A STUDY OF INDIAN DEPREDATIONS AND SETTLER REACTION IN KANSAS IN THE 1870'S

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The pressure of advancing settlers and the existing policy of the Federal government in dealing with the plains Indians, made preservation of peaceful conditions on the Kansas frontier a difficult task in the 1870's. Through government treaties and military action, the Indian was gradually being transformed from his once proud and free existence into a docile and listless product of reservation life. The buffalo, which had constituted the basic livelihood of the plains Indian, had been all but obliterated by the advancing civilization of the white man, and superior military strength had forced the red man into submission in many areas. The decade of the 1870's was marked by wholesale Indian resistance, and was glamorized by such engagements as the Battle of the Little Big Horn.

The relation of this study to the Indian conflicts of the 1870's will be restricted basically to the state of Kansas and occasionally to the adjacent Indian Territory as it relates to the Kansas situation. During the 1870's Kansas did not experience the major wars and massacres that Indian tribes farther west were causing, and possibly for this reason, historians have overlooked her Indian problems during this period. In fact, Kansas was undergoing an

important settlement movement, particularly in her western counties, and the Indian threat was a vital obstacle to this process.

Although the majority of the Indian tribes in Kansas had been transferred to reservations by 1870, their threat still proved to be an explosive and distressing factor to the Kansas settler. The period from 1870 to 1879 was marked by sporadic outbreaks of renegade bands from their assigned reservations, and by entire bands passing through the state enroute to richer hunting grounds. Most of these tribes had been restrained at one time or another on federal reservations in Indian Territory below the southern border of Kansas. In spite of this fact, until 1879, hardly a year passed that a greater or lesser number of Kansas settlers had not been murdered and their property stolen or destroyed by marauding bands of Indians.[1]

Due to the fact that the problem in Kansas did not consist of major engagements between the Indian and government troops, it is difficult to establish a clear cut, precisely documented account of the conflict. Reports of Indian depredations mainly originated with the prairie settler. Many of these reports were proved unfounded, and

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[1]Geo. W. Martin (ed.), Transactions of The Kansas State Historical Society, Vol. IX (Topeka: State Printing Office, 1906), p. 388.

very likely some of them originated from Indian scares in which an element of mass hysteria developed, and no extensive Indian activity really existed. This occasional lack of credibility, combined with the fact that more extensive activities were taking place in northern and western areas, might, in part, explain why the United States Army often tended to ignore situations which later turned out to be legitimate Indian threats. In addition, the federal military posts in Kansas rarely had enough men to spare in case an Indian uprising should occur.[2]

The recognition of the Indian problem in Kansas in the 1870's has been made previously by historians. With the exception of various studies on Dull Knife's raids of 1878, however, there is no evidence of detailed consideration of the problem of the 1870's. The decades of the 1850's and 1860's seem to hold the greatest interest for Kansas Indian research. Lonnie White has devoted several detailed accounts to the study of these periods in the Journal of the West, and other historians such as Paul Wellman have presented a careful picture of Indian wars prior to the 1870's. It seems that after the Medicine Lodge Treaty of 1867, the Indian problem in Kansas is overshadowed by more sensational battles farther west.

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[2]W. J. Carney, Colliers, XXVI (November 17, 1900), p. 12.

The period of the 1870's, when noted in reference to Kansas Indian problems, is usually not handled as a study in itself, but as a brief observation in support of a larger problem, and from a military point of view. The problem has been included in the biography or autobiography of various military leaders and professional soldiers; however, there were few actual military encounters with the Indian in Kansas during the 1870's, and information from this source is minimal.

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the Kansas Indian situation from a completely different point of view. The problem will be examined through the eyes of the settler, as described in contemporary newspapers, as he attempted to establish a livelihood on the Kansas prairies. The direct conflict between the settler and the Indian in the struggle for the frontier will be depicted, and reference to military activities will be made only when directly related to this struggle. An effort will be made to portray the prejudices and feelings of various geographical areas on the Kansas frontier toward the Indian threat. An attempt will also be made to relate these feelings and opinions to the underlying causes of the problem, and the action taken against it. In summary, this thesis will in addition to being a chronological account of the situation, examine the frontier problems from the settlers' point of view.

This investigation will be handled as a presentation of events in two distinct time sequences. The first sequence deals with the years 1870 to 1875 which involved sporadic outbreaks by various Indian tribes in southern and western Kansas counties. The second sequence deals primarily with the Cheyenne uprising in the late 1870's that left a swath of destruction across Kansas. The research will be restricted to the decade of the 1870's with the exception of the second chapter which provides the background material for this period, and examines the underlying causes of the Indian problem during this time.

Although there were six tribes in the Indian Territory known as "wild tribes" capable of insurrection at any time, in reality there were only two that seriously plagued the Kansas settler in the 1870's.[3] These were the Osage tribe, which was responsible for many of the uprisings of the early 1870's, and the Cheyenne tribe which was activily engaged in depredations throughout the entire decade. The remaining "wild tribes" were the Apaches, Arapahoes, Comanches, and Kiowas.

Since this thesis will attempt to present the Kansas Indian situation of the 1870's from the settler's point of view, special attention will be given to the problems and

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[3]Geo. W. Martin (ed.), Kansas State Governor Messages, 1861-1881 Vol. I (Topeka: Kansas Publishing House), p. 391.

hardships of the frontier Kansas settler. It will be illustrated that although the Indian threat of this period is considered inconsequential by many historians, it was significant enough to threaten any extended settlement of the Kansas frontier in the 1870's.

The recorded accounts of the problem of the 1870's in Kansas are to be found primarily in military writings and in brief recognition of the situation in other historical writings. Although some such sources were used to provide background and statistical information for this study, the bulk of the information included came from contemporary newspapers and periodicals published during the 1870's.

Since few papers were published in the frontier areas of Kansas particularly in the early 1870's, there are two types of news articles involved in the research of this thesis. One is a limited number of local publications in areas where Indian trouble actually occured. These accounts often display strong sentiment, and both news articles and editorial statements are used to reflect the feelings of the people involved. The second type includes papers published in more densely populated areas of eastern Kansas. These papers also furnish first hand accounts of the situation and are valuable in portraying the existing situation. However, these accounts are more refined and often fail to reflect emotional prejudices as strongly as the frontier publications did.

Another source of information was personal accounts of Indian skirmishes that were reproduced in periodicals of the 1870's and later periods. Also, extensive use was made of state and federal reports, documents, and correspondence located in the archives of the Kansas State Historical Society in Topeka, Kansas. The newspaper files of the Kansas State Historical Society and the William Allen White Library in Emporia provided the bulk of information which this paper attempts to assemble into an accurate account of the actual situation that existed in Kansas in the 1870's.

CHAPTER II

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO THE HOSTILITIES OF THE 1870'S

The Indian problems that were experienced by the Kansas settler in the decade of the 1870's had roots in many years of struggle between the red man and the ever advancing civilization of the white race. However, the 1870's marked the culmination of this struggle within her borders, and after 1879, the Indian no longer presented a formidable obstacle to settlement on the Kansas frontier. The struggle of the Indian and the Kansas settler in the 1870's never really reached the proportions of an all out war, at least not in the sense that struggles of the 1850's and 1860's did. However, the situation that existed from 1870 to 1879 did have an important effect on the final stage of settlement in Kansas. This paper does not attempt to determine which side of the struggle was the most justifiable, but simply presents a point of view on the part of the settler. Even so, to have proper perspective in viewing this situation, a basic understanding of preceding and underlying factors involved in the Indian depredations is helpful.

Although the Indian is presented as an unspeakable barbarian by the settler who existed in close proximity to him, the white man on many occasions exploited him for

selfish interests. A promise to an Indian seemed to carry no sacred connotations, a fact to which various broken treaties bear mute testimony. A brief look at a few of the agreements and ventures on the part of the white man's government may help to identify some of the factors involved in the confrontation of the settler and the Indian. The settler staunchly maintained that any injustices done the Indian did not warrant the inhumanity which was visited on the frontier by various tribes. On the other hand, many frontier newspapers recognized the fact that such injustices did exist, and particularly in the late 1870's, the government policy was condemned almost as severely as the Indian himself. While some actually sympathized with the Indian, in most cases the protests were grounded in a desire to maintain peace rather than a sincere interest in the fate of the red man.

There is an abundance of published material discussing treaties and agreements between the white man and the various Indian tribes. It is not in the interest of this paper to involve extensive histories of the tribes, although a brief outline of the situation of the two tribes most greatly concerned in the Kansas raids of the 1870's will be discussed. These two tribes are the Osages and the Cheyennes. Although at various times they were allied with other tribes in their attacks on the Kansas frontier, they

bear the heaviest burden of guilt from the point of view of frontier editors.

The Cheyennes signed their first peace treaty with the Federal government in 1825, acknowledging the supremacy of the United States.[1] However, they were soon to suffer at the hands of the men they respected, and the ultimate result was a desperate struggle for existence being carried on fifty years after that first treaty. The Cheyennes, like many other tribes, resented the westward push of civilization and it became necessary for the Federal government to establish some sort of security for westward immigration. This was briefly accomplished by the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1851. Under the terms of this agreement, Cheyennes, along with several other tribes, agreed to abstain from all hostilities on whites in return for which they were to receive $50,000 per year for fifty years.[2] The United States failed to keep these terms, however, and the disillusioned Cheyennes again began their raids. At the same time that the depredations were occuring, the Cheyennes expressed a desire to cease fighting and to be granted land where they could dwell unmolested by white civilization. In a treaty

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[1]Helen Jackson, A Century of Dishonor (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1886), p. 66.

[2]James C. Malin, "Indian Policy and Westward Expansion," Humanistic Studies, II (November, 1921), p. 92. Area of treaty shown in map on page 82.

of 1860, they relinquished all claims to lands in Kansas as well as in Nebraska and Colorado. In return they were to be established in agriculture by the federal government. Again they were dissatisfied, and since the treaty had involved only a few of the Cheyenne tribes, hostilities continued. In retaliation by the military, a tribe of peaceful Cheyennes were all but wiped out in the infamous Sand Creek Massacre of 1864, and a full scale war resulted.[3]

Eventually, the Cheyennes were in part relocated in the Indian Territory south of the Kansas border. The problems of white encroachment were supposedly solved by the Medicine Lodge Treaty of 1867 which promised that no white hunters would be allowed south of the Arkansas River, and no settlement by whites in the Territory itself was to be executed.[4] These promises were also broken by the white man, and the constant pressure for land and the extermination of wild game directly contributed to the continued warfare of the 1870's.

The Osage Indians, who were heavily accused in the raiding of southern Kansas in 1874, had not suffered as severely at the hands of the government, but they had also

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[3]Jackson, A Century of Dishonor, pp. 81-87.

[4]John Joseph Mathews, The Osages (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961), p. 688. Area of treaty shown in map on page 83.

felt the push of white civilization, and were exploited greatly by the frontiersmen. The Osage tribe had been considered by most settlers as more civilized than the Cheyennes, and consequently indignation at his depredations was greatly multiplied.

The Osage tribe had been moved west of the Mississippi River during the Jackson Administration. The Osage reservation occupied a large area in Kansas, and although the state had no jurisdiction over it, politicians and speculators had been pushing for cession of the Osage reserve since the territory was organized in 1854. The Osage reservation in Kansas was surrounded with white settlements by 1862. The pressure from land hungry speculators was intensified, and in a treaty in 1865 the Osages agreed to cede a part of their lands to the United States. An important factor in this treaty was that it also provided for the eventual removal of the Osage tribe from Kansas.[5]

After the cession of the first Osage lands in Kansas, the pressure of white civilization increased. The settlers continued to encroach on Osage land, and on July 15, 1870, federal legislation was passed for the removal of the Osages to Indian Territory. The treaty was signed by the Osages in September, but many problems developed with

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[5]Ibid., pp. 650-59

premature settlement of the land which directly contradicted what the Federal government was trying to achieve.[6] As a result, bitter feelings were encountered on both sides which contributed to the Osage threat of the early 1870's.

With the basic backgrounds of the two most severely implicated tribes in the 1870's, a close look at the immediate causes of the conflicts can more clearly define the problems and attitudes on the Kansas frontier. The main forces involved were the Indian policy of the Federal government, and the exploitation of the Indian by the white inhabitants of the area. The government, for the most part, blamed the Indian problem on white opportunists. In February of 1874, General Harney advanced this idea in testimony before a House committee investigating the raids. Harney maintained that the troubles with the Indian were principally caused by fraudulent agents and whiskey dealers, and that if the Indian had been treated fairly, no problem would have developed.[7] Two months later, a similar charge was made by General Pope, asserting that unlawful trade in whiskey and other wrongs committed by whites within the Indian reservations had resulted in the current troubles.[8]

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[6] Ibid., p. 687.

[7] The Walnut Valley Times, February 13, 1874.

[8] The Wilson County Citizen, July 24, 1874.

As will be witnessed in a succeeding chapter, the same problem of unscrupulous dealings with the Indian by the white man was raised during the raids of 1878.

On the other hand, the settler tended to see the policy of the Federal government as a major factor in his Indian troubles, and his extreme fear and hatred of the Indian prompted him to demand more forceful methods of handling the situation. The Indian policy of the United States had undergone three basic stages of development. The first stage during the settling of the eastern half of the country had basically followed a course of removing the Indian and re-establishing him west of the Mississippi River. With the westward movement of civilization, a second phase of government Indian policy developed. In this period, a plan was evolved to consolidate the Indian tribes in the Southwest so as to allow passage of immigrants along northern routes. The third stage was a further development of the second phase, only the emphasis was on grouping the tribes in the north and in the south, and clearing a path for western expansion through Kansas and Nebraska.[9] During these three steps, until the early 1850's, a forceful military program was employed to manipulate the various Indian tribes. In 1848, the Department of the Interior was

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[9]Malin, Indian Policy, p. 14.

created, and the Indian Bureau was transferred from the War Department to this new department.[10] After this, the policy toward the Indian began to change from military containment to peaceful negotiation of disputes, and on this factor the frontier inhabitants place much responsibility for the constant Indian threat.

In March of 1869, before his election, Grant had taken a militant stand, stating that "settlers and emigrants must be protected even if the extermination of every Indian tribe is necessary to secure such a result." Under the pressure of growing humanitarian interests, however, Grant soon revised his position and instituted his peace policy toward the Indian. This became known as the Quaker policy and was severely berated on the frontier as a contributing factor to the Indian threat.[11] Under this policy, the Indian was equipped with weapons for hunting, which was a great mistake to the settler's way of thinking. In this position and with the threat of military reprisal diminished, a situation had been created which proved to be quite explosive in the early 1870's. The Topeka Commonwealth of September 10, 1874 contained the following editorial comment:

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[10] Ibid., p. 84.

[11] Mathews, The Osages, p. 683.

> We approach a subject now that we are unable to handle without a burning sense of indignation that in some degree may prevent a just consideration of it; it is the very present and grave question of how to protect white settlers from butchery, and keep in proper subjection several thousand treacherous and implacable savages. It is the policy inaugurated by the government in some hour of sentimental and highly poetized philanthropy, when the practical Yankee wit and judgment of our governors were abroad and replaced by a false, unreal and illogical sense of justice to a wild, untutored people, who respect only power strenuously applied; and humanity to wretches who look upon a humane man as a milksop and a coward.

The Quaker policy demanded that the Indian be handled peacefully, and because of this, many settlers hated it as strongly as they did the Indian himself. Another account proposed a harsh sentence on the Quaker and his ideas:

> Now it is our opinion that if God Almighty wants to settle this Indian matter it will only be necessary to entice a few Quakers into the Territory. If the Indians will not do the scalping there are plenty of men on the border who will help them. We are sick of this Quaker policy and it is our desire to see a new policy adopted.[12]

Still another source stated that a volley of rifle bullets would be more effective than "all that speechifying long-winded peacemakers may address to the scalp-taking warriors."[13]

The frontier inhabitant who suffered most from Indian raids definitely put a large amount of blame for the

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[12]The Walnut Valley Times, July 24, 1874.

[13]The Wilson County Citizen, August 7, 1874.

Indian troubles on government policy. There was another factor, however, which also contributed extensively to the situation of the early 1870's. This involved the activities of the settler himself, and was particularly valid in relation to the Osage Indian tribe. The rich land of the Osage Diminished Reserve was a constant source of desire to the land hungry settler. When it became apparent that the Indian was going to be removed from this area, squatters began moving into the area prematurely. The treaty was not ratified by the Osage tribe until fall of 1870. The Walnut Valley Times of May 20, 1870, recorded a convention in Cowley County on the tenth of that month. The purpose of the convention was to demand extinction of Indian title to the Osage lands in Kansas, and to push for immediate removal of the tribe to Indian Territory. Another account in the same paper on May 27 verified that white men were actually settling claims on Osage property in hopes that the government would soon purchase the land and place it on the public market.

The attitude of the settler portrayed in the previous paragraph certainly contributed to strained relations with the Indian. This situation was not restricted only to the Osage lands. With the push of civilization, the settler had his eye on the entire Territory which had been established as a permanent reservation for various tribes.

The following editorial statement portrays his position on this matter:

> This superb country, unquestionably one of the most fertile on the globe, is a constant source of torment to the brave white men of the border, in whom the spirit of speculation is strong. . . . He aches to be admitted to the Territory with the same privileges granted Indian citizens. . . . He is crazed with the visions of the far-spreading, flower-bespangled prairies, the fertile foothills, the rich quarries, mines and valley lands. He burns to course at free will over the grazing regions where even the Indians raise such fine stock. . . . He thunders at the northern and southern entrances of the Territory, and will not remain tranquil.[14]

This attitude toward the land guaranteed the Indian by government treaties, together with encroachment on Indian hunting grounds by white hunters contributed jointly to making the Indian threat a constant factor throughout most of the decade of the 1870's.

In conclusion, there were several basic factors involved in the Indian raids and settler attitudes of the Kansas frontier during the 1870's. The long history of broken treaties and strained relations between the Indian and the Federal government was carried over into the situation of the 1870's. With this sort of overall precedent and the desperate struggles of the previous decade, the conditions were indeed explosive. Coupled with these factors is the development of the Quaker policy of the

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[14] Ibid., July 4, 1873.

Federal government. This gave the Indian a freer hand in his depredations, and at the same time aroused resentment and disgust among the frontier settlements of Kansas. Finally, the whole situation was further undermined by white violations of Indian boundaries. In light of these factors, the situation after 1870 was extremely critical to the frontier inhabitant of Kansas and for the most part, he took a definite stand against the Indian regardless of which party was the most at fault in the conflict.

CHAPTER III

THE EXPLOSIVE SITUATION, 1870-1875

Although the majority of the Indians in Kansas had been transferred to reservations by 1870, the Indian problem was far from being resolved in the eyes of the Kansas settler. The situation was very complex, and resulted in outright warfare between the Indian and the settler, and in strained relations between Kansas and the Federal government. In this chapter, two basic aspects of the period will be pursued and interrelated. First, the extent and perspective of Indian attacks will be viewed, and second, the force of public opinion in Kansas will be related to the Indian problem.

Before discussing the actual raids of the period from 1870 to 1875, it may be helpful to view briefly the details of the problem. The Medicine Lodge Treaty had supposedly reduced the Indian threat to the Kansas frontier, and the Federal government directed military strength to other areas. In fact, the Indian threat in Kansas was reduced to sporadic outbreaks by small bands of Indians. The minimal number of military garrisons after the forceful campaigns of previous decades, tended to magnify the danger of these small bands to the Kansas settler. In addition, the large concentration of Indians only a short distance

away in Indian Territory had a definite psychological effect on the frontier settler. In the 1870's, the following information concerning the number of Indians in the Territory was reported to Kansas officials by a state employed scout.[1]

Apaches	344
Arapahoes	2676
Cheyennes	3298
Comanches	1600
Kiowas	1120
Osages	2361

In truth, the Cheyenne and Osage tribes were the only members of the above list that posed a real threat to the frontier; however, the settler tended to look at the total figure, which included squaws and children, and in this light, the inhabitants of Indian Territory appeared very formidable.

As a result of the above mentioned situation, the settler was constantly alert for trouble and was ready to defend himself first and to consider the actual circumstances later. The end result of this attitude was that any Indian crossing the boundary into Kansas for whatever reason was considered an enemy and a potential threat to the community. This attitude was even carried to the point of proposing to deny the Indian the right to enter the state

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[1]Geo. W. Martin (ed.), Transactions of The Kansas State Historical Society Vol IX (Topeka: State Printing Office, 1906), p. 388.

to hunt buffalo. The settler contended that while no immediate damage might be done, the Indian could use these excursions to discover weak points in the frontier defense system. This information might then be used later to facilitate a massacre.[2]

Although such caution and distrust of the Indian seemed to be a requirement for survival on the frontier, it often resulted in what is known as an "Indian scare." In such an instance, a general alarm might be spread at the appearance of a small hunting party from a band of peaceful Indians. This in itself only served to keep the settler on his guard, but the false alarm was often taken up by big papers in the eastern part of Kansas, which resulted in a stifling of immigration when no danger actually existed. In this way, the scare could be very detrimental to the frontier area, and a great resentment was built up among the settlers toward Indians in general.

In spite of frequent false alarms, it is evident that a continued Indian threat did exist in Kansas after the signing of the Medicine Lodge Treaty. The Kansas settler was interested mainly in establishing a home and in gaining a livelihood out of the prairies, and the Indian continued to be an obstacle to this goal. The small number

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[2]The Republican Valley Empire, April 22, 1871.

of United States troops in Kansas and the opening of new areas of settlement through treaties, such as the Osage lands in 1870 and the Cherokee Strip in 1872, made the position of the Kansas settler somewhat uncertain despite paper peace agreements.[3] The opening of such vast new areas to settlers caused them to become widely dispersed, and consequently made them even more vulnerable to roving bands of Indians. As the settlers began to spread out along the various creeks and rivers of the new lands, they had to be ready to repel an Indian raid at any time. They lived in fear of having their stock stolen, or their families massacred, and many were either killed or discouraged, and were driven out of the country by this situation.[4]

Those who determined to remain on the Kansas frontier throughout the 1870's, witnessed a steady increase in Indian activity and depredations from 1870 to the close of General Miles' expedition in 1875. In citing the extent of the Indian threat in the early 1870's, a few outstanding or at least representative incidents will be related from each year to trace the progression of the problem. In the period immediately following the Medicine Lodge Treaty, the inhabitants of the frontier momentarily began to relax

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[3]The Neodesha Citizen, September 6, 1872.

[4]W. J. Carney, Colliers, XXVI (November 17, 1900), 12.

their guard, often with tragic results. One of the first incidents of the decade which, to the settler, hinted of the things to come, was the Solomon River massacre in May of 1870. Five homesteaders were cutting wood near the mouth of the Limestone Creek, a tributary of the Solomon in Mitchell County, when they were attacked by a small band of Indians. Having no suspicion of trouble, the men were unarmed and three were killed instantly. A fourth man was shot while trying to escape, and only one man lived to tell about the attack.[5]

As the summer of 1870 progressed, Indian raids were reported from both the southern and the western frontiers of Kansas. While the newspapers were constantly carrying accounts of horse theft by the Indians, these raids were being accompanied more frequently by attacks on the settler himself and also by murder. In a June raid at White Rock in Cloud County, several persons were murdered.[6] A few days later, three men were killed in a similar raid on Mulberry Creek near Fort Dodge over a hundred miles to the southwest.[7] The feeling of relief that had momentarily blanketed the Kansas frontier after the cessation of

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[5]The Guilford Citizen, May 28, 1870.

[6]The Republican Valley Empire, June 14, 1870.

[7]Ibid., July 5, 1870.

hostilities in the 1860's, now began to be replaced by a constant wariness and renewed hatred of the Indian.

As the decade progressed, the scattered attacks of small raiding parties became more frequent and consolidated, and as a result were more intolerable to the inhabitants of the frontier areas. In the absence of adequate military protection, the Kansas settler was forced to rely on a mutual agreement with his neighbors for protection and retaliation against the common threat of the Indian. This was later enhanced by the formation of a local militia when the situation reached its most crucial point in 1874. An example of this frontier bond is related by an old frontiersman who experienced several Indian battles on the Kansas prairies. The incident occured in 1871 on the Medicine Bow River in western Kansas. A group of marauding Cheyennes attacked the farm of a family by the name of Simmons. At the time of the attack, only Mrs. Simmons, her two daughters and her invalid father were at home. When Mr. Simmons and his twenty-one year old son returned a short time after the raid, they found their house burning and their family gone. Mrs. Simmons and her father had been killed and scalped and the two daughters had been kidnapped by the Indians. Soon every able settler within twenty miles gathered to search for the missing girls and as the party traveled, more men joined the ranks until

sixty armed men were trailing the Indians. The men were unsuccessful in their revenge, but the mutual bond and indignation of the frontiersmen is well-illustrated.[8]

When the winter came, the activities on the frontier tapered off, but with the arrival of clear weather, the Indians once again began harassing the frontier settlements with horse stealing forays and senseless murders. By the fall of 1871, the settler was strongly protesting against the situation, and area newspaper accounts and editorials were taking up his cause and echoing his plea. On August 23, 1871, six men were attacked and killed by Indians on Crooked Creek in southwestern Kansas, and several days later the Wichita City Eagle suggested that there could no longer be any doubt that the Indians meant war. It was also proclaimed that five thousand men in southwestern Kansas could be raised in a week who would settle the Indian problem once and for all. The article also went on to state that "without stopping to inquire who was first to blame, it is evident that the Indians must now be terribly punished, the sooner the better, and the Kansas boys are the ones to do it."[9]

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[8]Carney, Colliers, (November 17, 1900), pp. 12-16. The writer was unable to determine the location of the Medicine Bow River.

[9]The Wichita City Eagle, September 3, 1871. Exact location of Crooked Creek was not given, but streams by that name exist in Gray, Ford, and Meade Counties.

To the settlers' dismay, the Indian raids in 1871 did not cease with the coming of cold weather as they had the year before. In mid-November, two men were murdered on Beaver Creek near Arkansas City in Cowley County. Five settlers had been buffalo hunting and after killing two of the beasts they returned to camp. Later two of the men, Henry Floyd and Harry Hildreth went back to retrieve the carcasses. When they failed to return, the other men began searching for them. Henry was found with his head severed. Harry was never found. Although most previous attacks were credited to the Cheyenne Indian, in this case, the murderers were identified as members of one of the Osage tribes.[10] About a week after the Beaver Creek incident, the Indian again terrified the inhabitants of the southern frontier of Kansas by murdering eight men on a buffalo hunt in the vicinity of Elk City in Montgomery County.[11]

Until the fall of 1871, the scope of the Indian problem on the frontier of Kansas was realized only by the various areas that had suffered attacks. However, in the summer of 1872, with the continuation and frequency of Indian raids, the protest of the frontier inhabitants was louder and more explicit than it had been previously. In

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[10]The Neodesha Citizen, November 24, 1871.

[11]Ibid.

taking up the cause of the settler, the frontier editor first had to fight Quaker peace policies that had been adopted by the Federal government toward the Indian. In light of this policy, the Indian was portrayed as the noble red man, and as a result, eastern publications, far from any possible danger of the Indian, tended to sympathize with his cause. In the following excerpt from an editorial in a Hutchinson, Kansas paper, the attitude of the settler toward such sympathy is clearly defined: "We that live nearer the frontier have no sympathy with such twaddle. We know that from the character of the Indian and his circumstances, no policy, no reasonable policy will keep peace." The article also pointed out that the Indian would continue to maraud as long as he could escape the law by retreating to the sanctity of his reservation.[12]

The editorial just mentioned from the Hutchinson paper seems mild compared to one which appeared in a Wichita, Kansas paper about the same time. The inhabitants of Sedgwick County were upset by raids taking place both to the south and to the west of that area, and the following comment from The Wichita City Eagle of July 12, 1872, sums up their feelings toward the Indian who kept them in a state of fear and uncertainty:

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[12]The Hutchinson News, July 25, 1872.

> The miserable, thieving, murdering, dirty red devils are on the warpath as the surest means for new treaties, new blankets, provisions and ammunition. The sickly, softhearted sentimentality entertained generally by eastern philanthropists, and which affects even, to a greater or lesser degree, governmental heads, is well appreciated by these greasy, copperhued demons, and hence the murdering and stealing that we hear of daily now. Sheridan is right. Go for them as you would go for poisonous snakes, in regular Chivington and Sand Creek style, until no shaven-head, lousy, breech-clouted red skin can be found in all the land.

While this sort of attitude might have been difficult for an eastern writer to understand, the inhabitants of the frontier felt fully justified in their desire for the annihilation of the red man. Their existence on the drought-plagued Kansas prairies was unduly hard without the threat imposed by the Indian. Originally the Indian had been content to limit his forays to stealing a few horses in the various settlements of the frontier, and this had been accepted by the settler as a way of life. However, by the summer of 1872, the Indian bands were continually killing buffalo hunters on sight, and more often than not, the horse stealing missions resulted in death for white men involved. An example can be seen in an incident which occured in Comanche County, Kansas about the thirteenth of August. The Black Dog band of the Osage tribe, while on a horse stealing foray along the Medicine River, was surprised by Ed Mosley and murdered him. It

was later revealed that Osages had killed him because he knew them and could have identified them.[13]

In the fall of 1872, the Indian situation on the frontiers of Kansas suddenly obtained statewide recognition and became the subject of widespread publicity much of which would later prove to be inaccurate. Probably the one incident responsible for touching off this expanded awareness of the problem was the Jordan Massacre. The massacre which occured on the fifth of October near Ellis, Kansas is described in the following portion of a state Senate session dealing with the Indian problem.

> Whereas during the month of October, 1872, on Middle Fork of Walnut Creek, in the western portion of this state, several barbarous and shocking murders were perpetrated upon the citizens of the State of Kansas by roving bands of Indians, among which was the killing and mutilation of the bodies of Richard Jordan, George Jordan, and a Swede, name unknown, and the capture and abduction of Mrs. Mary Jordon, the wife of Richard; and whereas outrages of this character are of frequent occurance, interfering with the progress and settlement of the western portion of our State, and the perpetrators thereof permitted to go unpunished.[14]

With the mounting pressure from local newspapers and the settler himself, it was apparent to the Kansas government that some steps would have to be taken to deal with the problem. State-organized local militias were suggested,

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[13]The Neodesha Citizen, August 30, 1872.

[14]Senate Document, 42d Congress, 3rd Session, No. 64.

and Senator John H. Edwards stated in a letter to Governor Harvey that even though the Federal government chose to ignore the problem, the state of Kansas had authority over her own territory, and laws should be passed to keep the Indian outside of her borders.[15]

All that resulted at this time in the way of official opposition to the Indian depredations, however, was a senate resolution to halt payments and bounties to the Indian until the raids were stopped and the guilty parties were punished. This legislation appeared insignificant to the settler and was completely ignored by the Indian. Having lost all faith in both the intention and the ability of the government to settle the Indian problem, the frontier inhabitants voiced staunch disapproval of existing policies, and advocated their own solution to the threat that faced them constantly. The Hutchinson News, a paper which had formerly promoted a more reserved view of the situation, now pronounced judgment on the Indian in no uncertain terms. The following excerpt appeared in the September 19, 1872, edition:

> There is only one policy that will avail anything with the savage, and that is the policy of the rifle and revolver. . . . Hence we ask for a discontinuance of the quaker policy, and adoption

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[15]Kansas State Historical Society, Seventeenth Biennial Report (Topeka: State Printing Office, 1911), p. 65.

> of one more forcible, manly and just. We believe that assassins, robbers, and thieves should be brought to justice, be they either red or white, and advocate that the government take such measures as will cause every squad of marauding Indians to be run down and if necessary put to death. Pirates should be summarily dealt with, and we hope that the sickly sentimentality prevailing at Washington about the "poor Indian" will be dissipated to the extent that the government will realize that the only way to protect our frontiersmen is by opposing to the savages a bulwark of steel.

In another instance, a Wichita paper denounced the government policy of peace by stating that the missionary should follow rather than precede the soldier, and carbines and sabers should replace soft words and gifts in dealing with him. The idea also was advanced that the land of the frontier belonged to those with the ability to use it productively, and that the savage had no right to lay claim to it. In conclusion, it was stated that the Indian should be notified in unmistakable terms that if he did not cease his murderous practices, it would mean death for his entire race.[16]

Although the Indian problem of Kansas had by now reached a point of widespread recognition, and although public sentiment against the Indian was high, very little was done to correct the situation. In the spring of 1873, the raids resumed in both frequency and viciousness as

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[16]The Wichita City Eagle, October 24, 1872.

before. On March 19, a band of Cheyennes killed four members of Captain Darling's surveying teams on the western frontier of Kansas. After the massacre, small parties of Cheyennes visited other surveying camps telling what they had done and spreading the word that all other inhabitants of the area return eastward under the threat of similar treatment.[17]

One result of the widespread recognition of the frontier Indian situation was that it proved to be, for the most part, detrimental to the areas involved. This was simply that when the raids increased again in 1873, wild and totally groundless rumors of Indian massacres appeared in both local and out-of-state publications. Although many accounts related in these papers were in fact true, and although the situation on the frontier was crucial to the settler himself, in many cases the most insignificant appearance of an Indian party was described by some enthusiastic newsman as a major invasion. By publishing false or exaggerated stories, these papers tended to deprive the frontier of new inhabitants which was the one thing they most needed to establish a strong defense against the Indian. Although this aspect of the situation became much more acute in the following year

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[17]The Walnut Valley Times, April 25, 1873.

during increased Indian activity, it was recognized as having done positive injury in the way of keeping out settlers as early as May of 1873.[18]

The situation in 1873 was one which caused the Kansas settler more alarm than any time since the bloody days of the sixties. The Indian was committing senseless murders of anyone he caught alone or in a small group away from a settlement. Many newspapers predicted that a major war was imminent, and although this failed to occur, the brutality and cruelty of the attacks put sentiment on the frontier at a fever pitch. An example of the type of activity which generally inflamed public opinion was the murder of a teenage boy near Fort Dodge in western Kansas. A party of English tourists were buffalo hunting in the area, and hired a local boy to drive their wagon. After several days, their provisions gave out and the boy was sent to get more. When he failed to return in the expected time, the hunters traveled to Camp Supply in Indian Territory and a search party was sent out for the boy. He was found tied to his burned wagon. The horses had been stolen and the boy had been scalped and burned at the stake.[19]

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[18]The Hutchinson News, May 22, 1873.

[19]The Walnut Valley Times, December 19, 1873.

After four years of harassment by roving bands of savages, the settler on the Kansas frontier had become, for the most part, thoroughly disenchanted with the United States Army and the Indian policy of the Federal government. The worst was yet to come, however, for the summer of 1874 saw more raids and greater discontent than any of the four preceding it. Horse stealing missions were replaced by purposeful raids and murder on the part of the Indian. With trouble of a serious nature on both the southern border and the western frontier, publicity of the problem was widespread, and rumors and false scares were abundant. As a result, not only were new settlers discouraged from coming to the Kansas frontier, but many who had already established a homestead, packed up and moved back east. It was finally in 1874, that the Kansas government made some decisive moves to protect her frontiers from a force that threatened to block any further development of the area. A major factor contributing to the extreme uneasiness of Kansans in the summer of 1874, was that depredations occured almost simultaneously along both the western frontier and the southern border of the state. On June 24, The Topeka Commonwealth carried reports of Indian attacks in several southwestern counties. The first outbreak according to this source occured in Comanche County. A small party of Cheyennes first made their

appearance on Mule Creek and proceeded to Kiowa where they wounded two settlers. Four miles west of that town, they killed and scalped a farmer by the name of Kime. Shortly after this they shot and scalped two more settlers who were working on a fence. The same day a second party of Indians made their appearance in the same general area. This time there were reported to be about forty-five in the group, and two more settlers were killed and scalped. Although it could not be verified, seven other deaths were attributed to this group of Indians. The inhabitants of southwestern Kansas immediately began stockading their settlements and appealed to Governor Osborn for aid. A telegram from Osborn to General Pope in request of arms and provisions for the settler verified the killing of five more men in Barbour County. The same paper which reported this correspondence, voiced a lack of confidence in government support that existed in the frontier areas by stating that Congress had so drastically reduced the army, it was doubted whether a corporal's guard could be furnished to protect the frontier.[20] A similar plea in a Wichita paper called upon Governor Osborn to protect the frontier or arm the settlers regardless of what the United States Army might do or promise.[21] A Hutchinson, Kansas paper carried

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[20]The Topeka Commonwealth, June 24, 1874.

[21]The Wichita City Eagle, June 25, 1874.

accounts of the killings in Comanche and Barbour Counties as well as the murder of three men near Caldwell in Sumner County. These incidents were dismissed as a false scare and no indication of things to come.[22] This attitude was not shared to the south and west of Hutchinson. At the same time that the Hutchinson paper was dismissing the situation, Dodge City was preparing for an all out attack. Although such an attack never developed, several hunters had been killed in the area and the Indian had made clear his desire to clear the country of all white inhabitants.[23] The main source of unrest at this time, however, seemed to center in Barbour County in the vicinity of Medicine Lodge. The seriousness of the situation there is stressed in correspondence appealing to Governor Osborn for help.[24]

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[22]The Hutchinson News, June 25, 1874.

[23]The Wichita City Eagle, June 25, 1874.

[24]Geo. W. Martin (ed.), The State Government and The Indian Bureau on The Osage Troubles In Barbour County Kansas in The Summer of 1874 (Topeka: Kansas Publishing House, 1875), p. 65.

Medicine Lodge, Barbour County, Kansas
June 17, 1874

Hon. T. A. Osborn, Governor State of Kansas:

Sir: The Indians are raiding Barbour County, and have this day killed one of our citizens, that we know of, and probably more.

Kiowa was attacked yesterday, and a number of horses were run off. Four tribes are on the war-path, and threaten to clean out the Medicine River country.

The lives of the people are in danger. We need immediate assistance.

(Signed)

W. M. Friedley	B. H. Reed
G. W. Ellis	C. T. Rigy
O. D. Merriman	J. R. Easley
Rev. G. W. Keller	W. F. Crisp
H. Jones	H. More
A. Winston	J. More

Barbour County, Kansas
Sun City, June 21, 1874

Hon. Mr. Osborn, Governor State of Kansas:

Dear Sir: The people of Barbour County are suffering from Indian raids. Many horses have been stolen, and five men have been found killed and scalped by them. Most of the settlers will leave the county unless the State can give them protection.

Yours, in haste, from
S. B. Douglas
Co. Supt. Pub. Instruction of Barbour Co.

The situation in the southern counties seemed crucial, if not from the threat of an all out Indian war, then from the fact that it was seriously involving the interests of the state. Any further immigration to this area was being hampered, and established residents of Barbour and surrounding counties were leaving their homes for safer areas in

the east. The panic even spread to areas that were in no immediate danger. An example of this can be seen in the fact that around the first of July, settlers on the Cowskin Creek near Wichita, as well as some in western Sedgwick County, packed up their belongings and fled from the area. Although some of them returned later, the Indian threat was taking a heavy toll on the frontier.[25]

On the third of July, the attacks near Caldwell, Kansas, followed by a report from John D. Mills, served to increase the unrest and panic on the frontier. Mills was an Indian agent for the Cheyenne agency at Fort Sill, and he brought terrifying news to the border settler. According to his account, five war parties were moving toward Caldwell and had already been responsible for the scalping of four white men. He estimated the force at three thousand braves, and in his own words, "I have no doubt the Indians will clean everything until repulsed; this is their proclamation."[26]

The trouble continued in other areas also. Shortly after the Caldwell reports, a number of immigrants and hunters were killed near Dodge City, and a report from Sargent, Kansas, on July 7, stated that there were an

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[25]The Topeka Commonwealth, July 14, 1874.

[26]The Walnut Valley Times, July 10, 1874.

estimated three hundred warriors in the area, and two white settlers had already been killed. The account added that immigration to the western frontier had stopped entirely.[27] Although the report of agent Mills was discredited by many as an exaggeration, and he was accused of greatly injuring the southwestern Kansas counties by spreading his story, the inhabitants of the troubled areas were little comforted. For those who refused to be driven from their homesteads by the Indian threat, fear was paralleled by a strong indignation over the way the situation was being handled. Governor Osborn's June plea to General Pope at Fort Leavenworth had been rejected, the General affirming that he could not spare troops for patrolling the frontier.[28]

In general, the frontiersmen were in favor of a wholesale war against the red man, and they were thoroughly disgusted with the Washington opposition to such a policy. On July 9, The Topeka Commonwealth interpreted the rash of murders and scalpings as a prologue to a long awaited war of extermination against the Indian. The feeling of the settler is well-portrayed in the following editorial:

> Something will have to be done to put a stop to these Indian raids. It would be a God's blessing if some of these murderous tribes should get hold of Grant and some of his peace-policy men

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[27]The Topeka Commonwealth, July 16, 1874.

[28]Martin, Osage Troubles In Barbour County Kansas, p. 6.

> and torture them for an hour or two. . . . It is no use talking. There is but one way to deal with an Indian, and that is to kill him. No Indian is a "good Indian." They all ought to be cremated; and in our opinion it would work to advantage to cremate a few peace-policy men along with them. An Indian lives but to scalp a white man and he will invariably do if he gets a chance, spite of missionaries, preachers, bibles or Quakers. Kill the red devils and we will have peace.[29]

Another similar statement from a correspondent in Sargent, Kansas, held that no assurance for life and property could be had as long as false theories were permitted to dictate Indian policy in Washington. This article also suggested that Sharps rifles would have a wonderfully subduing effect on the untutored mind of the Indian.[30]

In response to the dismissal of their plight by the U.S. Army, the inhabitants of the frontier areas appealed to Governor Osborn to equip them to defend the frontier themselves. After the first raid of Medicine Lodge in June, a party of settlers took matters into their own hands and set out for reprisal of scalps in Indian Territory, stating their aim to ignore boundary lines.[31] For the most part, however, the settler desired aid from the state government to establish a local militia, and

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[29]The Walnut Valley Times, July 3, 1874.

[30]The Topeka Commonwealth, July 30, 1874.

[31]The Wilson County Citizen, July 3, 1874.

equip it with arms and supplies. The settler surmised this would be a much more effective preventive measure than the regular army since a militia made up of frontiersmen would not go after the Indians without bringing home their scalps. In describing such a force, the following picture was portrayed by the July 17 issue of the Walnut Valley Times.

> These men will not respect reservation lines. The sacred policy of non-intercourse and sequestion must give way to the safety of men's lives and propriety of walking over into the Cheyenne and Arapahoe reservations and carrying on such a war of reprisal as will strike everlasting terror to the heart of the sleek, well-fed vipers whom we nourish and tend as Aesop's husbandman did the serpent, only that they may rob and murder us at their will and fly to their reservations for shelter.

With requests and plans for a local militia constantly pouring in from indignant citizens, Governor Osborn visited the southern border counties in late summer of 1874 to survey the situation. Shortly afterward, he authorized the organization of state supplied and commissioned militia units in various southern counties.[32] By the first of September, ten companies had been formed in Cowley and Sumner Counties alone, and a new hope was afforded the Kansas settler.[33]

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[32]The Topeka Commonwealth, August 6, 1874.

[33]Ibid., September 10, 1874.

With a certain amount of security established on the southern frontier, the focus was shifted to Indian problems in western Kansas. On August 15, a band of Cheyennes attacked a small railroad settlement 250 miles southwest of Wichita and murdered four men. All of the men were unarmed, and two of them were cruelly burned to death.[34] On August 24, a surveying party near Dodge City was murdered by the Cheyennes. The Cheyennes had been removed from this area only a short time before, and they held to the belief that if the land was not surveyed, the settler would not come to the area, and they might possibly retain it for hunting purposes. In this instance, Mr. C. F. Short and his working party of three men and two teenage boys were running township lines when the Indians attacked them. All six were killed and mutilated.[35] In September, the Indian carried out a deed which centered public attention on the western frontier as the Jordan massacre had attracted the country's notice in 1872. A family of immigrants on their way to Colorado was attacked by Cheyennes while passing through western Kansas. John Germain, his wife, his son, and two of his daughters were killed and scalped by the attackers. Four other daughters were taken

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[34]The Wichita City Eagle, August 20, 1874.

[35]The Topeka Commonwealth, September 3, 1874.

captive. The Cheyennes were known to be part of Grey Beard's band, and the girls were later rescued by General Miles' expedition. The incident, however, had raised feeling against the Indian to a fever pitch on the western frontier and their battle cry became, "Remember the Germain Girls."[36] On September 15, another band of Cheyennes attacked Pierceville in Finney County, but the Cheyenne menace was slowly being extinguished by the push of the Miles' expedition through western Kansas and down into the Territory.[37]

Probably one of the biggest controversies in relation to the Kansas Indian problem of the early 1870's was concerned with the Osage tribe. In 1870, the Osages had relinquished their claims in Kansas and moved quite peaceably to a reservation in Indian Territory just below the southern border of Kansas. They were considered at the time, to be one of the more civilized tribes, and consequently when they did emerge as the villain in 1874, public outrage against them was abnormally strong. The controversy arose over the extent to which the Osage tribe was involved in frontier raids. Although the preliminary reports had blamed the Cheyenne tribe and their confederates

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[36]Grace E. Meredith, Girl Captives of the Cheyennes (Los Angeles: Gem Publishing Company, 1927), pp. 17-20.

[37]The Topeka Commonwealth, September 17, 1874.

for almost all the killings in the southern counties from 1870 to 1874, it was later confirmed by the Adjutant General of Kansas that part of the bands involved were Osages.[38] On August 13, 1874, The Topeka Commonwealth published a list of at least thirty Kansans known to be the victims of the Osage raiders from 1871 to 1874. During the late summer and fall of 1874, the Osages dispelled all false ideas that the settler might have about their passiveness, and by August, public opinion on the frontier held them in even less esteem than was the Cheyenne. On July 12, The Arkansas City Traveler reported that the Big Hill band of the Osage tribe had joined with the Cheyennes in terrorizing southwestern counties. On July 22, a band of thirty Osage braves surrounded a settler and his son near Medicine Lodge and forced them to give up their wagon and team.[39] A unit of the Barbour County militia, under the leadership of Captain Cyrus Ricker, set out to punish the predatory Osages and engaged them in battle on August 5. Five of the Osage band were killed in this battle, which served to touch off a whole new

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[38]Geo. W. Martin (ed.), The State Government and The Indian Bureau On The Osage Troubles In Barbour County Kansas in The Summer of 1874 (Topeka: Kansas Publishing House, 1875), p. 41.

[39]The Winfield Courier, August 7, 1874.

crisis in Barbour County and the surrounding area.[40] The Osage nation immediately held a war council in the Territory, and around August 25, word was received from the Osage agent that the tribe had declared war, and that the southern frontier was in immediate danger.[41] On the 27th of August, five hunters were killed in Clark County by the Osages and at the same time Governor Osborn received reports of a band of young Osage braves heading for the Medicine Lodge settlements.[42] Public reaction to these gestures by the Osage nation was immediate and indignant. An editorial in The Wichita City Eagle on August 27 contained the following statement:

> For one, we are more glad than otherwise, that these red imps have declared war, for it leaves the matter in good shape for speedy settlement, otherwise they might have made a secret attack on some unprotected settlement and brought about much woe and suffering.

A similar article appeared a day later in a Fredonia paper:

> One streak of light illumines this dark prospect. The Osage tribe Great and Little, have declared war against the United States, including the state of Kansas, and it fills us with unspeakable satisfaction to contemplate in our minds eye the thorough drubbing they are about to receive. If ever a set of sneaking cut-throats and chronic horse thieves

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[40]The Wichita City Eagle, August 14, 1874.

[41]The Topeka Commonwealth, August 27, 1874.

[42]The Wilson County Citizen, October 9, 1874.

> deserved a lesson, it is this same tribe of Osages. The innate savageness of such tribes as the Cheyennes and Apaches pleads in polliation for their wrong doings with those who reduce justice to an abstraction and hold to the view that the Indians are more sinned against than sinning. The Osages, however are basically civilized and the best fed of all the tribes. In spite of this peaceful mask they are treacherous and decietful, constantly murdering defenseless white men. Now that the settlers have turned in their own protection, the Indians justify themselves by wholesale slaughter.[43]

The situation on the frontier could not be ignored any longer. The overt declaration of war left little doubt that the Indian was serious in his threat to the frontier and the above mentioned editorial concluded as follows:

> We are glad that this tribe has at last shown its hand, and that the dangerous illusion that they were a peace loving community of savages is at last effectually dissipated by this overt and unmistakable act.

The revenge of the Osages was never realized to any great extent in the fall of 1874. Governor Osborn called up the state militia forces after the first reports, and a small group of men was kept moving constantly along the southern border of Kansas to provide an early warning system to the settlements in that area.[44] In addition, the expedition of General Miles had pressed deep into the Territory and all resistance from the Cheyennes ended in

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[43] Ibid., August 28, 1874.

[44] The Girard Press, January 21, 1875.

the winter of 1874-75. The forces that had been removed from Kansas to accompany the expedition were now reinstated and in some cases reinforced, and the Osage threat was reduced to an occasional horse stealing foray by a few braves.[45]

In summary, the period from 1870 to 1875 proved to be a very crucial stage in the development of the Kansas frontier areas. It was marked by a steady increase in Indian depredations and a constant strain in settler-Indian relations that finally exploded in the turbulent summer and fall of 1874. Although many still considered most of the accounts as rumors, and denied any actual danger of war, a special investigation of the problem by the Kansas government verified that from June 17 to the latter part of September, there was a definite state of Indian war existing in southern Kansas.[46] Regardless of the actual seriousness of the situation, two major results can be related to it.

In the first place, the situation appeared to slow down the development of the Kansas frontiers. The strain

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[45]William E. Connelley (ed.), Collections of The Kansas State Historical Society 1926-1928 Vol. XVII (Topeka: Kansas State Printing Plant, 1928), p. 651.

[46]Geo. W. Martin (ed.), The State Government and The Indian Bureau On The Osage Troubles In Barbour County Kansas in The Summer of 1874 (Topeka: Kansas Publishing House, 1875), p. 41.

of constant Indian harassment caused a certain percentage of settlers to leave, but it seemed to do even greater damage in keeping new people from settling there. During the first trouble in June and early July of 1874, a prospective population of at least 10,000 new settlers was lost, according to an opinion expressed in a Topeka newspaper.[47]

Secondly, the events that took place in Kansas during the first four years of the 1870's had a great deal to do with the reversal of the Federal government's peace policy of dealing with the Indians, and as a result of this change of policy, the Indian situation in Kansas did not again get out of hand until the rampage of Dull Knife's Cheyennes across Kansas in 1878.

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[47] The Topeka Commonwealth, August 13, 1874.

CHAPTER IV

OPINION VERSUS POLICY, 1875-1879

The Indian threat in southern and western Kansas continued to hinder settlement and plague the settler in the years following 1874. Although no major massacres or organized raids occured until 1878, the Indian never ceased to be a problem to the frontiersman. However, the very existence of the tribes in Indian Territory put the settler on guard, and depredations of 1874 had verified all of his misgivings about that situation. A characteristic of the frontier view of the Indian after 1874 was the grouping by many settlers of all Indians into one category. The feeling that the only good Indian was a dead one became more general, and any redskin sighted north of the Territory, regardless of his reason for being there, was considered a hostile deserving of death. This, in part, contributed to some of the problems of 1878 which will be discussed later in this chapter. The Indian threat after 1874 also continued to be a problem, in spite of the fact that few killings occured, because it tended to deter immigration and retard local development of the frontier areas.

The actual situation in Kansas as far as outright Indian raids were concerned was fairly satisfactory from the winter of 1875 till the fall of 1878. For all practical

purposes, the Cheyenne resistance had been broken down by General Miles' campaign, and with various leaders of the 1874 uprising, imprisoned at Fort Marion in St. Augustine, Florida, the southern tribes remained farily docile.[1] The newspapers carried very few reports of depredations between 1874 and 1878, and what accounts were published did not denote the serious nature that was invoked in previous years. An example of the type of trouble that characterized this period of comparative peace is exhibited in the following accounts. The first comes from western Kansas and involves a group of white hunters being chased and fired upon by a small band of Indians. No one was killed, and the intent of the Indian in this case seemed to be horse stealing.[2] A second account cites the movement into Kansas of a band of young braves who had left their agency without permission.[3] In both cases, the intruders were moving north in search of better hunting and living conditions, and were simply passing through the state as opposed to entering Kansas for the specific purpose of conducting a raid.

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[1]William E. Connelly (ed.), Collections of The Kansas State Historical Society, 1926-1928 Vol. XVII (Topeka: Kansas State Printing Plant, 1928), p. 652.

[2]The Wichita City Eagle, May 13, 1875.

[3]The Wilson County Citizen, September 17, 1875.

Although the Federal government had seemingly altered its Quaker policy with the Miles campaign, the garrisons in Kansas left much to be desired as far as the settler was concerned, and the military situation was in fact quite deplorable when the Cheyennes challenged it in 1878. It was the United States Army that received much of the public criticism that had been reserved almost solely for the Indian in the years before 1875. The policy of the Federal government toward the Indian also came under renewed attack. The way in which he was mistreated was credited with being the cause for the troubles of the late 1870's and then when the exodus of the Northern Cheyennes began, the Federal government was again accused of endangering the frontier by maintaining Quaker attitudes toward the Indian.

The main cause of unrest on the frontiers of Kansas in the late 1870's was the movement across Kansas of a group of Northern Cheyennes under the leadership of Dull Knife and Little Wolf. This incident has been thoroughly covered in various books and theses; however, the great unrest and backlash of public opinion which it generated has been ignored. It is from this standpoint then, that the situation of 1878 will be assessed for the purposes of this paper.

Since the subject of Dull Knife's rampage across Kansas has been studied in detail, this paper will not dwell on the particulars of the case. In relating these happenings to the situation and reaction of the Kansas settler, however, it seems desirable to understand generally the background of the trouble of 1878. The Northern Cheyennes had arrived in the Indian Territory in 1877. Colonel R. S. McKenzie had taken Dull Knife's village in the Black Hills by surprise in the winter of 1876. Left shelterless in the bitter northern cold, and threatened with extermination if they did not comply, the Cheyennes surrendered. According to Dull Knife, his tribe was promised a beautiful reservation in the south where game was plentiful. In truth, they were crowded on a barren reservation where conditions were contrary to everything they were accustomed. By 1878, the Cheyennes were famished and dying of fever, and returning to their former hunting grounds seemed the only solution to their chiefs.[4]

The lack of rations and the starvation policy which the Northern Cheyennes were experiencing in the Territory was a subject of much controversy on the frontier. The settler was aware of the explosive quality of the uncivilized Indian, and any mistreatment seemed only an invitation to

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[4]Paul I. Wellman, The Indian Wars of the West (Garden City: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1956), p. 199.

trouble. The publications of frontier areas severely berated the Federal government for giving the Indian any excuse to renew his raiding across the Kansas border. As early as February of 1878, predictions of spring raids were circulating, and the starvation policy practiced by the government was cited as the direct cause of this threat.[5] The indignation of the settler over the careless handling of a situation so vital to his existence was evidently based on valid reasoning. After the Cheyennes had made their escape, General Pope verified that an enormous deficiency in Indian supplies had existed and that the promised rations had been only partially carried out. He agreed that this was the primary cause for the Cheyennes' leaving.[6] It was also admitted by Agent Miles of the Cheyenne Agency that the full list of rations promised the Cheyennes had not been furnished.[7] The attitude on the frontier was that it was cheaper to feed the Indian than to fight him, but that both policies were poorly handled by the government. A Dodge City paper carried the following editorial comment of the government policy:

> Feeding the Indian three days and fighting him seven, is not a very advisable policy. Starvation

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[5]The Ford County Globe, February 5, 1878.

[6]The Barbour County Mail, October 24, 1878.

[7]The Ford County Globe, October 29, 1878.

> is not the proper mode to bring him under subjection, although it is the present humane policy of our government. We think the Indian ought to be either wiped off the face of the earth, or fed and cared for by the government according to the promise of the treaty.[8]

The main objective of the settler was to maintain some degree of security against Indian raids. If this could be done by making the Indian comfortable and content on a reservation, he was in favor of such a policy. A great hatred built from fear still existed on the frontier, however, and preferable policy in the minds of many frontiersmen still seemed to be to have the menace wiped out completely south of the Kansas border.

The Cheyennes left their agency on the morning of September 9, 1878, and began a northward exodus that was to rouse a wave of terror and protest from one border of Kansas to the other. Public opinion was directed to a great degree at the Federal government. In 1874, the Indian had borne the brunt of public protest. In 1878, he again received his share, but now the government was attacked for allowing the activities of 1874 to be repeated. They were, in many areas, held as responsible as the Indian for the hostilities of 1878, and were reproached both in the area of Indian policy and in the manner in which the army handled the situation. From the indications of frontier newsprint,

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[8] Ibid., September 29, 1878.

sentiment about the situation was very strong on the part of the settler against the existing policy of dealing with the Indian. The original protest had been in opposition to mistreatment which would goad the Indian into action. This claim continued to be held throughout, and even after the raids had ceased. The Ford County Globe of October 29, 1878, promoted the idea that the majority of Kansas Indian raids were caused by vascillating government policy coupled with unscrupulous and dishonest men appointed by the government to deal with the Indian.

As the danger on the frontier increased in 1878, the attitude of the settler in his protest began to change. He had demanded fair treatment of the Indian in order to maintain a degree of security. After this security had been lost, he immediately demanded a stronger defensive policy against the intruding Cheyennes, and his former chastisement of policy that mistreated the Indian was now combined with a rebuke for not dealing more harshly with them. The following paragraphs will be used to represent the sentiment on the frontier and relate it to the movements of Dull Knife and Little Wolf through Kansas.

Upon leaving their reservation in Indian Territory, the Cheyenne party who entered Kansas in early September was apparently poorly armed and mounted. Consequently, their first goal was to obtain horses and guns and

regardless of their intentions, these raids, coupled with the defensive position of the settler, were bound to result in deaths on both sides. The first reported depredations in Kansas occured in Comanche County where a cattle camp and ranches were raided. The main purpose of these raids was to secure ponies; nevertheless, two white men were killed outright, and several others were wounded.[9] These first raids occured in the same general area as the raids of 1874, and the effect on the surrounding territory was severe. The Barbour County Mail had predicted an outbreak as early as July 18, and the prevalent sentiment at that time had been that the only good Indian was a dead one. With the incidents in Comanche County there was an immediate clamor for guns, and although the situation in Barbour County proved to be only a scare, immigration was definitely deterred. Feelings were strong in the southwestern counties in spite of the fact that losses were minor. The government was first attacked for reducing its army along the frontier, and secondly for putting hostile Cheyennes in the Territory without sufficient preparations for guarding them. The Cheyennes were cited as a continual source of danger to the southern frontier and protests were summed up in the following statement:

The sooner they are removed beyond the bounds of

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[9]The Barbour County Mail, September 10, 1878.

> settlement into the barren country they themselves so much long for, the sooner the government will have done its duty to the people whose muscle and nerve are developing the finest county in the Union.[10]

The settler of the Kansas frontier in 1878 had a better organized defense system than had existed in 1874 and earlier years. With the news of the northward movement of Dull Knife, local militia groups were immediately called together, and appeals made to Governor Anthony for arms and ammunition.[11] Two major problems existed which were negative to the position of the settler. The first was a credibility gap, and second was the speed at which the marauding band of Cheyennes was moving from one area to another. When the first appeals had been made for help in Barbour and Comanche Counties, the existence of a threat had been denied by the army. Correspondents from the area of Sun City, however, continuously denied the fallacy and sensationalism that was attributed to reports of raiding by the Cheyennes.[12] After the trouble had diminished, the governor continued to receive letters from indignant settlers verifying the raids in Comanche County and listing graves of the victims as proof.[13]

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[10]Ibid., September 26, 1878.

[11]Dennis Collins, The Indians Last Fight (Girard: Press of The Appeal to Reason, 1915), p. 82.

[12]The Kinsley Graphic, October 5, 1878.

[13]The Kansas State Historical Society, Eighteenth

On September 18, the Kansas governor began receiving dispatches from the Dodge City area requesting arms and verifying the existence of hostiles. The following appeals characterize the outlook of the settler as the Indian threat again loomed near.[14]

Dodge City, Kansas
September 18, 1878

Geo. T. Anthony, Governor, Leavenworth, Kansas:

Three hundred Indians are driving off stock and killing herders. They are now within six miles of our city. We are without arms, having equipped members who have gone south. Can you send us arms and ammunition? Situation alarming. We are powerless without arms and ammunition.

James Kelly, Mayor

Dodge City, Kansas
September 18, 1878

Governor Anthony:

Indians are murdering, and burning houses within three miles of town. All the arms we had have been sent. Can you send us arms and ammunition immediately?

H. Shinn

Again Governor Anthony referred the appeals to the military, and again General Pope denied the validity of the reports of Indian raiding parties. Although the reports may have

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Biennial Report (Topeka: State Printing Office, 1913), p. 25.

[14]Ibid., p. 23.

been exaggerated as to the size of the Cheyenne party and its proximity to Dodge City, the fact was supported by the local papers that some Indians were stealing stock in the immediate area, and engagements of the main body by the United States Army eighty miles south of Dodge verified the danger.[15] When thirty-five miles southeast of Dodge City, the band entrenched itself in the sandhills. Though this may have been the gravest danger that the city itself faced, farmers from thirty miles distant poured into Dodge for safety, and a great blow was dealt immigration. Much stock and several lives were also lost.[16] The Cheyennes were again engaged by the army and a volunteer group of settlers and cowboys near Famished Woman's Fork of the Smoky Hill River on September 28. With the death of the leader, Colonel William Lewis, however, the attack was halted and the Indians again headed north.[17]

As had been the case in Comanche County, the towns in the areas on all sides of the Dodge City conflict were alarmed, and the newspapers freely expressed sentiment against the Indian and the way in which the situation was being handled. In Cimarron, elaborate preparations for

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[15]The Kinsley Graphic, September 21, 1878.

[16]The Ford County Globe, September 24, 1878.

[17]Wellman, Indian Wars, p. 203.

defense were made, and though no Indian showed himself in the vicinity, the town leaders rebuked scoffing by stating that a man could perform no braver act than to prepare for all probabilities of danger, and if the Indian did show up, he would meet a strong resistance.[18] At Larned, the Indian was rebuked, and publishers made a point of describing how the 'bloody devils' would offer their hand in friendship and then rob and kill in the same motion.[19] At Kinsley, the press desplayed an even more adamant attitude toward the Indian and the circumstances that contributed to the 1870 trouble as can be seen in the following editorial:

> We are no longer disposed to appear by silence to submit, much less endorse the diabolical and unrighteous policy of the government in dealing with the Indians of our frontier. It is an outrage upon the civilization of the age, a damned spot upon the fair escrutcheon of the great Republic. As we write, the bloodthirsty fiends are roaming at will, almost in sight of Kinsley, butchering the honest unsuspecting pioneer, whose wreaking scalp is thonged to the belt of these satanic fiends who are armed today better than any army in Europe. Whilst we see no occasion for alarm here, yet we submit that the responsibility of the cold blooded murders should be laid at the doors of the ungodly, grasping agents and higher officials who continue the system which equips these treacherous devils for better than our skeleton army is equipped, and violate treaties or obligations, or practice some other imposition, thus giving a pretext for these periodical outbreaks.[20]

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[18]The Ford County Globe, October 1, 1878.

[19]The Pawnee County Herald, October 1, 1878.

[20]The Kinsley Graphic, September 21, 1878.

Several days later, after the army had unsuccessfully engaged the Indians in battle, an even stronger position was taken by the Kinsley source. It reads as follows:

> We are in favor of ignoring the milk and water policy which prompts an order to the military to "bring on no general engagement," but rather pursue the rascals with a force sufficiently large to run them down and spare them not. The only treaty that will bring peace to our frontier is the Winchester or "forty-four."[21]

The Indians continued north and the same pattern of terror, followed by bitter resentment, was displayed by the settlements along the way or, in some cases, those safely out of the path of the hostiles. An example of the confusion and general panic that existed is illustrated by various incidents. On October 2, correspondence was sent from Ellis, Kansas, to Governor Anthony, requesting arms and indicating an imminent attack. It was also indicated that settlers twenty miles distant were leaving the county for safety farther east.[22] By the time of these occurances, the Cheyennes were already many miles to the north, but immigrants to the frontier were reported turning back even farther south a week after the last depredations in Kansas were committed.[23]

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[21]Ibid., September 28, 1878.

[22]Geo. W. Martin (ed.), Kansas State Governor Messages 1861-1881 Vol. I (Topeka: Kansas Publishing House, 1879), pp. 39-41.

[23]The Topeka Commonwealth, October 12, 1878.

The greatest horror of the Cheyenne exodus of 1878 occured on the last days of September and the first days of October in the Sappa and Beaver Valleys of Rawlins and Decatur Counties. The particulars of this massacre have been fully researched by other writers and will be touched upon only briefly in this paper. Until the Cheyennes reached these two northern counties, they had killed only in obtaining horses and supplies and when being attacked by the army. Now they killed every white person they could, and the reason for this had its roots in the prevailing frontier attitude of the time. As was mentioned earlier in this chapter, almost any Indian north of the Territory, and particularly a Cheyenne, was considered a hostile in the period following the trouble of 1874. On April 23, 1875, this attitude was brutally capitalized upon by a company of soldiers and a group of buffalo hunters. A party of Northern Cheyennes under chief Bull Hump was returning to its reservation after a visit in Indian Territory. On the return trip, while camped on Sappa Creek, the troops under Lieutenant A. Henely, and the hunters, led by Hank Campbell, surrounded their village and nearly wiped them out, including women and children. Thus, when Dull Knife and his followers reached the Sappa Valley, they began a terrible vengeance on the white settlers of the area.[24]

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[24]Wellman, Indian Wars, p. 204.

The Cheyennes swept methodically through the area killing the men, raping the women, and looting and burning the settlements. Various sources disagree on the number of people actually killed in the massacre. Some place it as low as eighteen, but an account in The Barbour County Mail of November 21, 1878, lists thirty people in the Sappa and Beaver Valleys as having died outright or later as the result of wounds. Other current papers of the time agreed that at least this many had been killed, and though in many cases their figures may have been exaggerated, the correspondent writing the article in The Barbour County Mail, claimed to have conversed with eye-witnesses and participants of the massacre, and verifies his story with over one hundred witnesses. The important factor here is not the number killed, but rather the principle involved.

In the aftermath of the rampage of Dull Knife and Little Wolf, public sentiment on the Kansas frontiers became increasingly verbal and critical. When confusion of the events had been cleared away and the true picture emerged, the people promoted a satiric attack on government policy. In the southern counties that proved most vulnerable to hostiles in the Territory, one account expressed a desire for cold weather which alone could halt the raids of the season. It was then stated that this would keep the Indian

on his reservations where the government could re-equip him with the latest weapons and prepare him for the next summer's campaign.[25] When two hundred of Dull Knife's band were captured and returned to the Territory, a Dodge City paper asserted that this was for the purpose of fattening them up during the winter and spring so they could again break out and be recaptured in the fall with this process being repeated indefinitely. Another account in The Barbour County Mail of December 4, 1878, claimed that the government policy was to capture the most bloodthirsty Indians they could find, arm them, clothe them, and when they were capable of taking care of themselves, to place a handful of soldiers to guard them, thus making escape easy. The same paper pronounced the agricultural plan that the government proposed to the Indian as a failure. It stated that while the Indian "might farm well on the moon," he certainly could not do so here, and as far as he was concerned, civilization was a failure. A Kinsley paper maintained that there was a serious responsibility resting on someone, and if the baby-like Quaker policy of the government be intimated as solely responsible for the repeated outrages, "the cost may fit well." It continued that the idea of the Indian being protected and fed by the government, but not answerable

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[25]The Barbour County Mail, October 17, 1878.

to the laws of the land was preposterous. "The beasts of the primeval forests are as much aborigines as these cut-throat savages of the plains."[26]

The inhabitants of the frontier were strongly opposed to the return of the captured Cheyennes to the Territory. This attitude is displayed in this editorial:

> Thus will the government expose thousands of men, women and children who are unfortunate enough to be white, to the horrors of Indian massacre and outrage, having apparently, confidence in the long sufference of western people. . . . It is a shame and an outrage. If we were the governor of Kansas not a red devil should have been allowed to pass our northern border to cross the state.[27]

Another logical target of the wrath of the frontier settler after the raid of 1878 was the United States Army. From the point of view of the settler, the army had made a shameful showing against Dull Knife. The troops had always been close behind the Indians, but seldom engaged them in battle. When they did evoke a fight, they appeared reluctant and backed down easily, and this was unforgivable to the settler whose very livelihood and life was at stake. The deficiencies as the settler saw them were more or less outlined in an article shortly after the Sappa Massacre. In the first place, the Indians had, according to Agent Miles, about 130 braves, while at one time during the march

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[26]The Kinsley Graphic, November 30, 1878.

[27]The Ford County Globe, November 19, 1878.

there were 24 companies of cavalry and infantry in the field against them. Secondly, the Cheyennes passed by several military posts without being severely challenged, and marched part of the time on public routes, robbing and murdering at will. Thirdly, when they were engaged by the army, the soldiers did not promote an aggressive battle. For the most part, the Army was held highly reprehensible for not capturing or annihilating the Cheyennes.[28] Another source suggested that if troops had been rushed immediately to guard along the railroad west of Dodge City, countless lives might have been saved, and "a dark and bloody page, in the history of these recent outbreaks and murders by our 'pet wards,' of the Interior Department," might have been saved.[29] An earlier account during the time when the fighting was centered near Dodge, accused the officers of being haunted by the ghost of Custer, and added that when the cattlemen and other volunteers sensed that they would gain no support to fight from the troops, they returned home in disgust.[30] One final, more satiric approach maintained that, "the U. S. Army is certainly a very effective body of men when they allow a little band like this to

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[28] Ibid., October 29, 1878.

[29] The Kinsley Graphic, November 30, 1878.

[30] The Ford County Globe, September 24, 1878.

traverse the country for 300 miles without scarcely an interruption."[31]

The feeling against the Indian himself after the situation had cooled down was anything but wholesome. While The Kinsley Graphic of November 30, 1878, verified a belief that the Cheyennes had been defrauded, ill-treated, and cheated by the Indian agents and traders, they held that this certainly did not justify their crimes of 1878. Various solutions were offered to deter further raids. A Wichita paper suggested that several of the Cheyenne leaders be brought to trial and sentenced to a penitentiary life of hard labor. It was held that this would have a wholesome, quieting effect on the remainder of the tribe.[32] Another suggestion as a deterrent involved establishment of a military post on the border between Indian Territory and Kansas.[33] In view of all that has been said then, it can only be concluded that regardless of the military's reasons for acting as it did, and regardless of the logic behind government policy, the settler tended to see the issues in black and white, and if the Indian were able to raid across the Kansas border, it was obvious that somebody was not doing his job effectively.

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[31]The Barbour County Mail, October 10, 1878.

[32]The Wichita City Eagle, November 14, 1878.

[33]The Barbour County Mail, December 4, 1878.

In 1879, the new Kansas governor, John P. St. John, took measures to prevent the settler from experiencing any more of the savagery that the decade of the seventies had provided them. In a speech before the state legislature concerning the situation of 1878, he stated:

> The duty of the hour is not so much to deal with the past, but to look to the future with a determination that a repetition of these outrages shall never again occur in our state.

To enforce this statement and encourage further settlement of the Kansas frontier, a border guard was established to patrol the southern border of Kansas from Barbour County to a point 100 miles west. This guard was created by an act of March 12, 1879, and served the specific purpose of alerting the settlers in time to organize for mutual defense in case any hostiles were to enter the state. Fortunately, the Indian trouble of 1878 proved to be the last that the Kansas settler was to experience, and not a single instance of loss of life or property to predatory bands of Indians was recorded after the fall of 1878.[34]

In order to ease the loss of the settler as the result of Dull Knife's depredations, a legislative act of March 7, 1879, had set up a commission to audit claims for losses, and nearly 100 such claims were paid off at a

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[34]Martin, Kansas Governor Messages, p. 390.

total of over $100,000.00.[35] However, monetary adjustments were little comfort to the settler. The thought had been stressed on the frontier immediately after the Sappa Massacre that the government could not offer adequate compensation for the damage done by the Indian, any more than it could bring back the lives of the farmers who were killed defending their homes and families.[36] The loss to the country was much greater than mere destruction of property, for many settlers never returned to their homes after the 1878 raids, and many more were discouraged from coming to establish new homes. Although some began to forget and rebuild, and one editor even saw Dull Knife's defeat in Nebraska as the extinction of a noble race, the stigma of 1878 remained on the Kansas frontier for many years.[37] An example of the degree to which this statement was true can be seen when a company of Mounted United States Rifles was mistaken for Indians in Harper County and caused a general alarm in which many settlers actually fled their homes.[38]

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[35]The Kansas State Historical Society, Eighteenth Biennial Report (Topeka: State Printing Office, 1913), p. 31.

[36]The Kinsley Graphic, October 26, 1878.

[37]The Phillips County Herald, March 6, 1879.

[38]The Ford County Globe, June 3, 1879.

In conclusion, the period from 1875 to 1879 had two very marked effects on the Kansas settler as far as the Indian question was concerned. In the first place, it encompassed one of the most savage massacres he was ever to experience, and secondly, it resulted in the culmination of a major Indian threat to the development of the Kansas frontier. This period was also marked by a severe criticism on the part of the frontiersman of the Indian and the way in which the Federal government conducted Indian affairs. After the Indian trouble of the early 1870's, culminating in the raids of 1874, the settler was very demanding of change, and when 1878 appeared to be a repetition of former problems, he became very intolerant and vocal in his protest. Changes were obtained to some extent, due to various factors, and 1879, for all practical purposes, marked the end of the Indian problem on the Kansas frontier.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

After carefully observing the Kansas Indian situation of the 1870's as presented in state records, personal accounts, and newspapers of the day, there is evidence that a problem did exist. The military never fully acknowledged the intensity of the forays that were indicated by frontier reports. However, in many cases, particularly in the raids of the early 1870's, there were no federal troops even near the area where trouble was reported. It is also a probability that government sources tended to minimize the Indian threat in order to encourage immigration to the frontier. The effect of the Indian raids on immigration was certainly a very real problem to Kansas throughout the 1870's. For the most part, the local papers did not let this problem control public protest. The feeling on the frontier was strongly in opposition to the existing situation, and the press promoted a clear, verbal campaign supporting this opposition.

The reports from the areas in immediate danger during an Indian scare were often rebuked as being sensational and exaggerated. Although they were very likely influenced to some extent by personal prejudice, they still serve as a valuable source indicative of local feelings

and opinions. The resentment of the marauding Indian that existed on the Kansas frontier is repeatedly exhibited. The following letter to the military from a resident of the western frontier adequately displays the intensity of feeling that often occured:

> Our citizens have been murdered and scalped, driven from their homes and starved out of the country, and those that remain are in daily dread of attack. I tell you sir there is a pent up volcano of wrath in the western counties. The conduct of the government and county officers has been such in the past as to engender a bitter feeling toward those in high places, and we call loudly for reform.[1]

The various Indian tribes had suffered greatly over the years from broken treaties and exploitation at the hand of the white man. Many frontier sources recognized this factor; however, they saw no justification for the ruthless activities along the southern border and western frontier of Kansas. Public outrage against the Osage tribe after the depredations of 1874 was particularly strong because it had been considered one of the more civilized and advantaged tribes. The following statement concerning them was also true in the case of the Cheyenne tribe and others and this attitude was prevalent throughout the Kansas frontier areas after 1874:

> It will be well for them if they remain south of the state line, for it would be taken for granted if

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[1]The Wichita City Eagle, July 30, 1874.

> they were to show themselves north of the line that they came with hostile intent, and needle guns of the very best make would be turned loose upon them.[2]

In view of this attitude, no Indian was safe north of the Territory in the years following 1874, and the indiscriminate slaughter of a group of Cheyennes in 1875 directly contributed to the Sappa Valley Massacre of 1878.

The resentment of the Indian situation in Kansas was also directed against the Indian policy of the federal government. Already in the early 1870's, the Quaker peace policy of the Grant administration had been berated as a contributing factor to continuing Indian depredations. In 1878, the volume of public opinion in opposition to government policy was increased, and often a satiric criticism was employed as is illustrated in the previous chapter. An example of the frontier view of government, Indian policy in general can be seen in the following excerpt:

> Congress appropriated $25,000 for presents to the Sioux Indians to induce them to relinquish treaty rights to hunt in Nebraska. We suppose this refers to hunting white men. It looks like extravagance to throw away $25,000 to a tribe of hair lifters who could be decently buried for half that money.[3]

This attitude was exhibited intermittently throughout the decade of the 1870's, and at times public sentiment against the federal government was as strong as the violent disapproval of Indian activities.

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[2]The Topeka Commonwealth, May 27, 1875.

[3]Ibid., June 27, 1874.

Regardless of the actual degree of physical damage and loss inflicted by the Indian upon the settlements of the Kansas frontier, another type of negative factor developed from the Indian situation. This was simply the demoralizing effect that the constant threat of trouble had on the settler and on further development of the frontier. Newspaper accounts indicate that the Indian raids of the early 1870's and particularly 1874, caused many established settlers to move away from the frontier to safer areas, and stopped an even greater number from moving into the vulnerable areas. This was also characteristic to a lesser degree of the 1878 crisis. The extent to which the advancement of the frontier was retarded by the Indian in the 1870's is not measureable, but the widespread panic that often accompanied an Indian raid caused the problem to be extended to areas that were actually not endangered at all by the Indian.

In final analysis, the Indian problem of the 1870's was, from the viewpoint of the Kansas settler, a deplorable situation. Others may not have perceived the seriousness of the matter to the degree that the settler did, and, in fact, his accounts may have been influenced at times by personal feelings. At the same time, however, the frontiersman resented the way in which individuals who had no firsthand knowledge of the events defined the problem and passed

judgments on it. In the October 10, 1878, issue of The Topeka Commonwealth, a correspondent from Oberlin described the procedure of hunting bodies and burying friends after the Cheyenne raid in Decator County, and stated that people at large could not possibly realize the condition of that area.

For the most part, the frontier inhabitant had exhibited a strong determination in his protests and his struggle for existence, and whether right or wrong, many survived to witness an end to the Indian problem in 1878.

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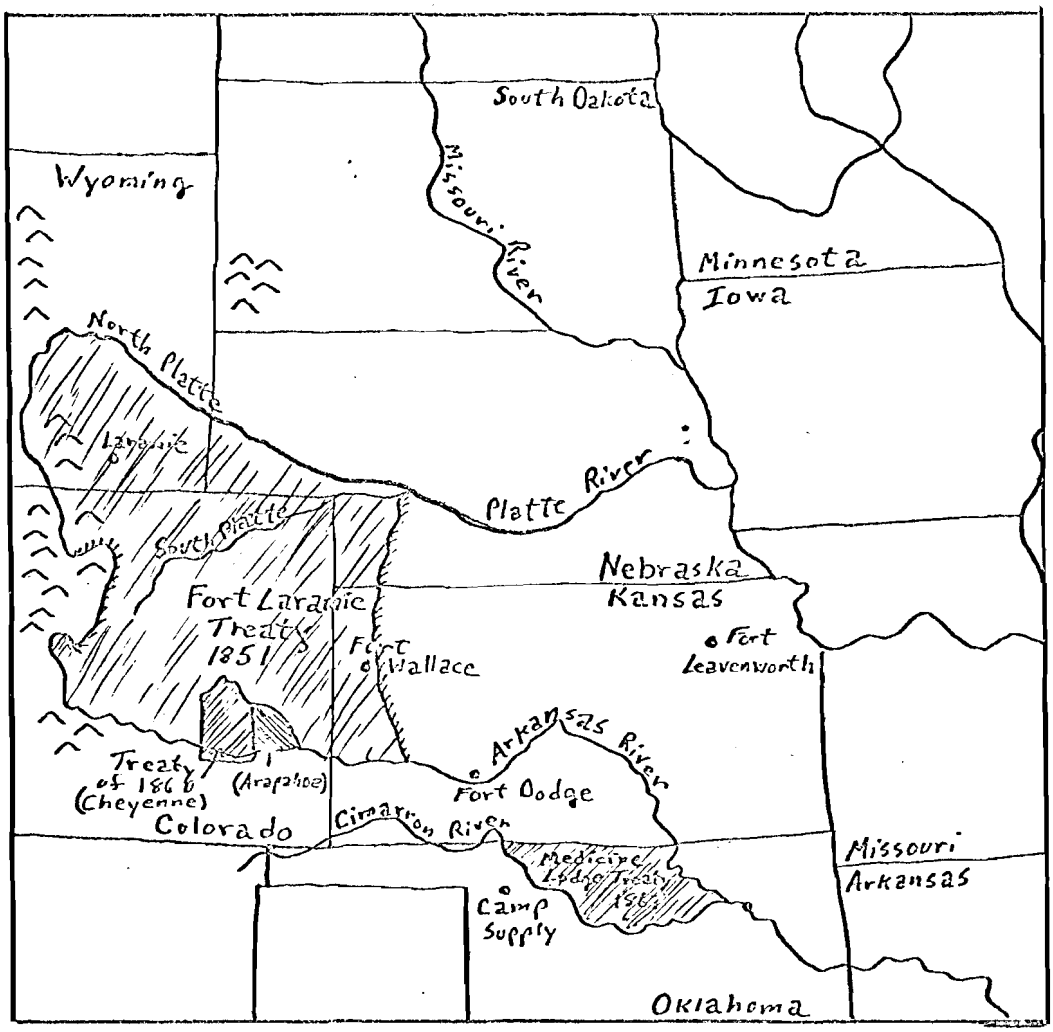
APPENDIX

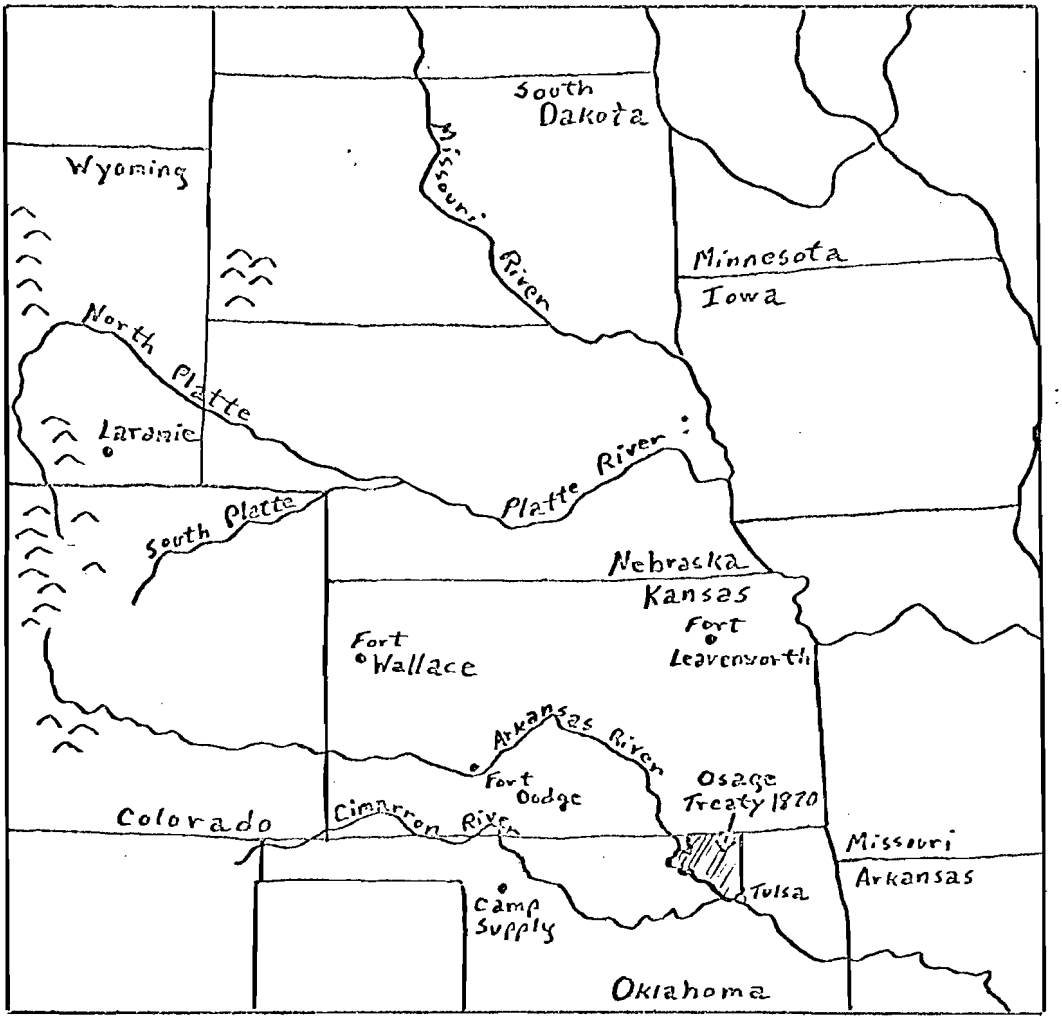
APPENDIX

CHEYENNE TREATIES

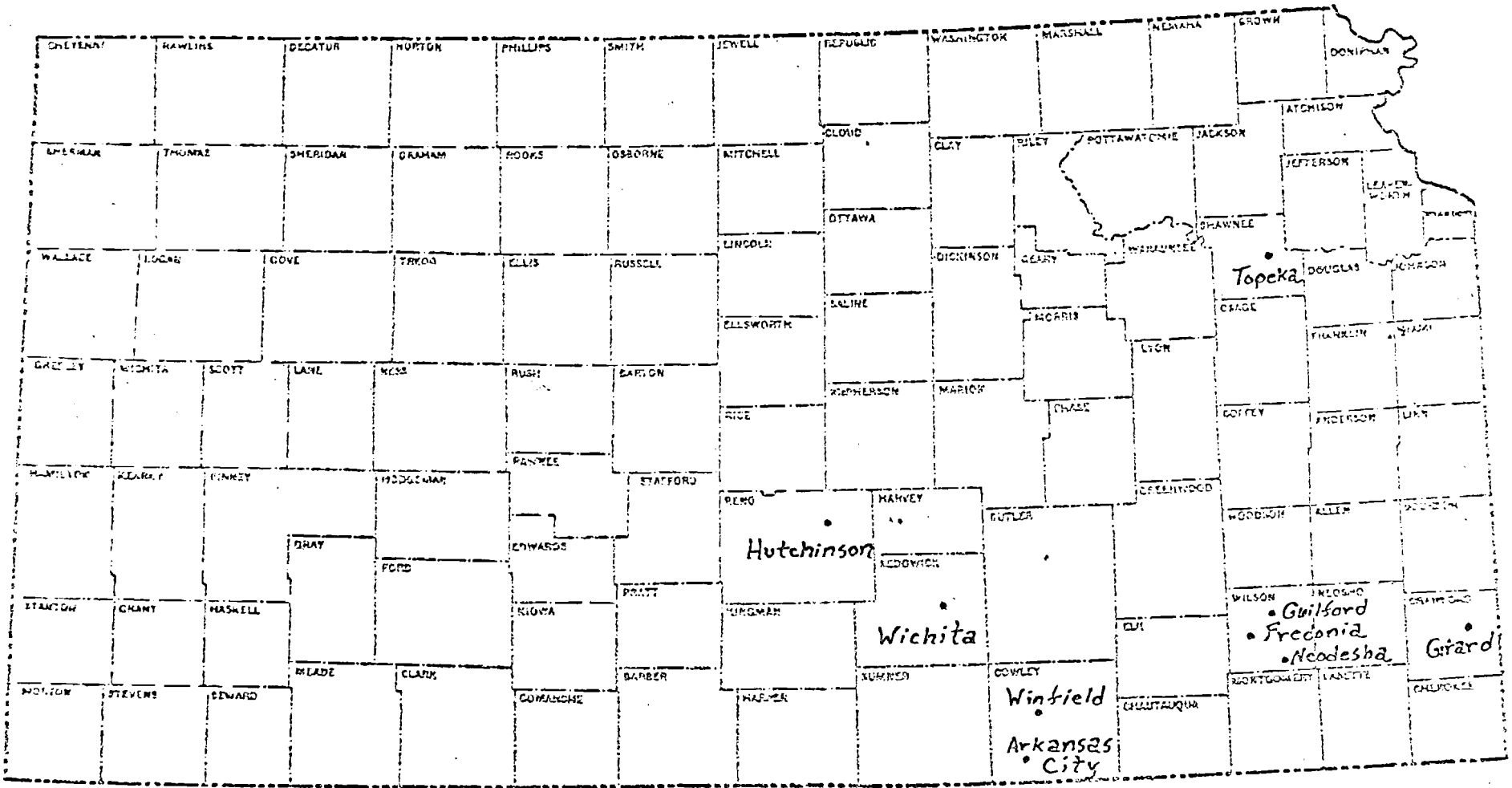


Map reproduced from Donald J. Berthrong, The Southern Cheyennes, p. 11. This shows the boundaries established in the Laramie Treaty of 1851, the treaty of 1860, and the Medicine Lodge Treaty of 1867.

OSAGE TREATY



Boundaries of Osage Reservation taken from John Joseph Mathews, The Osages, p. 695. The boundaries were established in the Osage Treaty of 1870. This area is the present Osage County of Oklahoma.



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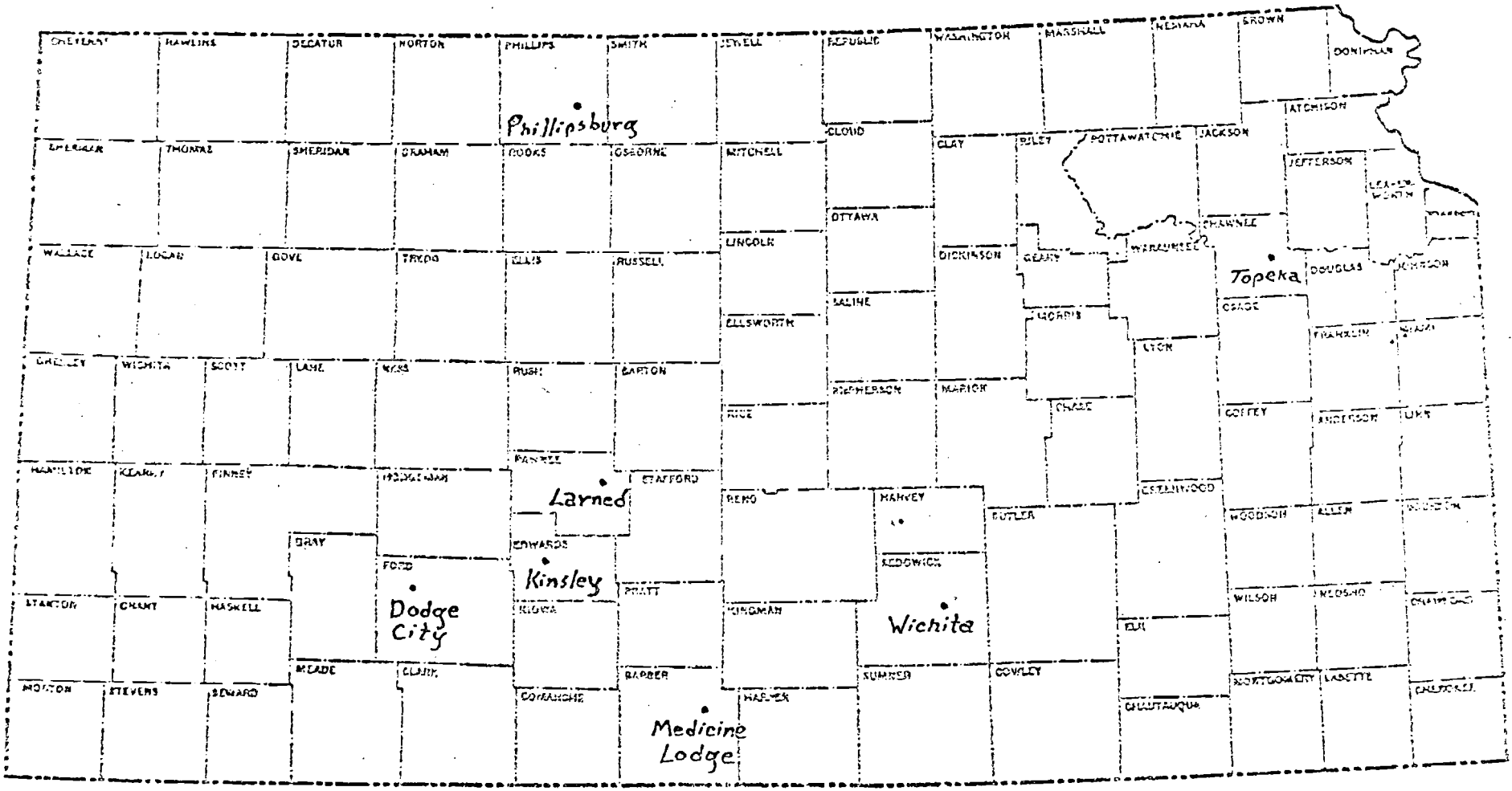
This map shows the location of the towns where the newspapers used in the study of the 1870-1875 period were published.



This map shows the location of the towns where the news-papers used in the study of the 1875–1878 period were published.