicting cattlemen from the Outlet. This account gives a new dimension to a historical event that traditionally ended in 1890. Evasion of the President's order and direct misrepresentation were the tactics of the ranchmen, but the Outlet was cleared through the persistence of locally based troops.

The controversy was closed in September, 1893 when the commanding officer of Fort Supply officiated at the Opening of the Cherokee Outlet to more than 100,000 homeseekers.

No Man's Land west of Fort Supply was incorporated into Oklahoma Territory in 1890, and in 1892 the Cheyenne and Arapaho lands were opened to settlement. The Cherokee Outlet opening in 1893 and its inclusion in Oklahoma Territory signaled the end of Fort Supply. Hostile Indians in Indian Territory had gone the way of the buffalo herds. Cattle trails and ranges were now fenced by farmers, and railroads cut the country. The War Department transferred the Fort Supply military reservation to the Department of the Interior in February, 1895. In time a Woodward County town named Supply grew out of the civilian population that resided at the post.

Fort Supply has assured itself a place in the history of the frontier triangle from Fort Dodge to Forts Reno and Elliott. After 1868 each of the four posts in this area performed special duty, yet always in cooperation with the other stations. Fort Supply offered unique service as a supply depot, an Indian observation point, and a ranching control center. Fort Dodge was the supply, transportation and communication link for military and Indian officials in Indian Territory. Fort Elliott troops tamed the wild Texas Panhandle

and Fort Reno troops protected the Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians and reservation from cowboys and Boomers. Together these posts controlled the Indians and non-Indians of the region, a portion of the western cattle trade, and opened the Indian Territory to settlement. It was a necessary and well performed service.

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