Conquered

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In this selection, Dr. La Vere provides an overview of Native Americans in the Lone Star State from the Civil War until January, 1881, when the final Indian battle in Texas occurred. Now conquered, Indians found themselves confined on reservations, forced to submit to the white man’s culture. La Vere recounts important events like the Red River War of 1874–1875, and discusses such Native American leaders as Satanta, Victorio, and Quanah Parker.

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The Indians of the now-defunct Brazos and Clear Fork reserves barely had time to get settled in southwestern Indian Territory before the Civil War thundered to life. The withdrawal of U.S. troops from forts in Texas and Indian Territory left the line of white settlement unprotected. Frightened settlers, who earlier had demanded the extermination of the Reserve Indians, now

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begged them to ally with Texas and serve as a buffer against both Comanches and Union forces. By late 1861 Texas and Confederate diplomats were fanning out to Indian villages and soon the Indians found themselves just as divided as the United States. Among the Five Civilized Tribes, the Choctaws and Chickasaws, closest to Texas and with many of their leaders slave owners as well, sided almost wholly with the South. The Cherokees, Creeks, and Seminoles split and engaged in their own bloody civil war, with some factions remaining loyal to the Union and others to the Confederacy. Many of the wealthier pro-Confederate Indians moved their families, livestock, and slaves to North Texas, which they hoped would be out of reach of Union raiding parties. Down in Texas, a few Alabama-Coushattas served briefly with the 24th Texas Cavalry but by late 1862 had left the service and returned to their homes in East Texas.

The former Brazos Reserve Indians, now on the Wichita Reservation in Indian Territory, also split. Some Caddo and Wichita bands went to Union-held Kansas. Others moved farther west, willing to brave the plains, the Comanches, and the Kiowas to get away from the war. A large faction stayed put and sided with the South, especially when their Indian agent, Matthew Leeper, accepted a commission in the Confederate Army. The turmoil of the war years provided an opportunity for old enemies to even old scores. On October 23, 1862, a large band of Indians attacked the Confederate-allied Wichita Agency. They burned the agency headquarters, killed some Confederate officials, but concentrated mainly on the Tonkawas, killing Chief Placido and about a hundred of his people. The Wichitas, Caddos and other Indians at the agency scattered. No one could say exactly what instigated the Tonkawa Massacre, as it has come to be called. Some said it was an attack by pro-Confederate Wichitas, Comanches, Shawnees, and Delawares on the pro-Union Tonkawas. The Wichitas and Comanches blamed the Shawnees and Delawares, saying they were taking revenge for Tonkawa cannibalism. Others said it was a Union attack on the Wichita Reservation and the Tonkawas just happened to be in the way. Whatever the reason for the attack, the few surviving Tonkawas fled back to Texas, settling around Fort Belknap, not far from their old reserve at Clear Fork. There they served as scouts for Confederate Texas forces. Only years after the Civil War, would the government step in and provide a reservation for the Tonkawas in the northern part of Indian Territory, well away from their old Texas Indian neighbors.

In Texas, the Civil War brought more raids and violence. Comanches, Kiowas, Kiowa-Apaches, Kickapoos, and others, their supplies of manufactured goods severely curtailed by the war, stepped up their raids into Texas in hopes of replenishing their supplies. For Texans, this could not have come at a worse time as there were fewer people to give chase. Federal troops had been withdrawn to Union territory, while the Confederacy stripped Texas of many of its fighting men, leaving fewer Ranger companies, most of these understaffed. With raids on the increase, the line of settlement halted its westward march and even backtracked about a 150 miles. Nevertheless, Ranger companies, such as those led by Sul Ross, attacked as they always had. Ross's company had attacked a Comanche camp in December, 1860, and come away with Cynthia Ann Parker, who had been taken by the Comanches in 1836. By this time, Cynthia Ann had become a Comanche. She spoke no English, had a Comanche husband and family, and was the mother of the soon-to-be-famous Comanche chief Quanah Parker. So for the second time in her life, she was stolen away from her family. Brokenhearted, she did not live long after.
MEXICAN KICKAPOOS AND SEMINOLES

While Comanches, Kiowas, and Kiowa-Apaches struck from the north, Kickapoos out of Mexico raided across South Texas. Kickapoos were immigrant Indians, a band of which had settled in East Texas in the early nineteenth century. After the Kickapoo War of October, 1838, most Texas Kickapoos moved beyond the line of settlement or to Indian Territory. However, a small band of about eighty immigrated to northern Mexico and settled around the town of Morelos in the State of Coahuila. Mexico warmly welcomed these Kickapoos and soon the men were serving as scouts and auxiliaries for the Mexican army in their pursuit of Comanches, Kiowas, and Apaches.

In 1849 the number of Mexican Kickapoos increased with the arrival of Seminole chief Coacoochee and his band. Coacoochee, better known as Wild Cat, had fought the United States during the Seminole Wars. Forced to move to Indian Territory, he wanted as little to do with Americans as possible and so determined to move to Mexico. Many Kickapoos agreed with Wild Cat’s assessment of Americans and about 250 Seminoles, Kickapoos, and African Americans decided to join him. The next year, Wild Cat was again recruiting in Indian Territory and convinced another 250 or so to immigrate to Mexico. About half the Kickapoos returned to Indian Territory the next year, however most Mexican Kickapoos and Seminoles were again serving as auxiliaries, turning back raiding parties that crossed into that part of Mexico. Though most Seminoles would eventually return to Indian Territory, the remaining Mexican Kickapoos became so successful in battling Indian raiders that Comanche and Kiowa attacks in Coahuila dropped off considerably. During the 1850s, while Mexican Kickapoos battled Indians south of the Rio Grande, Kickapoos in Indian Territory joined with their Comanche and Kiowa trade partners and heavily raided Texas settlements along the upper Colorado and Brazos Rivers and as far west as the Pecos. In 1858 even the El Paso mail route was threatened and several California-bound immigrant trains in West Texas were attacked.

Several incidents during the Civil War served to increase Kickapoo raids. As the Civil War divided the Kickapoos and other peoples of Indian Territory, a band of about six hundred Kickapoos under Chief Machemanet decided to immigrate to Mexico in December, 1862. Wanting to avoid Texas settlements, Machemanet’s village swung wide into West Texas, but in Tom Green County near present-day Knickerbocker, a Confederate patrol spied the Indian herd, shot down three Kickapoo peace emissaries, and attacked the immigrants. The Kickapoos held their ground, retook their horses, and sent the patrol reeling, with sixteen cavalrymen shot out of their saddles. The Kickapoos resumed their journey and joined their kinspeople in Mexico. Word of Machemanet’s village’s prosperity soon reached the remaining Kickapoos in Kansas and Indian Territory, and in September, 1864, seven hundred Kickapoos under Chiefs Pecan, Papequah, and Nokoah began their own migration to Mexico. As before, they swung wide to avoid Texas settlements. However, on January 8, 1865, while camping on Dove Creek near present-day Mertzon, they were attacked by a detachment of Confederate scouts and militia. Once again, the well-armed Kickapoos held fast and aimed a devastating fire on the charging Confederates. In an all-day fight, the Texas Confederates had twenty-six
men killed, sixty wounded, and sixty-six horses killed. The survivors barely managed to escape during the night, while the victorious Kickapoos, losing a total of fifteen warriors, continued their move into Mexico. Once there and settled, the Kickapoos determined to take revenge on Texas for twice attacking peaceful migration parties.

During the next two decades, the Mexican Kickapoos certainly took their retribution. Over the years, as the Mexican Kickapoos battled Comanche, Kiowa, and Apache raiding parties, a benefit had been the horses, mules, and goods they acquired in battle. These items found ready markets in Mexico and brought prosperity to the Kickapoos. After the Civil War, as raiders struck less frequently into northern Mexico, the Kickapoos were deprived of these commodities. While supplies dwindled, the demand remained; so to acquire the ever-wanted horses and goods, the Kickapoos began raiding ranches and farms on the Texas side of the Rio Grande. A great semicircle, curving from Laredo in the south up to San Antonio and then west to Terrell County, became the Mexico Kickapoos’ area of operations. Atacosa County, just south of San Antonio, became a favorite raiding ground. South Texans demanded protection, claiming the Kickapoos were much worse than the Comanches and Kiowas North Texans faced. A government commission investigating the Kickapoo raids in 1872 calculated that between 1865 and 1872, Kickapoo raiders had taken five hundred thousand head of cattle and fourteen thousand horses, most making their way to markets in Mexico. No count was given of the number of women and children taken captive nor the number of ranches burned and men killed.

Finally, in 1873, the government ordered Colonel Ranald S. Mackenzie and the U.S. Fourth Cavalry to deal with the problem. Mackenzie and his four hundred men rode into Mexico without Mexican permission and on May 18, while the Kickapoo warriors were away hunting, attacked their village at Remolina. Though the women, children, and old men fought back as best they could, the Fourth burned the village and supplies and killed an untold number of Indians. They also took forty women and children captives, who were quickly herded up to Fort Gibson, in the northeastern part of Indian Territory.

Mackenzie’s raid had the desired effect, rapidly pushing along the Kickapoo removal plan the government had sought. Authorities believed the best way to stop Kickapoo raids was to get them to return to the United States and take a reservation in Indian Territory. Several approaches had been made but each had been rebuffed. With some of their villages destroyed, the realization that the United States would cross into Mexico if need be, and the knowledge that forty of their kinspeople were being held in Indian Territory, many Kickapoos agreed to return to the United States. In August, 1873, 317 Mexican Kickapoos moved back to Indian Territory, reaching Fort Sill in late December. The next year they were assigned a reservation in the central part of Indian Territory, just east of present-day Oklahoma City. In 1875 another 114 Kickapoos returned from Mexico, leaving about 100 Kickapoos along the Mexico-Texas border. Many of their descendants still live in Mexico, but a few crossed the Rio Grande and settled around Eagle Pass, where they became the Texas Band of Kickapoo Indians and remain there to this day. While Mexican and Texas bands of Kickapoos sporadically raided into Texas over the next few years, counterattacks by U.S. cavalry had the desired effect, and by 1880 the Kickapoos had ceased being a threat to Texas.
RAIDS AND RESERVATIONS

The Civil War provided opportunities for Kickapoo raids into Texas, and it did the same for the Comanches, Kiowas, and Kiowa-Apaches, who seemed to grow ever more powerful. By 1864 they threatened the Santa Fe Trail, the supply route to Union-held New Mexico. To protect the trail, on November 25, 1864, Union colonel Kit Carson and his New Mexico Volunteers attacked a series of Comanche, Kiowa, and Kiowa-Apache camps near Adobe Walls. These were the ruins of an old Bent-St. Vrain trading post built in 1840 on the Canadian River in the Texas Panhandle. Though Carson’s men managed to destroy one Indian camp, unexpectedly strong resistance from the Indians forced the troops to retreat to New Mexico, barely getting away with their lives. Though the battle secured the trail, it did not deter Comanche and Kiowa raids on Texas farms and ranches.

Four days after Kit Carson’s attack, not far to the northwest at Sand Creek in southeastern Colorado, the Colorado militia attacked Chief Black Kettle’s peaceful Cheyenne village, killing and scalping well over a hundred Indian men, women, and children. The Sand Creek Massacre shocked both the eastern establishment and Washington officials. When the Civil War ended five months later, Congress turned its attention to the Plains Indians and determined to bring about what they hoped would be a lasting peace. In October, 1865, government representatives met with various Comanche, Kiowa, Kiowa-Apache, Cheyenne, and Arapaho chiefs in Kansas. After several days of negotiations, feasts, exchange of presents, and the restoration of captives, they hammered out the Treaty of the Little Arkansas River. Essentially, the treaty provided for the Comanches and Kiowas to receive virtually all the Texas Panhandle and western Oklahoma as a reservation. Even better, they could hunt outside the reservation boundaries, south of the Arkansas River until the buffalo were gone and the area settled. They would also receive between ten and fifteen dollars per person annually for the next forty years. In return, the Indians were to allow the government to build forts along the Santa Fe Trail and refrain from raiding U.S. citizens and Indians people friendly to them.

While certainly Indian-friendly, the treaty was dead on arrival in Washington. Texans protested bitterly and would have none of it. Similarly, cost-conscious senators severely amended it, making renegotiation virtually impossible. Many individual Kiowas and Comanches also opposed the treaty, refusing to be fenced in or fenced out of lands they had long called home. In the end the treaty was not ratified and raids continued into Texas, with Texans complaining that between May, 1865, and July, 1867, Indians had killed sixty-two people, wounded forty-two, and taken another forty captive.

Help for Texans was not long in coming. With the Civil War over, the U.S. Army now reoccupied Texas forts. Immediately after the war, the United States sent more than fifty thousand troops to Texas, most stationed on the Texas-Mexico border to prevent any spillover from the French invasion of Mexico. Others served on Reconstruction occupation duty. By 1867 their numbers had been reduced to three thousand but with a good number of these now stationed farther west in forts guarding the line of settlement. Texas now hosted the 17th Infantry, 19th (Black) Infantry, 38th (Black) Infantry, 114th (Black) Infantry, 117th (Black) Infantry, 6th Cavalry, and 4th Cavalry. Later would come the famous 9th and 10th (Black) Cavalry. None
of these units remained congregated at any one place. They were divided into company-size units, usually of about ninety to one hundred men, and distributed among various forts. For example, the 4th Cavalry was headquartered at Camp Sheridan in San Antonio, where its headquarters and B, C, D, E, F, L, and M companies remained. But Company A was stationed at Fredericksburg; Company G, at Clinton; Company H, at La Grange; Companies E and F, at Fort Brown; and Company K, at Fort Inge. In time, other units would come and go, but as always, they gave chase whenever raids were made.

Most of these encounters were small unit actions, such as running battles or brief skirmishes, rarely involving more than a score or two of men on either side. And though cavalry troopers and Texas Rangers often served together, there was little love between them. As one soldier believed, the Rangers were far superior to the army in the field but their tendency to “kill every Indian on sight without pardon” made them less civilized than U.S. troops, who “endeavored to kill as few as possible and to capture alive if possible.”

As before, the army turned to the reservation Indians for help. Tonkawas from around Fort Griffin, along with Caddos, Wichitas, and Delawares from the Wichita Reservation in southwestern Indian Territory served as scouts and auxiliaries for the Rangers and cavalry. In December, 1866, Toshaway and a few other Penetaka Comanche chiefs, as well as Caddo chiefs George Washington, Tinhah, and Jim Pockmark all agreed to serve as scouts. The number and variety of Indian scouts serving with the army grew considerably. By late 1874 one cavalry officer reported his detachment of scouts included Wichitas, Tawakonis, Wacos, Kichais, Caddos, Delawares, Shawnees, Pawnees, Arapahos, and Comanches.

The continued raids, the good example of the Indians of the Wichita Reservation, and the failure of the Little Arkansas treaty made Congress redouble its efforts to get a workable treaty with the Southern Plains Indians. In October, 1867, government negotiators met with various Comanche, Kiowa, Kiowa-Apache, Cheyenne, and Arapaho chiefs at Medicine Lodge Creek in southern Kansas. By this time, many more chiefs were open to the reservation idea. Buffalo on the Southern Plains were fast disappearing, a crippling blow to people for whom it was the staff of life. The attacks and potential attacks by Rangers and cavalry often meant life had to be lived on the run. Hunger, warfare, disease, as well as the steady westward migration by non-Indians made many chiefs realize that times were changing and their people now had to walk a different road. They advocated peace, if at all possible. Twenty Comanche and Kiowa chiefs signed the Treaty of Medicine Lodge Creek, which stipulated peace between their people and the United States. The Indians gave up all claims to lands in Texas and accepted a much smaller reservation between the Red and Washita Rivers in the southwestern part of Indian Territory. They agreed to adopt “civilization” by sending their children to school and becoming farmers. The United States pledged to build the schools and provide teachers, blacksmiths, carpenters, instructors, clothing, farming implements, and even agricultural instruction. The Comanches, Kiowas, and Kiowa-Apaches still had the right to hunt on lands south of the Arkansas River as long as the buffalo ranged there. Their reservation lands were guaranteed to them, none of which could be taken without approval of three-fourths of the adult male population. In return, the Indians were to receive annual clothing distributions as well as twenty-five thousand dollars a year for thirty years, sometimes in
cash, sometimes in goods. To ensure the peace, just over a year later in 1868 the government built Fort Sill almost dead center in the new Comanche-Kiowa reservation.

Just to the north, the former Texas Reserve Indians on the Wichita and Affiliated Bands’ reservation set an example of acculturation. With the end of the Civil War, scattered bands of Taovayas, Tawakonis, Wacos, Kichais, Nadacos, Hainais, Cadodaches, and Delawares returned to their reservation and settled down to farming. The Penetaka Comanches of the old Clear Fork Reserve settled nearby. Now able to live in peace, their lands guaranteed and their persons protected, the Wichitas and Affiliated Bands, as they were collectively called, seemed to prosper, growing large crops of corn and melons, raising small herds of cattle and pigs, even building a sawmill. Young men might divide their time between hunting, farming, and scouting for the government. “Progressive” chiefs, such as Guadeloupe and George Washington of the Cadodaches, José Mariá of the Nadacos, Black Beaver of the Delawares, Toshaway and Esahabbe of the Penetaka Comanches, along with Tawakoni Dave and Tawakoni Jim, urged their people to settle down, send their children to school, and peacefully walk this white man’s road. On the reservation, a curious melding of cultures began taking place. Through proximity and intermarriage, the many different bands began to form into one. Where there had been Taovayas, Tawakonis, Yscania, and Kichais, soon there were only Wichitas. Similarly, the Cadodaches, Nadacos, and Hainais became collectively known as the Caddos. While the Indians themselves still recognized traditional bands and lineages, most non-Indians in Texas and Indian Territory now just saw Wichitas, Caddos, Delawares, Comanches, Kiowas, and Apaches. Adding to this melting pot, Wichitas, Delawares, and Caddos sometimes intermarried, as did some whites who settled nearby.

**PEACE POLICY AND THE RED RIVER WAR**

Of course, not all Comanches, Kiowas, and Kiowa-Apaches wanted to settle down to farming as the Wichitas and Caddos did. Nor did they accept their “progressive” chiefs’ willingness to live on a reservation. Many chiefs and warriors, particularly younger men, refused to give up the culture and lands they valued. They determined to resist at all costs. The Kwahadi Comanches absolutely refused to settle on the reservation, while other bands might drift on and off at will. Most men still saw raiding as the road to individual status and power. Fueling their fire were failures and missteps by the U.S. government. Despite all its promises of clothes, blankets, and food, government indifference, bureaucratic fumbles, corrupt contractors, and a primitive transportation system meant that supplies often came late and were usually short and substandard. Food supplies were inadequate, and though the Indians could leave the reservation to hunt for food, the buffalo were quickly disappearing. Already starvation stalked the Comanches and Kiowas. Discontent with the treaty increased as many Indians believed the government only fulfilled those treaty stipulations that worked to its favor. Some chiefs who had signed the treaty, such as the Kiowas Satank and Satanta, now turned against it. By the early 1870s Comanches, Kiowas, even Cheyennes, in search of food, goods, status, and revenge, rode into North Texas, hitting cattle herds, stagecoaches, wagon trains, isolated ranches and farms, and virtually anybody who crossed their path.

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President Ulysses S. Grant’s “peace policy” did nothing to stop the raids. Looking for scapegoats for the United States’ disastrous Indian policy, eastern churchmen pointed to corrupt, spoils-system Indian agents, accusing them of cheating the Indians of their due and so causing much of the conflict. When Grant became president in 1869 he began appointing churchmen and missionaries as Indian agents, which everyone hoped would bring about peace, hence the term “peace policy.” The Comanche-Kiowa reservations came under the authority of Quaker missionary Lawrie Tatum. Tatum was honest and his heart was in the right place, but he was naive when it came to Indians. Kiowa chiefs Satanka, Satanta, and Big Tree, who had grown up in the rough-and-tumble world of Kiowa politics, easily manipulated Tatum and played to his sensibilities. Comanche and Kiowa raiders found they could strike into Texas and then take refuge back on the reservation in time to receive their share of allotment goods, boasting of their exploits and unpunished by Tatum who wanted to believe the best of everyone. Each successful raid emboldened the young men. They even raided the Fort Sill horse corral as well as that of the agency itself. Army officers fumed over Tatum’s reluctance to arrest and punish them. Texans complained loudly, demanding the government do something about the raids stemming from Tatum’s slipshod reservation. As one Texan wrote, “Give us Phil Sheridan and send Philanthropy to the devil.”

Then, in mid-May, 1871, the Kiowas overplayed their hand. Satanta, old Satank, Big Tree, and more than a hundred other Kiowas rode down into North Texas and set up an ambush on Salt Creek Prairie, along the Fort Richardson road not too far from Jacksboro. A small wagon train appeared that was escorted by a few cavalrymen, but as the Kiowas prepared to attack, the shaman Mamanti urged them to let it go as another, far better wagon train would soon appear. The Kiowas allowed the wagon train to pass. They did not realize that in the train was General William Tecumseh Sherman, general in chief of the United States, who was personally investigating the validity of Texas’ complaints. Not long after, as Mamanti predicted, a second train of ten freight wagons loaded with supplies clopped by and the Kiowas attacked. Of the twelve teamsters, five escaped; seven were killed, some tortured to death, all mutilated. The wagons were plundered and burned, and the Kiowa raiding party made off with all the supplies they could carry, as well as forty-one government mules.

Word of the wagon train attack quickly spread. Sherman, now at Fort Sill, was determined to capture the raiders. The Kiowa raiding party returned to the reservation to receive their ration allotments, and when Tatum asked Satanta about the attack, the chief readily admitted it. He had lost three men, so was willing to call it even. Still, he boasted to Tatum, “If any other Indian claims the honor of leading that party he will be lying to you. I led it myself.” Tatum now had to forget his Quaker sensitivities. With Satanta’s boast as proof, he determined to arrest the leaders of the raiding party. Tatum, Sherman, and Colonel Benjamin Grierson stood on Grierson’s porch at Fort Sill; troopers were concealed around the quadrangle and inside the house. When Satanta, Satank, and several other chiefs arrived to “size up” Sherman, the troopers sprang the trap. For a tense moment it was touch and go, but the chiefs surrendered without a shot being fired. Satanta, Satank, and Big Tree were arrested and sent to Texas to stand trial. En route to prison, Satank was killed while trying to escape. But his death seems more like suicide, with the old man not willing to be imprisoned. In Texas, Satanta and Big Tree were
tried and sentenced to death. However, public opinion suggested that keeping them in prison might be a better way to end the raids. The idea seemed valid, so Satanta and Big Tree were imprisoned at the Texas State Penitentiary at Huntsville. And it did seem to diminish Kiowa raiding into Texas. Nevertheless, many people, particularly the Five Civilized Tribes in Indian Territory, called for clemency and begged Texas to eventually release the two chiefs.

While the imprisonment of Satanta and Big Tree may have caused the Kiowas to think twice about raiding into Texas, it made little impact on the Comanches and their strikes continued. Then, on September 29, 1872, up in the Texas Panhandle, Colonel Ronald Mackenzie and his Fourth Cavalry attacked a large village of more than 260 lodges of combined Kwahadis, Kotsotekas, Yamparikas, Noconis, and Penetakas. The Fourth Cavalry killed twenty-four Comanches, burned the village and its utensils, and took 124 women and children captives. These were taken to Fort Sill, essentially hostages to ensure the good behavior of the Comanches. They remained prisoners until June, 1873. During this time, Comanches raids slackened considerably. The women and children were later returned to their families and a few raids took place. Without the woman and children in custody, the government tried to tie Comanche behavior to the impending release of Satanta and Big Tree. It demanded that at least five Comanche raiders be turned over for punishment or the Kiowa chiefs would not be released. The Comanches refused and in October, 1873, its bluff called, the government finally released Satanta and Big Tree as it had promised, despite demands from Texans and Sherman himself to keep the two in prison.

The spring of 1874 saw tensions at near breaking points across the Southern Plains. Texans had no illusions about the freeing of Satanta and Big Tree and prepared for more raids. The Comanches and Kiowas were angry. Angry at their chiefs’ imprisonment and the short rations; angry about American horse thieves out of Kansas who stole Indian ponies and peddlers selling cheap whiskey to the Indians on credit, often getting them so deeply in debt that they had to forfeit what little cash they received from their annuities. But what really enraged them were the buffalo hunters. In the late 1860s American buffalo hunters armed with high-powered rifles began invading the Great Plains. By 1870 they had wiped out the buffalo on the Central Plains, taking only the hide, maybe the tongue, and leaving the rest to rot. Now they cast greedy eyes toward the few remaining buffalo south of the Arkansas River. By 1874 buffalo were almost impossible for Comanche and Kiowa hunters to find. With government rations often late or short, the reservation Indians began to starve. Ignoring Indian complaints, the government did nothing to stop the buffalo hunters, in fact, some officers encouraged them, realizing that killing off the Plains Indians’ main source of food was the best way to defeat them. With the government turning a blind eye, by the summer of 1874, a number of hunters had banded together and were killing off the buffalo in the heart of the Comanche and Kiowa hunting grounds in the Texas Panhandle.

Now many Comanches, Kiowas, and Southern Cheyennes had had enough. On June 27, 1874, about three hundred Comanche and Cheyenne warriors attacked a band of buffalo hunters at Adobe Walls, the site of Kit Carson’s fight ten years earlier. And so began the Red River War, the last desperate fight of the Southern Plains Indians to remain free. Not all Comanches, Kiowas, or Southern Cheyennes wanted war or joined it. A good many chiefs and their followers had
long recognized that their way of life was changing and so had grudgingly accepted the white man's road. War, they understood, would be a disaster and could not be won. Still, fiery young chiefs, such as Quanah Parker of the Noconi Comanches, who led the attack on the buffalo hunters, and Isatai, a young shaman who urged the war, were determined to try. From the first, the Indians experienced mixed results. The hunters, with their high-powered rifles, held off the Indians for several days, suffering only a few losses, and killing at least fifteen warriors, maybe many more. Nevertheless, the hunters quickly abandoned the area once the Indians withdrew. On July 12, a large party of Kiowas successfully ambushed a troop of Texas Rangers at Lost Valley, west of Jacksboro and not far from where the wagon train had been ambushed three years earlier.

The attacks drove a stake through the heart of President Grant's "peace policy." Those Indians siding with the war factions left the reservation to try to live on the Southern Plains as they once had. Given the okay by Washington, army troops out of Fort Sill marched onto the reservations where they made lists of "friendly" and "hostile" Indians. The friendlies, consisting of a majority of Kiowas, as well as all the Penetaka Comanches and about half the Yamparikas and Noconis, were rounded up and placed on Cache Creek within the reservation boundary. As it always had with Indian peoples, family came first and hostiles were able to take advantage of the confusion. They often slipped in to the friendly area for food and rest. At the same time, hostiles posing as friendlies sometimes left the camp and made raids of their own.

By late August several hostile factions of Comanches and Kiowas, many of whom had participated in the Adobe Walls or Lost Valley fights, settled around the Wichita Agency at Anadarko, using the peaceful Wichitas, Caddos, and Delawares as protection. On August 22, when the army demanded the Comanches and Kiowas give up their weapons, a battle broke out at the Wichita Agency. Over the next two days, a fierce firefight raged. About seven non-Indians were killed; the Comanches and Kiowas lost around fourteen. The agency store was looted, and many of the farms of the peaceful Indians were burned, including that belonging to Delaware chief Black Beaver. Starting a grassfire to cover their retreat, the Comanches and Kiowas made their way to the safety of the breaks of the Red River.

The army was already on the offensive, putting more than five thousand men into the field. Columns out of Kansas, Indian Territory, Texas, and New Mexico all converged on the Texas Panhandle. Once again, the Wichitas, Caddos, Delawares, and Penetaka Comanches served as scouts and auxiliaries. Though parties of Comanche, Kiowa, and Cheyenne warriors raided ranches and small wagon trains when they could, they soon found themselves on the run, constantly harried by army detachments and the Indian scouts. On August 30 cavalry under the command of General Nelson Miles defeated a large camp of Cheyennes at the Battle of the Cap Rock on Prairie Town Fork of the Red River. To escape, the Indians burned their lodges, abandoned their camp utensils, and scattered into the scorching Llano Estacado. A month later, on the night of September 28, Colonel Ranald S. Mackenzie's Fourth Cavalry, along with Tonkawa and Seminole scouts, surprised and destroyed a large camp of Comanches, Kiowas, and Cheyennes inside Palo Duro Canyon, just south of present-day Amarillo. Though the Indians only lost three men killed, they were totally routed. Mackenzie captured more than 1,400 Indian horses and the entire camp of tepees and utensils. Understanding the importance
of both to the Indians, Mackenzie kept 350 of the horses and mules for his own men and methodically killed the remaining thousand-plus animals. He then destroyed the entire village and its contents.

For the Indians, the loss of so many horses and tepees, as well as winter food and clothing, proved a crushing defeat. Even the elements turned against them. The horrendous 100-plus-degree heat and drought of the summer now gave way to incessant rains and autumn chill. Constantly harried by the army in what has come to be called the “wrinkled hand chase,” many cold, wet, hungry, shelterless hostiles opted for reservation life. Slowly, bands of defeated Comanches, Kiowas, and Cheyennes made their way back toward Fort Sill. Blue norther and blizzards of December sent back more until only a few bands remained at war. On February 25, 1875, the last 250 Kiowa holdouts, led by Lone Wolf, surrendered. Finally, on June 2, the last Comanche warriors under Quanah Parker came in, bringing an end not only to the Red River War, but also to the free life the Southern Plains Indians had always known. Seventy-four Comanche, Kiowa, and Cheyenne warriors, some of them not involved in the war at all, were imprisoned for three years at Fort Marion, Florida. Satanta was sent back to the Texas State Penitentiary in Huntsville. Despondent, he committed suicide in March, 1878, by jumping from an upper-story window. Now all Texas Indians were on reservations.

APACHE INCURSIONS INTO WEST TEXAS

By the 1870s the Lipan Apaches, whose heyday in Texas had been in the seventeenth century, and the Kiowa-Apaches, who had migrated south with the Kiowas in the late eighteenth century, had largely disappeared from Texas. The Lipans had been pushed even farther south by the Comanches, and by the 1870s, the Lipans, as a recognized division, had ceased to exist. What few remaining Lipans there were had either integrated with other more numerous Apache bands in New Mexico and Arizona or become hispanized peasants living in northern Mexico. During the latter part of the nineteenth century, when Texans mentioned the name “Apache,” most were thinking of the Kiowa-Apaches. The Kiowa-Apaches had been defeated along with the Kiowas and Comanches during the Red River War of 1874–75 and took their place on the reservation around Fort Sill. On the reservation, the Kiowa-Apaches dropped the term “Kiowa” and became known just as the “Apaches,” or more specifically, the Apache Tribe of Oklahoma.

Then, in 1881, the very last Indian raids ever made into Texas took place. They came from the Chiricahua Apaches, a band not previously known for venturing into Texas. The Chiricahuas mainly confined their activities to the mountains of southern Arizona, southern New Mexico, and northern Mexico. During the 1870s, as the U.S. government tried to concentrate the many different and often antagonistic divisions of Apaches onto the San Carlos Reservation in Arizona, some Chiricahua leaders, such as Naiche, Geronimo, and Victorio, resisted. Geronimo and Naiche never made it to Texas, at least as warriors, but Victorio and his band of Chiricahuas put a scare in West Texans.

In 1877 the government tried to move Victorio and his band of Chiricahuas and Mescaleros away from Ojo Caliente in central New Mexico to the huge San Carlos Reservation in Arizona. Victorio refused, pointing out that he and his people had been living at Ojo Caliente peacefully.
for the past decade. When the government insisted, Victorio, an excellent tactician, began raiding into Mexico, New Mexico, and West Texas, mainly in the area between Fort Davis and El Paso. The government ordered two African American cavalry units, the Ninth Cavalry and Tenth Cavalry, to give chase. The Tenth recruited Tigua Indian scouts to lead them. In early 1880 the Tenth Cavalry, which had been moved from Fort Concho to Fort Davis, went after Victorio and found itself being led on a fifteen-hundred-mile wild-goose chase. They returned to Fort Davis in May without ever catching a whiff of Victorio. Sent back on the Apache’s trail, the Tenth Cavalry caught up with Victorio’s band. On June 11 Tigua scouts and the Tenth Cavalry “buffalo soldiers” slugged it out with the Apaches just west of Valentine. Twenty Apaches and four Tiguas were killed. In August, at Rattlesnake Springs in the Guadeloupe Mountains, the army and Apaches met again in a three-hour battle. Once again, Victorio and his band managed to slip away and headed toward Mexico. In September a detachment of Texas Rangers joined the chase and illegally entered Mexico during their hunt. They also had no luck in catching up with Victorio. As one writer calculated, during fourteen months of raiding in Mexico, New Mexico, and Texas, Victorio’s band, “seldom more than seventy-five strong, had taken the lives of more than one thousand whites and Mexicans while eluding three American cavalry regiments, two American infantry regiments, a huge number of Mexican troops, and a contingent of Texas Rangers.”

However, Victorio’s luck was quickly running out. In October, 1880, he and his people took refuge in a mountainous area of northern Mexico called Tres Castillos. On October 15 a detachment of Chihuahua State Militia managed to surround the band and in an all-day battle defeated the Apaches, killing Victorio and all his warriors. The women and children were taken captive and held in Chihuahua City for the next several years. However, though Victorio was dead, some of his band who had not been at Tres Castillos were roaming far West Texas. In January, 1881, at the Sierra Diablo Mountains of West Texas, the last Indian battle in Texas took place. Tigua Scouts fighting alongside Texas Rangers caught up with the last Apaches and routed them. With this, the Indian wars in Texas came to an end, as did the freedom of any and all Indians who had once called Texas home.

RESERVATION LIFE

By 1881 only two small recognized Indian “tribes” remained in Texas: the Alabama-Coushattas, with their tiny reservation in Polk County of East Texas, and the Tiguas near El Paso. In the late 1860s Texas tried to get the federal government to take over administration of the Alabama-Coushattas but nothing came of it and for the next several decades the state virtually ignored the small group of Indians. As for the Tiguas, though Texas had granted them about thirty-six acres of land in 1854, through actions by the Texas legislature and unscrupulous whites, they lost virtually every inch of it. Finally in 1871 the Incorporation Act restored about twenty acres to the Tiguas. The remainder of the nineteenth century saw the Tiguas ignored by the state and federal governments and left to their own devices. None of the other Texas Indians, such as the Comanches, Kiowas, Apaches, Caddos, and Wichitas, lived in Texas anymore. They were on reservations in southwestern Indian Territory.
Defeated and virtually prisoners on their reservations, these Texas Indians in Indian Territory relied on government allotments of cattle, flour, and clothing, though some did try to plant crops and raise cattle. Many Comanches and Kiowas shrewdly learned how to make do on the white man's road. The Kiowa-Comanche reservation contained huge expanses of lush grasslands, excellent for fattening cattle. The Comanches, under the leadership of Quanah Parker, and the Kiowas to a lesser extent, now began leasing their lands to Texas cattlemen for cash payments called "grass money." By 1885 Texas cattlemen were running 75,000 head of cattle on the Kiowa-Comanche reservation, using 1.5 million acres and paying only six cents an acre per year. Though less than market value, grass money did provide about $55,000 a year for the Kiowas, Comanches, and Apaches. Twice a year the cattlemen distributed the grass money. In the summer of 1885 the companies paid each Indian on the Kiowa-Comanche reservation $9.50, all in silver dimes. Many government officials disliked the idea of the Indians leasing their lands, rather than farming them, so in 1890 the United States declared the lease null and void and ordered the cattle off the reservation. Making matters worse, whites living near the reservation often targeted its resources. For example, white settlers often slipped onto the reservation and stole Indian timber to be used as fence posts, housing, and firewood. As one settler recalled, a local missionary had been caught stealing wood by a Kiowa. "White man talk heap Jesus on Sunday," the Kiowa commented, "and steal Kiowa's wood on Monday." It got so bad that an Indian police force had to be created to keep white thieves out of the reservations.

During the twenty-five-odd years of the reservation experience in Indian Territory, the Indians not only had to adjust to farming and ranching but also got "heap Jesus." By the late 1870s Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, and Baptist missions had been founded in Anadarko, Oklahoma, and around Fort Sill, where they experienced varying degrees of success. Although many Indians might have gone to church on Sunday, most still attended their traditional ceremonies and dances, at least when they could, as reservation agents normally banned these as "uncivilized." Quanah Parker, who became the main spokesman for the Comanche people, and a few Caddo chiefs founded the Native American Church, which blended traditional Indian beliefs, peyote use, and Christianity. While agents, white churchmen, and even some "progressive" Indians condemned the "peyote road" as mere drug use and a throwback to tribal days, the adherents advocated a peaceful, harmonious, industrious life, and their ceremonies were always quiet and dignified. The church spread rapidly and soon had adherents across Indian America. In 1944 the Native American Church received a charter, with its stated purpose to "promote morality, sobriety, industry, charity and right living." The Native American Church still exists and many American Indian people across the United States are quite active in it. Other religious movements, such as the 1890 Ghost Dance, touched reservation Indians in Indian Territory, but this passed peacefully without causing the bloodshed it brought to the Lakotas at the Battle of Wounded Knee in that year.

Along with religion, the United States also forced American-style education on the Indians. Schools, such as the Riverside Indian School at Anadarko, taught Indian girls and boys domestic and mechanical arts. Besides English, basic reading, writing, and arithmetic, the girls were taught how to sew, cook, and clean. Boys learned how to be farmers or carpenters. Little effort was made to prepare the students for the modern industrial world nor were they given courses.
that would lead them to universities. Many children were sent to boarding schools far away from their families, such as Rainy Mountain Boarding School near Gotebo, Oklahoma; Chilocco Indian School in northern Oklahoma; Haskell Institute in Lawrence, Kansas; or the most famous of all, Carlisle Indian School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. At these schools, boys had their hair cut; their old “Indian” clothes were burned; and they were prohibited from speaking their native tongue.

While the government and the churches actively tried to erase traditional Indian culture, the Comanches, Kiowas, Apaches, Wichitas, Caddos, and others also found themselves changing by virtue of the ever-increasing number of Americans around them. White and black storekeepers, teachers, preachers, government officials, cowboys, and ranch hands lived on or around the reservations and came into contact with the Indians in a variety of ways. Many non-Indian men married Indian women, “squaw men” as they were called. Some of these were loving husbands and from the union came children who lived with a foot in both the Indian and American worlds. Other “squaw men” were opportunists who hoped to get their hands on as much Indian land and resources as they could. Claiming they were now a member of the “tribe,” they demanded every benefit they could, but then turned to the U.S. government when tribal governments attempted to control their activities. Indian culture changed rapidly. As Indian women came into contact with white women, dress styles and cooking methods changed. Although some people remained committed to the past, others learned how to walk the white man’s road.

Still, by the mid-1880s many government officials and philanthropists believed the Indians were not “civilizing” fast enough. Seeing only reservation poverty and not the community it contained, these “friends of the Indians” felt that communal reservation land was hampering Indian “progress.” The key to Indian “civilization” and prosperity, they believed, was to break up the reservations, give each Indian family its own plot of land, teach them to become small farmers, and force them to swim in the ocean of profits and losses. This approach ignored several realities. The Caddos and Wichitas had been successful farmers for hundreds of years and had their own ideas of farming. The Comanches and Kiowas never possessed any form of agriculture nor had any desire to learn how to plow a field. Cattle leasing was rather profitable and more conducive to reservation geography than farming. And finally, small farms in America were on their way out, being replaced by agribusiness, and the United States was fast becoming urban and industrialized. But as Merrill Gates, a “friend of the Indian,” saw it: “To bring [the Indian] out of savagery into citizenship we must make the Indian more intelligently selfish before we can make him unselfishly intelligent. We need to awaken in him wants. In his dull savagery he must be touched by the wings of the divine angel of discontent. Then he begins to look forward, to reach out. . . . Discontent . . . is needed to get the Indian out of the blanket and into trousers,—and trousers with a pocket in them, and with a pocket that aches to be filled with dollars!”

So despite almost unanimous protests by the Indians, the U.S. government passed the Dawes Severalty Act of 1887, which would give 160 acres of land to each head of an Indian family and lesser amounts to unmarried or orphaned Indians. Excess land would be sold off by the government, with the proceeds going into Indian accounts to pay for their education and the purchase
of stock and farming implements. Most whites, especially land-hungry settlers, small ranchers, railroad companies, and oil companies strongly supported the Dawes Act. Only the big cattle companies of Texas protested, and not because the Dawes Act was bad for the Indians but because they would lose their cattle leases.

Gates said of the Dawes Act, it would be "a mighty pulverizing engine for breaking up the tribal mass." It was. The Dawes Act finally caught up with the Comanches, Kiowas, Apaches, Wichitas, Caddos, and Tonkawas in the 1890s as the Jerome Commission began negotiating the reservation allotment process. In June, 1891, the commission managed to get the Wichitas, Caddos, and Delawares to accept $715,000 for their 574,000-acre reservation, about $1.25 per acre. Congress approved the plan in 1895 and shortly thereafter the reservation was broken up and the Indians began receiving their individual plots of land. In October of that same year, the commission pressured the Tonkawas to give up their 90,000-acre reservation for $30,600 and take individual allotments. In October, 1892, after much arm-twisting, the commission managed to get the Kiowas, Comanches, and Apaches to sell their several-million-acre reservation for $2 million. Congress ratified the agreement in 1900 and the allotment process began soon after. The Tonkawa reservation was thrown open to white settlement first, in September, 1893. A few years later, on August 6, 1901, the surplus land on the Kiowa-Comanche-Apache and the Wichita and Affiliate Bands reservations were sold off to white buyers.

The negotiation and ratification process was not without controversy. According to the 1867 Medicine Lodge Creek Treaty, the government could not take any of the Kiowa-Comanche-Apache reservation without approval of three-fourths of its adult male Indian population. There were grave doubts as to whether three-fourths of the reservation Indians actually approved the Jerome Commission agreement in 1892, but the government ignored these concerns. Showing a shrewd understanding of American society, Kiowa chief Lone Wolf filed suit on this point to prevent the allotment from taking place. Lone Wolf v. Hitchcock wound its way through the court system and in 1903, the U.S. Supreme Court rejected Lone Wolf's arguments, ruling that Congress could make any law it wanted for the Indians and was not bound by previous treaties. If Indians had any doubt that they were conquered, the ruling in Lone Wolf v. Hitchcock put those doubts to rest. Before allotment, many reservation Indians had prospered as ranchers by running their cattle on the communal lands. They now found themselves in bad shape, their allotment too small for ranching and the land too poor for small-scale farming. Within just a few years, many Comanches, Caddos, Kiowas, Wichitas, and Apaches had lost their allotments to whites and sunk even deeper into poverty.

Tiguas around El Paso had their own land problems during the last half of the nineteenth century. In 1871 the State of Texas, with the urging of unscrupulous Anglo land speculators, incorporated the Tigua's town of Ysleta. On paper, the new city was the largest in the state at the time—thirty-six square miles. Suddenly, the Tiguas found their property heavily taxed, and when they could not pay it was confiscated and sold to Anglos. Much of their land had been taken from them by 1874 when the incorporation was declared illegal. Just as bad, in 1877 the Tiguas were barred from using the salt beds near the Guadalupe Mountains that had attracted the Jumanos in years past. For centuries the Tiguas, as well as the Jumanos and

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Pueblos, had gotten their salt from these dry lakebeds. They were considered communal property. Local speculators at El Paso, including Judge Charles Howard, tried to gain control of the salt beds and prohibited the Indians from using them. This began the El Paso Salt War in which the Tiguas and nearby Hispanic settlers rose up and attacked the Anglos, killing five, including Judge Howard. Troops had to be sent in to stop the violence. In the end, the Tiguas still lost access to the salt beds.

By the turn of the twentieth century the Indians of Texas, both those living in and out of the state, had been defeated. It had not taken long, just under 400 years from the time Cabeza de Vaca washed ashore at Galveston; about 180 since Spain established a firm presence in Texas; only 64 years since the Texas Revolution; and a mere 35 since the end of the Civil War. Despite a valiant defense, people who had once fearlessly roamed the Southern Plains and whose lands had stretched from the piney woods of western Louisiana to the Rocky Mountains of New Mexico found themselves confined to tiny reservations or land allotments. Nor were they free to live their lives as they wanted. Traditional religious ceremonies were banned. Certain types of clothing were too. They could not do with their allotment as they saw fit and were even told how they must slaughter cattle. Government officials forcibly interfered in the lives, politics, and religion of these Indians to a degree that other Americans would never have tolerated. Even the education provided for them was second-rate and did not prepare them for the modern, industrialized twentieth century.