

**REPORT OF THE INDIAN AGENT
AT THE CHEYENNE AND ARAPAHO AGENCY
(Primary Source)**

The Commissioner of Indian Affairs submitted the following report to the Secretary of the Interior for the year 1885.

July 22, 1885.

Cheyenne and Arapaho Agency, Ind. Ter.,

Sir: I have the honor to make this my sixth annual report as Indian agent, over four years of which were spent at the Quapaw Agency:

Since my last annual report events of national importance have transpired here. I will briefly give you facts, as you request in yours of the 1st, taking care to note the progress made and suggest the best plans to follow in the future. To fully appreciate the situation, my last report should be considered with this. It is proper for me to make the preliminary statement that I do not expect to enter into detail as to all the minor matters relating to crimes, & c., that have been so fully reported from month to month during the past year. With this conception as to what you desire, I assume the task, and shall give a faithful account of the situation. Public business can be best transacted by those who are acquainted with it, and it is an easy matter for the Department to get any and all facts relating to Indians through their agents and inspectors.

The life and business of an agent here will not be, for several years to come, a quiet and sedate ones but rather calculated to excite the temper, and not eminently promotive of longevity. My past year's work has been in part very interesting and enjoyable, with a bit of war talk thrown in for excitement; but beyond all and deep down in my heart I feel that much good has been accomplished. Evidently the plan of making farmers of these people is the only one to pursue as a regular road to civilization.

The threatened trouble has been averted by the presence of so many troops, but no one can tell when it will rise up again. If troops had been sent, as requested over a year ago, or a sufficient number had been kept here, all this trouble would never have been heard of. They would have acted as a constant threat of punishment, the only consideration a "wild Indian" has any respect for. Horse and cattle thieves could have been arrested and punished; raids in Kansas and

Texas would not have been heard of. I have found that there is no use of making extensive calculations or laying plans for handsome success; but it will be worth while for the Department to remember, however, the suggestions I have made, for over a year past, and bear in mind that the plans I have proposed must sooner or later be carried out, if success attends the efforts of any agent.

The agency is situated on the north bank of the North Canadian River, in one of the most magnificent sweeps of river bottom land to be found in a season's travel. It extends along the river a distance of many miles, and reaches back to the hills in a width varying from one-half to 2 miles; it presents an almost unbroken level of rich alluvial soil, every rod of which is capable of drainage and cultivation. The soil in some places near the river is very sandy, but is as whole quick and warm.

A year ago this was the favorite camping ground of a majority of these Indians, and was well dotted with "teepees" as far as one could see. Skulls, bones, horns, and hoofs covered hundreds of acres. But to-day the whole scene is changed; the "teepees" have given way to the march of civilization, the bones, & c., have been carted off, and small but well-kept farms are seen on every hand. They are not covered with *weeds*, but abound in beautiful crops of corn, oats, millet, and garden vegetables. These farms are not on paper, but here to show for themselves. Generals Sheridan and Miles of the Army, and General Armstrong of the Interior Department, and hundred of others, will bear me out when I assert that the work done the past year, and the results accomplished under the most trying circumstances, has been most remarkable.

These two tribes, including the children away at schools in the States, numbered, according to the old enrollment, 6,271, but now that we have been able to secure a correct census, number 3,500. From the day I came here, up to the present time, I have struggled to secure *control* of these people. Had my suggestions been carried out, the government would not have been in doubt up to this time as to how many Indians we had, and, as I have repeatedly said, had my plans been acted upon, thousands of dollars would have been saved. We were issuing to 6,095 people before the enrollment; they were given full ration of beef, but not of flour, and no other rations were issued. The extra amount of beef was sufficient for their actual wants; but under the new enrollment they must have the greater part of the established ration or many will suffer. While the saving is considerable, it is not so great as many would suppose who have not the actual data to draw conclusions from, and I will here state that this year's contract for beef is only 4,785,000 pounds, a reduction of 1,215,000 pounds from previous year's estimate. Under the new enrollment the Indians number 3,500, and are entitled to 3 pounds per diem gross beef, or, for the year, 3,832,500 pounds, making a saving of 952,500 pounds, which, at \$3.17 per 100 pounds, contract price, is \$30,194.20 Beef under

the contract is taken for three months, issued during the winter in advance, and the shrinkage for these months is very great, the net loss falling on the Indians. Only 600,000 pounds of flour is contracted for, but under the new enrollment the Indians are entitled to 638,750 pounds, and the Department will have the deficit at \$3.97 per 100 pounds, or \$1,538.37. Bacon, beans, coffee, salt, and sugar have already been purchased; these last-named articles the Indians have not heretofore had issued to them, but after giving them all that has been purchased they will be under the enrollment of 3,500 persons, entitled, according to the established ration, to 7,320 pounds beans, 31,000 pounds coffee, 10,500 pounds salt, 49,000 pounds sugar, and 6,387 pounds baking-powder, more than has been purchased, which will cost, say nothing about transportation, at least \$6,250. Add to this the \$1,538.37, cost of flour, and we have \$7,788.37, to be deducted from \$30,194.25, leaving a total net saving for one year of \$22,405.88. The bacon purchased will all be required to make shrinkage on winter beef good.

This reservation was set apart by the President in 1869. It is bounded on the north by the Cherokee strip, east by 98th parallel of west longitude, south by the Washita River and the Wichita Reservation, and west by the Pan Handle of Texas; it embraces 4,297,771 acres. A small portion is stony, but the greater portion is fine grazing land, a typical cattle-range, and the bottoms embrace as fine land as the sun shines on; it is all fairly well watered, but there is little timber. Occasionally the prairies are broken by a wooded water-course, and on different parts of the reservation there are countless secluded cañons, cut deep down into the red soil, and crowded with stunted pines, cedars, and cottonwood. Buttes or hills stand out like pillars on the beautiful prairies, from the tops of which is commanded a splendid view of the surrounding country. The principal streams are the Canadian, its north branch, and the Washita and Cimarron, with numerous tributaries which flow across these beautiful prairies, and go speeding on to the Arkansas River to mingle with the restless absorption of the sea. The climate for the greater part of the year is delightful, and the nights in summer are perfect.

These are nearly all "Blanket Indians." they have no written language, no code of written laws, no systematic government, and the "court of Indian offenses" has not yet been established — only such rules are made by the Department or agent are in force. They should be made amenable to the law, so that they could be speedily settled and encouraged to make improvements of a permanent nature. They have no use for 4,297,771 acres of valuable land. In their more savage condition they roamed over it for game, but now there is no game, and the sooner they are given to understand that they must cease their savage ways and settle down to work, the better for them and the Government.

Some desire to do so now, and the number will increase as they are placed under control, and see that it is for their own good. Those who have fenced farms, with corn, oats, millet & c., to sell, are a standing encouragement to the others. In the

near future, if they are controlled, they will all want some of the rich bottom land, fearing it will be taken up.

In my judgement it only requires wise measures honestly administered and faithfully adhered to to make these people wholly self-supporting in the next ten years. I speak from a long personal experience with Indians, who only 13 years ago were considered the worst in the United States — The Modocs — who to-day are fairly civilized and can support themselves by agriculture without one dollar of Government assistance except that of an experienced farmer as instructor. But they were first wholly subdued! When that is done here, the progress of these people under proper management will be marvelous. "The same means will produce the same results." Will it be done? An agent must have no difficulty in his way in securing the unqualified indorsement and support of the Government. The Indians must be taught to work, and, if need be, compelled to do so. They must be made farmers, and stock-raising will follow. They must support themselves, and the Government must be relieved of the contract. It is not in the nature of things that this vast quantity of land should lie vacant for any great number of years. They have leased 3,832,120 acres to cattlemen, but still have left 130 acres per capita, or an average of a section (640 acres) of land to each family, comprising thousands of acres of as fine farming land as is to be found anywhere, while all is superior for grazing purposes.

ARAPAHOES

The Arapahoes seemed to take a new lease of life last winter, and commenced by filling up their school. The cold weather and the anticipation of troops coming helped some. They are generally easily managed, and would like to be separated from the Cheyennes; but if they are all subjected properly, I cannot see that it will be necessary. they accept instructions in manual labor willingly, and our farmers have don most satisfactory work with many of them the present season. Last year the whole tribe did not raise to exceed 100 acres of crops. This year they will harvest corn and other grain, not weeds, from 500 acres. The fields have been well tended, and the yield will be splendid.

Many of the young men are as headstrong as the worst Cheyennes, and should be deprived at once, absolutely and rigorously, of their fire-arms — compelled to obey the law precisely as the whites do. Such a policy would sound the death-knell to their rascality and insure peace to the Indians and whites alike; any other policy will only encourage them to disobey your wishes. The practice of depredating is general, and from lack of restraint they are emboldened to an alarming extent. On the night of 2d of May two young men took nine head of oxen from the post wood contractor's teams; the oxen were soon missed and trailed to the

camp of "Tall Bear," an Arapaho chief living on the South Canadian. They had not twenty-minutes before slaughtered two of them, and were eating the meat; the others were under guard by Indians in a cañon near by. The heads had been buried and hides thrown into the river. Tall Bear is one of our best Indians — I mean best, for he has for years been friendly and engaged in farming — but it is not considered a crime any longer, even if it is found out. The only regret that Tall Bear expressed when I talked to him of it was that they killed work oxen when there were so many cattle just as handy to get at. They have been threatened, & c., but feel that the authorities will do nothing with them, and that if they can kill without being found out, they will not have to pay for the stock slaughtered. Some I believe to be honorable and honest, as they understand it, but such innocent parties should no longer be compelled to suffer for the sins of those who will not do right, unless you wish to breed a race of thieves. We have never been able to make arrests for offenses committed in which so many are interested. I took five stolen horses from this band a few months ago, but the following night they took them from our pasture, and I have never seen them since. Is it not high time to put a stop to such state of affairs? And is it strange that I should have builded high hopes upon future results when these people are under control? I have given years of study and investigation to this important subject, yet I fear that it will be difficult to secure the co-operation of the Department where there are so many opinions to be considered.

These people are badly diseased with syphilis, and physical degeneracy is sure to follow rapidly, as they are ignorant of the rules of diet and proper nursing and care.

They deserve great credit for the course they have taken in our present trouble, and many of them would have been shoulder to shoulder with our troops had the Cheyennes gone on the war path. They should be assisted and dealt with as the Modocs have been, and the result will satisfactory. Farmers must instruct them, and carpenters put up houses, sheds, and barns for them when they haul in logs and wish to build. In a few years every family can be in comfortable houses. Black Coyote hauled logs and our apprentices built him a house. Several others have frames for houses up, while "Powder Face" and "Left Hand" — chiefs — have all the material on the ground for two \$500 houses.

CHEYENNES

The full blood Cheyennes have cultivated 584 acres of crops this year, and there has been by "half-breeds," 350 acres. Those who have given proper attention to their work will be bountifully rewarded. Caste distinction, in the form of tribal exclusiveness, is strong with nearly all Indians. Each is proud of his own tribe. But the Cheyennes are more so than the Arapahoes, whom they despise, and it

is a rare thing for a Cheyenne buck to marry an Arapaho. Still Cheyenne women marry Arapahoes. The Cheyennes hold the Arapahoes on a low plane of respectability, caused, no doubt, from the fact that the Arapahoes have refused to join them in some of their wars against the whites; yet the fact remains that the Arapahoes lead in industry and are not behind in native intelligence and capacity to receive instruction, and have actually accomplished twice as much as the Cheyennes the past year.

The fundamental defect of Indian character is aversion to manual labor, but when deprived of the opportunity to roam and pick up a living by depredating, he can be forced to work rather than go hungry, and there never will be any substantial progress made with the Cheyennes as a tribe until the Government compels them to earn at least a part of their own living. Moral suasion never civilized an Indian tribe and never will. The more advanced Indians do not dare to favor, only in a limited degree, civilization, as the wilder element are liable at any time to kill their stock, destroy their "teepees," and mercilessly slaughter them. Is it to be wondered at, therefore, that more intelligent Indians do not join the ranks of the few who, under the shadow and weak protection of the agency, are struggling manfully for an independent livelihood. This will only change when the plans I have suggested are carried out.

CONTROL

The outlaw bands of "Stone Calf," "Little Robe," "Spotted Horse," and their sympathizers cherish a bitter hatred for the whites. They steal horses and cattle constantly, and are dissatisfied because they cannot seek shelter and protection under the agency. They are sullen and angry, and implacable in their resentment of what they term getting on the white man's road. A worse class of savages probably never existed than these have been and are up to the present time. Their only real grievance is that they do not want to be civilized. They have *never been controlled*. Some may deny this, and point to some of their attempts to escape from the reservation when they have been overhauled and forced back, but this only applies to small bands. When they are united in any demand upon the Government it has been granted; this has been done often and in a most high-handed manner. The few troops which could be brought to bear upon them in the past on such occasions only served to increase and inflame their passions, and in no instance, so far as known, has the military arm of the Government been able to sustain and enforce the agent's authority fully. They have little respect for the Government, as a matter of course, as they are not punished for crimes or outbreaks. The functions of the Government, from their standpoint, will be to feed and clothe them forever. They complain freely, and force the remedy for

their complaints at the mouths of their "Winchester rifles;" and they have plenty of them.

When they can go into a missionary's house (Rev. Haury's), threaten to take his life and then have the young bucks ravish his wife; cut the military-telegraph wire at will; go on raiding expeditions and stay out for weeks, and returning bring the stolen horses into the agency; cut down and burn the posts from the fences built by the Government for the protection of their own cattle; burn off the range in the Government pasture, so as to compel the stock to scatter — when they can refuse to be enrolled, or allow others to do so under penalty of death; refuse to receive their annuity goods, and go out and cut down the fences of friendly Indians and destroy their property at will; order the agent to stop building fences and to send the wire back, as they could not eat it and were not ready to be civilized; close the traders' stores; refuse to haul their own supplies and compel the government to have whites do it for them; threaten the life of their agent and all whites, and to burn the agency — when they can do all this and more too, it makes one think that they can at will repeat the burning of others as they did poor Hennesy in 1875, to his wagon; murder other families as they did the Germans in Kansas in 1874, and carry away three captive girls, only to rape and ravish them. Are all attempts to punish men for such crimes to be abandoned? Are the threatened, bullied, and overridden people who chance to be in this country to forgive and forget such insults and condone all the offenses, without so much as reproving the Indians? If so, the Indians' contempt for United States officials is surely not a surprising thing. Men that have done these things walk into my office daily. Such a thing as punishing them in any way, if ever contemplated, has never been attempted. How long are these wild savages to be permitted to roam constantly over these broad prairies, and allowed to go unpunished for crimes committed?

Now that so many troops have come and more are expected, the Indians have changed their tactics. Their arms are put away in the sand hills, and they are all good and want to at once go to plowing for corn. Can such a course deceive any one when practiced by the most barbarous savages and desperate fighters in the country?

There is but a handful of this class compared to those who are anxious to do right, and if they were under control, does any one who knows anything about Indians doubt that they could be forced out of their barbarisms, out of their feathers and blankets, and into farms and into houses? I know they can be, and that, too, speedily. No need of waiting a generation to do what can be done inside of ten years.

There is but one way out of this whole difficulty. The people of the West, who have in the past been so fearfully outraged by these savages in loss of life and property, will never be contented under a policy that leaves this dreaded foe armed and supplied with ammunition, so that they can at will, for some imaginary grievance, deal death and destruction to citizens of our own country; and they will never be contented or feel safe so long as these Indians are not disarmed. For years past, except at intervals, their career has been marked by bloodshed, rape, and torture. With this record how can any one come to any other conclusion? Agent McGillicuddy, at Pine Ridge, Dakota, has a sample of these Indians there (the Northern Cheyennes), and in his last year's report pointedly but briefly states their condition, which is a *fac simile* of these here.

FARMING

In the early spring some of our best Indians showed a disposition to farm, and I gave them every encouragement. Those who had heretofore opposed all kinds of work and improvement withdrew their opposition, as they were told by "squawmen" and returned pupils, who read the papers, that they were to be disarmed and the leaders of the outlaw gangs arrested. This had the desired effect and accomplished some good for the time, but no troops came and they soon commenced to act worse than ever. The great mistake was in not sending the troops, and in allowing such important matters to reach the public press, as it placed me in a most dangerous position in giving you such facts as I was in duty bound to give. I hired 600 acres broken, and the Indians fenced and planted it; they also fenced and planted 600 acres more, all of which is in addition to the 475 acres reported last year, which is under cultivation this year. The land was broken in patches from 3 to 40 acres, and much more is inclosed in each field by a substantial three-wire fence, so that the acreage can be increased from year to year if nothing prevents the present flattering start they have made.

Crops of corn, oats, wheat, millet, and their small gardens look well, and they will harvest 10,000 bushels of corn, to say nothing of other crops. Our wheat is now in the stack, and if a thrashing machine is furnished there will be at least 1,000 bushels. Much was lost for want of machinery to cut it, but the fact remains that this country will produce well all kinds of crops. The success of the 100 who have worked so faithfully this year will, it is to be hoped, stimulate others and make them renew their exertions to follow civilized pursuits. Many questioned the results when I proposed this inroad on their do-nothing lives, but now all who have seen the result say that it is perfectly marvelous. Forty miles of fence has been built during the year; 900 grafted fruit trees set out and doing well.

SCHOOLS

Our schools have been well managed and everything possible to insure the attainment of the end proposed and most desired has been done. Still, there is too large a margin left for failure, and too many chances against success.

The parents of the children do not appreciate the benefits to be derived from an education, and only send their children to be rid of them, or through fear of displeasing the Great Father. Many bands of Cheyennes have not furnished a child for school the past year, "Stone Calf," as usual, taking the lead in disobedience to your wishes. Compulsion must be used in all such cases. We cannot afford to raise any more wild Indians, and the educated Indians from such agencies as this must be placed under different conditions after their education has been carried to an advantageous point. They must be protected from the ridicule of the other Indians, and assisted by the Government until they can care for themselves, or until more of them can be educated, in order that their influence for good can have a better chance to work. They must be educated in manual-labor schools at home; any other course of education given to these "blanket Indians" will become a curse to them, as has been fully proven by the experience of the past year. Brains will tell, and generations will come and go before the Indians will be able to, in any degree, compete with the whites, however high the ideas of the Indians may be placed. The final test of success is his practical knowledge of how to make a living. It is, therefore, a matter of vast interest to the Government and the Indians as to what extent book study shall be enforced. The folly of making book-learning superior to industrial knowledge is reflected here as clearly as if it were in a mirror. The parents visit the schools too often, and the children are allowed to go home more frequently than they should; but with better control all this can easily be changed.

The school attendance has doubled since I came here, and I have been successful in sending over 100 children to Lawrence, Kans., and 45 to Chilocco. I can therefore report the average attendance here and elsewhere as follows:

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| Cheyenne Industrial Boarding School | 56 |
| Arapaho Industrial Boarding School | 73 |
| Mennonite Manual Labor and Boarding School (agency) | 36 |
| Mennonite Manual Labor and Boarding School (at Cantonment) | <u>41</u> |
| Total | 206 |

The Cheyenne school has furnished over 100 children for schools in the States. Industrial work has had special attention. The employés and children have

raised 20 acres wheat, 20 acres oats, millet, corn, and sorghum, and 5 acres garden, and 23 cows have been milked and over 300 acres fenced in as pasture for their stock. Forty acres have been cultivated at the Arapaho school and the crops are most excellent. The Mennonites have large fields and well-tilled crops.

CARLISLE PUPILS

If these Indians were farmers and had fixed places of residence, the return of these children from schools in the States would leaven the whole tribe, as their influence for good would spread; but thus far the experiment of returning here has been a failure. They go from Indian homes and return to Indian homes. The Indian nature is too strong to resist successfully these surroundings. It is much easier to go down than up, and to expect good results under the present condition of affairs here implies an impossibility.

"SQUAW-MEN"

Squaw-men are not all bad, but as a rule they abandon every respect for decency and are leaders of the most disturbing element and often the means of crating uneasiness among the Indians. From the bill of fare usually presented by Indians, if from no other cause, one would not imagine that white men could be induced to indulge, but they have no higher ambition than to enjoy the rights of an Indian.

POLICE

The police are usually prompt in carrying out all orders in cases where white persons are to be arrested, but of no use in enforcing order among their own people. Could you expect more when the military has failed so often? If sufficient troops were used to disarm these Indians and arrest the leaders of the "outlaw" gang, the cause of all our trouble would at once be removed, and there would be no need of a standing army on the borders of Kansas, and the garrison here could be reduced, as forty policemen would then handle the worst cases and keep them under subjection.

RATION DAY

On Mondays we issue rations. At the beef corral a large concourse of Indians assembles for beef, and at the commissary for flour. When the cattle are issued they have an exciting time; the frightened and desperate animals rush madly around pursued by from on to a dozen savages, yelling, whooping, and firing their guns, reminding one of the early days when buffalo-hunting was their chief

sport. When the beef is killed the voracious bucks and their families eat the raw entrails with great satisfaction. The squaws take charge of the carcass, dry the meat, and the "buck" takes the hide to the traders. Such an assembly would furnish a study for an artist—Indians, ponies, and dogs of all ages, sizes and appearances. Nearly all wear blankets, but many have on some single garment of civilization.

INDIAN MEDICINE-MAKING AND DANCES

These Indians are a religious people in their way, and do not seem to doubt the immortality of man. I have never opposed their "medicine-making," only so far as to try to protect those who do not longer believe in it from being compelled to attend, and this I think should be done by all means. The "dog soldiers" round up all these people and make them attend, or risk their property and lives in the attempt to resist their mandates. They live in "teepees" that one white man would feel cramped in, but dozens of Indians crowd in and enjoy the social dance, keeping time to the monotonous tom-tom by chanting and howling.

A strange sight is their "medicine dance"—fascinating, weird scene, their bodies naked from the waist up. A number of braves enter the "medicine lodge." They gash their arms and legs, and pierce holes in their chests, pass ropes through the holes and suspend themselves from the center of the lodge until their struggling tears the flesh loose. Each one has a whistle, and keeping their eyes on the charm, they dance night and day without food or water until exhausted. These "medicines" are a record of terrible suffering, endured with indomitable heroism, which sometimes ends in death. Such evidence of devotion in the performance of duty is worthy of a better religion.

DOG SOLDIERS

The "dog soldiers" are a sort of military organization, or fighting band, which they keep up, composed of the most daring, bloodthirsty young men of the tribe. For years past they have been very troublesome. They commit crimes constantly and demand heavy tributes for the privilege of driving through their country. Many of the Indians who commit such crimes are known to me, but I have thus far been powerless to arrest or punish them. Some of the more intelligent Indians deprecate such a state of affairs, but the restless, savage, and dishonest portion of them see only the present gain, and cannot or do not care if the money for their deviltry is paid by the Government, as in the Oburn case. To say that such a state of affairs is demoralizing in the extreme is putting the case mildly, and the Department should have checked their course soon after I made my first reports, calling for five hundred troops.

LAW

Congress passed a law last winter making any offense committed by an Indian a crime, if the same would have been a crime under the United States law, when committed by a white man. This is all right, but up to the present time there has never been any power here sufficiently strong to enforce it. It is now greatly to be hoped, not only for the future good of the Indian, but for the protection of the property of others, that the law will be enforced.

These Indians now have hundreds of stolen horses in their possession, and they are daily committing depredations on cattle herds. Only last week I recovered from Lump Foot nine head of horses he stole from a beef pasture on the Cherokee strip, after cutting the fence; at the same time his party killed two fine beeves, and only took the tongues for food, leaving the carcasses to rot. In a few days after this I recovered from Magpie, who had just returned from a raid in Texas, two horses belonging to the Y Ranch; he was reported as having one hundred and seventeen head on his return, but our police were not able to find them. The day following I received two fine mules from White Bear. These men all belong to Stone Calf's band, or train with his party. They are all at large, as is Flying Hawk, the Cheyenne who threatened the life of Rev. Haury and to ravish his wife. Thomas Carlisle Bear Robe, who cut the telegraph wire, still enjoys his freedom. I am aware that there is a difference of opinion as to what is best to do in such cases, owing to the difference in the moral and intellectual condition of men, but I believe these men know right from wrong, and that an example should be made of some of them.

Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior for the year 1885, Washington: GPO, 1885. pp. 73-79.
