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This thesis, directed and approved by the candidate's committee, has been accepted by the Graduate Committee of The University of New Mexico in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

EDWARD W. WYNKOOP, FRONTIERSMAN

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EDWARD W. WYNKOOP, FRONTIERSMAN

BY
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B.U.S., University of New Mexico, 1973

THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in History
in the Graduate School of
The University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico

December, 1976

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

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EDWARD W. WYNKOOP, FRONTIERSMAN

William Charles Bennett, Jr., M. A.
Department of History
The University of New Mexico, 1976

Edward Wansaer Wynkoop was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on June 19, 1836. In 1856 he moved to Kansas where he was employed in the Pawnee Land Office in Lecompton until 1858. He then joined a group of entrepreneurs and journeyed to the Rocky Mountains and was one of the founders of Denver, Colorado. From 1859 to 1861 he was a prominent citizen of Denver and Jefferson Territory. After Congress created the Territory of Colorado, and with the advent of the Civil War, Wynkoop became a lieutenant in the First Colorado Regiment of Infantry Volunteers. He was promoted to the position of senior captain of the regiment and after distinguishing himself at the Battles of Apache Canyon and Glorieta Pass, New Mexico, was promoted to major.

After duty in New Mexico Wynkoop's command moved to Fort Garland, Fort Lyon and then to Camp Weld, Colorado. While in command of Camp Weld in May 1864, he was assigned to command of Fort Lyon. There he came into contact with the Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians. At this time Wynkoop became sincerely convinced of the integrity and virtuousness of the Indian character and did all in his power to effect a peace between the United States and the Indians. In September, 1864, he took principal chiefs of both tribes to Denver to confer with military and Indian department officials. After giving the chiefs of both tribes assurances of safety he was relieved of the command of Fort Lyon, on November 2, 1864, and departed. Colonel John M. Chivington attacked the Cheyennes and Arapahoes near Fort Lyon soon afterwards. Wynkoop condemned the action, was reassigned the command of Fort Lyon, and ordered to conduct an investigation of the affair. His report was extremely biased against Chivington but served to focus attention on the gravity of the affair.

After The Sand Creek investigations Wynkoop was promoted to brevet lieutenant colonel. He resigned his commission in 1866 after serving as a special Indian agent and was appointed agent for the Upper Arkansas Agency by President Andrew Johnson. Throughout his tenure as an Indian agent he was a consistent champion and defender of the Indians. After the Battle of the Washita, November 27, 1868, Wynkoop charged the army with perpetrating a massacre similar to Sand Creek, and resigned his commission as Indian agent under protest.

Following his resignation Wynkoop returned to Pennsylvania and engaged in a number of occupations. In 1876 he was a miner in the Black Hills of South Dakota. He was later appointed to positions in the Federal Government and the Territorial Government of New Mexico. Edward Wynkoop died September 11, 1891, at the age of fifty-five. He left five children and was a respected citizen of New Mexico.

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INTRODUCTION

It was in a United States emerged in the fervor of expansionism often referred to as "manifest destiny" that Edward Wansaer Wynkoop was born and reared. He was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on June 19, 1836, to John Wanshaar Wynkoop and Angeline C. Estill Wynkoop. Edward, or "Ned" as he was nicknamed, was the youngest son of a family of seven children. His Dutch ancestors had come to America when New Amsterdam was established. He spent his first twenty years in the anthracite coal region of Pennsylvania where his brother, Francis Murray Wynkoop, was the editor of a mining newspaper called The Anthracite Gazette and Schuylkill County Advertiser in Pottsville, Pennsylvania. As soon as he was old enough, Edward worked for his brother at the printing trade.¹

To many people the Far West was a land of promise where mountains held rich minerals, where fertile fields assured abundant harvests, where the extra quarter-section of farmland could be sold to a latecomer at a profit, where "growing up with the country" assured both affluence and an elevated social status. Restlessness, a thirst for adventure, over-crowding, and idealism also drove men toward the frontier. But whether men went west in search of

¹Wynkoop's middle name has been spelled a number of ways. This spelling was taken from: Richard Wynkoop, Wynkoop Family: A Preliminary Genealogy (New York: Press of Wynkoop & Hallenbeck, 1866), 14, and; R. Wynkoop, Wynkoop Genealogy in the United States of America, Also a Table of Dutch Given Names (New York: Press of Wynkoop and Hallenbeck, 1878), 114; Francis Murray Wynkoop, "Intimate Notes Relative to Colonel Edward W. Wynkoop," Wynkoop Papers, History Division, Museum of New Mexico, hereafter cited as MNM; Edward Estill Wynkoop, "Edward Wanshaar Wynkoop," Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society, 13 (1913-1914), 71; Winifred Gregory, ed., American Newspapers 1821-1936 (New York: H. W. Wilson Inc., 1937), 622.

adventure or wealth they were driven by impulses that failed to motivate their neighbors who stayed behind. In every pioneer there was a touch of the gambler. Edward Wynkoop was just such a man.²

Wynkoop and many of his contemporaries were born with a vision of the trans-Mississippi West. From a safe and civilized Pennsylvania the country across the Mississippi River represented a freedom of soul, of lifestyle, far removed from the conformity and rules and regulations of the eastern United States. It is interesting to note the changes in the character of Edward Wynkoop as he reacted to various stimuli presented by the West. The metamorphosis he underwent was not only the process of maturation but also the impact the Far West made upon him. He was clearly to become a product of the trans-Mississippi West. This is his story.

²Ray Allen Billington, America's Frontier Heritage (Hinsdale, Ill.: Dryden Press, 1966), 28.

CHAPTER I
EARLY DENVER DAYS

In the fall of 1856 Edward Wynkoop left Pennsylvania for Kansas Territory. He traveled as far as Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, by train and from there took a boat down the Ohio River to the Mississippi Valley. Making his way to St. Louis, Missouri, he purchased passage on a side-wheeler, the steamer F. X. Aubrey. It was the young man's intention to travel up the Missouri River to Leavenworth, Kansas Territory.¹ The journey up the Missouri began without incident. Later, however, the steamer encountered floating chunks of ice that proved to be an obstacle to its progress. Wynkoop and the rest of the passengers found themselves walking a distance of twenty-two miles to procure lodgings.²

A few days later Wynkoop arrived in Leavenworth, which was a young city in the midst of a state of strife and disorganization that characterized "bleeding Kansas" prior to the outbreak of the Civil War. Some of Kansas' problems resulted from conflicts over slavery issue. However, much of the turbulence came about as a result of frontier conditions that prevailed. Disputed land titles caused by the negligence of government surveyors probably cost as many lives as the slavery issue. Not until the summer of 1856 was enough land platted to allow the first public sales. Thousands of settlers could not wait for the surveyors and squatted on the land. On many occasions

¹E. E. Wynkoop, "Edward Wanshear Wynkoop," 71.

²Edward W. Wynkoop, "Manuscript Colorado History," Wynkoop Papers, Manuscript Division, State Historical Society of Colorado, hereafter cited as SHSC.

conflict arose when a latecomer arrived from the East with a recently purchased and perfectly legal title to land that squatters had been living on for months. Other battles were fought between rival speculators over the issue of choice townsites. Many of these clashes were laundered by the American press to appear as part of the struggle between the forces of slavery and freedom.

Such was the state of affairs when Wynkoop set foot in Kansas. Leavenworth was filled with eastern speculators who had come to Kansas to buy land that had recently been put up for sale after Indian claims had been extinguished. Soon afterwards Wynkoop traveled to Lecompton, Kansas Territory, which had been designated the territorial seat of government. The situation in Lecompton was similar to that in Leavenworth. Governor John W. Geary had only recently arrived in the territory in September 1856. It was hoped that the new governor would sort out the problems of the new territory and get things running more efficiently. However, the task proved to be too great for one man. The territory was still overrun with border ruffians and free state men. In the middle of this commotion were the farmers, interested only in obtaining some land on which to settle. Not long after Wynkoop's arrival in Lecompton, on March 10, 1857, Governor Geary left the territory after he presumed that his life was endangered.³

Evidently Lecompton had been Wynkoop's ultimate destination as it was here that his sister Emily and her husband General William Brindle lived. Brindle was receiver for the United States land office in Lecompton, and Wynkoop soon found employment in the land office as a general clerk in the receiver's department. During this period the land office itself was a lively place. Wynkoop later recorded that Brindle and the rest of the employees

³Ibid.

went about their business armed with six-shooters and bowie knives, as did most of the men in Kansas at that time. Wynkoop also noted, to his amusement, an anecdote concerning a new arrival in Kansas Territory from Pennsylvania. A certain gentleman who had just arrived in the territory was shocked at the presence of so many armed men. However, after a few days in "bleeding Kansas" had elapsed this same individual was seen walking about the streets of Leecompton sporting a larger pistol and a longer bowie knife than many of the townspeople boasted.⁴

The land office was very busy with scores of land hungry settlers. For a brief time the office was moved to Paola, a town located in southeastern Kansas, for the purpose of selling Indian lands in the area that had recently been put on the market. The town was close to the border of Missouri, and consequently there was often open conflict between the free state men of Kansas and Missourians. The town of Paola became the neutral ground for the two groups. Robert J. Walker was at this time the governor of Kansas Territory, until December 1857, when he was succeeded by James Denver.

During the spring and summer of 1858 rumors spread throughout Kansas that gold had been found on the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains. To Kansans sitting on the edge of the frontier the Rocky Mountain area of what is now Colorado existed only in vague descriptions by trappers and travelers. It was known that this country, commonly referred to as the "Pike's Peak region" was separated from the Kansas settlements by a six hundred mile journey across the "great American desert." The journey west to the mountains involved traveling through country occupied by hostile Indians and prone to destructive blizzards.

In early September 1858, Wynkoop attended a meeting in the Leecompton

⁴ Ibid.

land office to organize a townsite association for a town that was to be located somewhere along the base of the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains. It was thought that this type of enterprise would prove to be quite profitable in view of the discovery of gold in the area. A president and a secretary-treasurer were elected, and the association was given the title "Colorado Town Site Association of Lecompton, Kansas Territory." Members of the organization each pledged five hundred dollars for outfitting an expedition to the Pike's Peak region. It was decided that the expedition would consist of twenty-five men, five wagons, and provisions for one year. According to the original plan seventeen men were to be mounted, and eight were to be drivers. The members of the expedition were to be well armed with rifles and revolvers, with two Sharps rifles kept in reserve. Wynkoop, full of youthful enthusiasm, elected to make the journey.⁵

Territorial Governor James Denver was quite interested in the new gold country. In August 1855 the Kansas Territorial Legislature had laid claim to the area where the gold fields were thought to be located. This part of Kansas Territory was named "Arapahoe County" by the legislature, and county officials were chosen for the various positions in the county administration. The original boundaries of Arapahoe County were described in detail in the legislative act as "beginning at the northeast corner of New Mexico, running thence to the south line of Nebraska and north line of Kansas; thence along said line between Utah and Kansas Territories." As defined by the legislative act of 1855, Arapahoe County of Kansas Territory constituted about one fifth of the present area of Colorado. From the time of its formation in 1855 Arapahoe County existed on paper only, and the first county officials

⁵Ibid.; Ely Moore, "The Lecompton Party Which Located Denver," Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society, 7 (1901-1902), 447.

never ventured to that remote region. However, after rumors of gold spread throughout the Missouri Valley, Governor Denver sought to reorganize the county in expectation of a large influx of people.⁶

After having been informed of the meeting of the Colorado Town Site Association, Governor Denver decided to make use of its members by appointing them to the various posts in the county administration. On September 21, 1858, Denver issued commissions to the following men, and appointed them to positions in the county government: H. P. A. Smith, probate judge; Edward W. Wynkoop, sheriff; Hickory Rogers, chairman of supervisors; John H. St. Mathews, county attorney; John Larimer, treasurer; Joseph McCubbin and Lucillias J. Winchester, supervisors; and Hampton L. Boan, clerk of supervisors.⁷

With a few delays the expedition party departed for the Pike's Peak country on October 1, 1858, after meeting at Topeka, Kansas. Apparently only seventeen elected to make the journey. The group resolved to take the Arkansas River route as it was fall and it was thought that this route was less prone to bad weather than the alternative, the Platte River route. After many good wishes and farewells the party left for the Rocky Mountains. Of the seventeen men making up the party none had ever crossed the plains before. At that time a crossing was considered a serious undertaking. Wynkoop would write later of the event: "As we cut loose from civilization we felt as though we had drifted out to sea . . . but we were well mounted with the exception of our drivers, and felt an excitement and exhilaration

⁶"Governor J. W. Denver's Administration, Letters and Commissions," Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society, 5 (1889-1896), 512. The Arapahoe County Organic Act constitutes Chapter 37 of the "Laws of 1855, Kansas Territory."

⁷Ibid.

that precluded any sense of danger."⁸

Before reaching the plains the party camped at Council Grove, Missouri, which was on the edge of civilization. Here one of the expedition traded a horse for a Mexican mule with a Kaw Indian. Later, after the group had traveled about three hundred miles from Council Grove, a large band of Kiowa and Comanche Indians was encountered. One of the Kiowas examined the newly acquired mule and declared it to be his property, informing the current owner that the mule had been stolen by Kaws. The rider of the mule did not want to give the animal up, and it was decided that a council should be held among the expedition. In council a vote was taken and it was democratically decided not to deliver the mule to the Kiowas. The decision of the impromptu council was relayed to the Indians, who were angry at the resolution. The Kansans were permitted to leave, however, and proceeded on their journey west without further delay, fearing trouble at any moment.⁹

A day or two later the Indians caught up with the Kansans and once again confronted the party on the mule issue. It was at this time that Wynkoop nearly provoked an ugly incident. Apparently one of the Kiowas rode up beside Wynkoop and suggested that the two of them have a race. Wynkoop, who was well mounted, accepted the challenge and in a flash was off and running. The Indian was off a moment later. While riding nearly side by side, Wynkoop's rifle accidentally discharged and the ball passed under the neck of the Kiowa's horse. The surprised Indian yelled when the weapon fired, and the rest of the Kiowas became quite alarmed. Wynkoop halted his horse and explained in sign language that the weapon had discharged accidentally. Luckily he made the

⁸E. W. Wynkoop, "Manuscript Colorado History," Wynkoop Papers, SHSC.

⁹Ibid.

Indian understand the situation, and an explanation was then given to the larger body of Indians who also seemed satisfied and just as happy as the Kansans in avoiding an incident. These Indians may have been waiting for their annuities at the time, and not interested in committing any hostile actions in fear that their agent might withhold their goods.¹⁰

Once again it is through the eyes of an enthusiastic young man during the greatest adventure of his life that we get Wynkoop's first description of the Rocky Mountains. It was on a clear and frosty morning, thirty-five days from their point of departure, when the Kansans spotted the Spanish Peaks of the Rockies. The seventeen members of the expedition cheered loudly, imagining that their cheers would be ". . . carried back over seven hundred miles of desert to the ears of our anxious friends." Wynkoop was also to write later that:

. . . the men who came after us could not have felt as we did, for we belonged to the pioneers. In our innocence we fancied Columbus when the New World first rose to his view, or DeSoto when the Father of Waters was known to him . . . and in our enthusiasm we did not stop to consider that many eyes before ours had gazed upon the same spectacle, and no one at that time would have taken the risk of stating such a humiliating fact.¹¹

The group reached Pike's Peak five or six days later. Once again great enthusiasm was spurred at the sight of this mountain. The men began examining the sands of nearby creeks in search of gold. One member of the party excitedly reported that he had found the precious metal in a creek bed. The Kansans hurried after their excited companion only to find after close examination of the sand that the glittering flakes were only pieces of mica. Later the expedition reached the mouth of the Fontaine Qui Bouille, a stream which

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid.

empties into the Arkansas River near present day Pueblo, Colorado. Here a party of Mexicans and Anglo-Americans was encountered. This group had decided to spend the winter in the immediate vicinity, and informed the Kansans that it was impossible to go north to Cherry Creek, where it had been reported that gold had been discovered, until spring because of snow conditions. Taking the advice of this party, the Kansans too decided to spend the winter at the mouth of the Fontaine Qui Bouille. The men chose as the site for their camp the ruins of an old adobe fort built by the Spaniards.¹²

Unknown to Wynkoop and his companions, another party of Kansans was on its way to the Cherry Creek area, also with the intention of laying out a town. This party, which had departed from Leavenworth, consisted of General William H. H. Larimer and four others. They were camped about seven miles north of Wynkoop and his party. On an evening walk one of the members of this party observed two men hauling hay south. When questioned these men informed Larimer that another group of Kansans was camped at the old fort. In this way Larimer learned that the other party consisted of the newly appointed officers of Arapahoe County.¹³

Larimer, who had left Leavenworth on October 3, 1858, was not unfamiliar with real estate manipulations. Neither were the members of the Lecompton party, many of whom had worked in the land office there. General Larimer wisely decided that it would be beneficial to both groups if they collaborated; he was also well aware of the advantages the Lecompton party possessed by being officially sanctioned by Governor Denver. Larimer rode to the Lecompton Kansans' camp and persuaded Wynkoop and the others to join his

¹²Ibid.

¹³Jerome C. Smiley, History of Denver (Denver: J. H. Williamson, 1901), 194.

party and continue immediately to the mouth of Cherry Creek.¹⁴

On November 16, 1858, Edward Wynkoop gazed upon Cherry Creek. The party had traveled from Lecompton to Cherry Creek where Denver, Colorado, is now situated, with no serious difficulties or misfortunes. Only one small accident had occurred, when one of the men put his hand into a buffalo's mouth he presumed to be dead in an attempt to cut out the tongue. Evidently the buffalo was not completely dead and closed its mouth, crushing the man's hand.¹⁵

Rumors of gold strikes in the Pike's Peak region had spread throughout the Missouri River Valley like wildfire. When Larimer, Wynkoop, et al, arrived at Cherry Creek they found nearly one hundred and fifty former residents of eastern Nebraska already camped on the left bank of Cherry Creek. For weeks afterwards new arrivals were a daily occurrence. The members of the combined parties also found that an attempt had been made to establish a townsite in the area. In October 1858, the town of Auraria had been laid out. Auraria was located on the west side of Cherry Creek. On November 8, 1858, the first meeting of the board of directors was held, and an "engineer" authorized to survey the townsite. The boundaries of the townsite included about twelve hundred acres.

An earlier attempt at plotting a townsite had also been attempted. The St. Charles Town Association had been organized by a number of miners who had come to the Cherry Creek area from an earlier townsite they had established called "Montana City." Montana City had been laid out near a spot where placer mining activity had taken place, north of the Cherry Creek area by twenty or thirty miles. The "city" of St. Charles had been established in

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵E. W. Wynkoop, "Manuscript Colorado History," Wynkoop Papers, SHSC.

September of 1858 by a group of disenchanted miners who had turned from gold digging to real estate speculation, and two mountain men who had moved into the Cherry Creek area with their Indian wives. Because these two men had considerable influence among the Cheyennes and Arapahoes, and in view of the fact that the land still legally belonged to the Indians they were encouraged to become a part of the St. Charles organization. The townsite of St. Charles was plotted on the east side of Cherry Creek, and included a square mile of land. St. Charles was actually the first planned community in the area of what is now Denver, Colorado.¹⁶

The expedition from Leavenworth and Lecompton, upon reaching Cherry Creek in November 1858, viewed the impending struggle between two companies. After some deliberation it was decided that because of the proximity of Cherry Creek to the most probable routes of travel, a town located on the east side of the creek would be in the most advantageous position.¹⁷

The day after their arrival at Cherry Creek, Wynkoop and his associates took possession of the St. Charles townsite on the east side of the creek. Although this can be viewed as a classic example of claim jumping, some strong arguments were put forth justifying the action. It was true that the St. Charles Town Association claimed the land, but the only improvement made on the claim was an unfinished cabin. It was also argued that there was no evidence on the ground of a survey that the St. Charles Association was alleged to have made. In this case, however, it is not unlikely that the members of

¹⁶Smiley, History of Denver, 190, 199-201, 206-208; Henry Villard, The Past and Present of the Pike's Peak Gold Regions (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1932), 11. The mountain men were John Simpson Smith and William McGaa.

¹⁷Smiley, History of Denver, 213. The two trails, forming a connection with the East via "the Great Northern route" (the Platte River route) and with New Mexico crossed each other at the mouth of Cherry Creek.

the Leavenworth and Lecompton party could have pulled up the surveyor's stakes.

Of the original members of the St. Charles Town Association only three remained in the vicinity; the rest had departed east for their homes. The two mountain men, Smith and McGaa, original members of the St. Charles Association, had been given shares in the Auraria Town Company. Auraria was already a budding settlement, and both men seemed indifferent to the jump of the St. Charles site. In true frontier fashion the other member of the St. Charles organization, Charles Nichols, was notified by one of the newly arrived eastern Kansans that if he made any trouble "a rope and noose would be used on him."¹⁸ Apparently this subtle suggestion was heeded by Nichols, for soon afterwards he entered into negotiations with the Wynkoop-Larimer party.

Because there were no completed dwellings on the eastern bank of Cherry Creek, the first meeting of the new townsite company was held in Auraria on the evening of November 17, 1858. The meeting convened in William McGaa's tipi. The newcomers from Lecompton and Leavenworth produced a bottle of whiskey, and after McGaa had had more than a few drinks he freely divulged all the desired information concerning the St. Charles Association. It was decided at this point to admit the members of the St. Charles Town Association to the new townsite company. Sometime during this evening meeting, or during the next week, it was decided to name the company and the town (or "city" as all these early real estate speculations were called) after Governor James Denver. Thus, it was resolved to call the company the Denver City Town Company. One week after their arrival at Cherry Creek, the Leavenworth and Lecompton party had taken possession of the St. Charles townsite, formed an association of forty-one persons, made plans for future development, and were

¹⁸Ibid.

ready to begin surveying and platting.¹⁹

Wynkoop, an active participant in the above affairs, mentioned that some gold was found in small quantities along the banks of the South Platte River and Cherry Creek. However, extensive prospecting operations were suspended because it was getting well into fall and too late to go into the mountains, where it was presumed that gold existed in large quantities.²⁰

Apparently Wynkoop and his associates were not welcomed with open arms when they arrived in the Cherry Creek area. In a letter written from Auraria during this period one miner stated that the arrival of Denver's appointed county officers angered the inhabitants of the young settlement. Citizens of Auraria held a public meeting and requested that the Arapahoe County officials resign so that Aurarians could pick their own officers. The meeting ended with the Denver appointees promising that they would consider the matter.²¹

After the organization of the Denver City Town Company, Wynkoop was appointed general agent for the company, and his first duty was to return to Lecompton to have the new company properly and legally incorporated. It was decided that this should be done as soon as possible because it was feared that one of the promoters of St. Charles might have already started the process of having the St. Charles Association incorporated. Wynkoop was to have stock certificates printed and the plats lithographed. With one other man, Albert B. Steinberger, two mules and a spring wagon, Wynkoop set out to cross the plains again. They left Cherry Creek December 3, 1858.²²

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰E. W. Wynkoop, "Manuscript Colorado History," Wynkoop Papers, SHSC.

²¹Letter from G. N. Hill, Nov. 28, 1858, in the Kansas City Journal of Commerce, Jan. 15, 1859; letter from A. F. B., Dec. 14, 1858, in the Council Bluffs Eagle, Feb. 23, 1859.

²²E. W. Wynkoop, "Manuscript Colorado History," Wynkoop Papers, SHSC.

The two men chose the Platte River route because it was one hundred miles shorter than the Arkansas River route. Wynkoop was later to describe this journey as "foolhardy." The trip was to take them across the plains with distances of up to one hundred miles without any trees. The men also had to pass through territory occupied by Indians, without any knowledge as to whether they were hostile or peaceful. The weather was bad, the temperature was below zero, and it was the consensus that the two would never reach Lecompton alive. The first day on the trail Wynkoop's feet were frozen with frostbite. It was lucky for him that a party of hunters happened on the two travelers and gave prompt attention to Wynkoop's feet, eventually bringing them back to life.²³

With much suffering from inclement weather and scarcity of food, the two men finally reached Fort Kearney, Nebraska Territory, a distance of about three hundred and fifty miles from Cherry Creek. Here Wynkoop and his companion rested for the night and part of the next day. They started off again in the afternoon, and set out to cross the Platte River which was at this time of year frozen. The two men had inquired about crossing the river at the fort, and were told that the ice was solid enough to permit them to cross. When the men were in the center of the river, however, and a good distance from either shore they broke through the ice. The mules sank down to their backs and the wagon filled with freezing water. Wynkoop and Steinberger succeeded in pulling one animal out onto solid ice, but the other mule was still immersed in the icy water. Using a rope hitched to the rescued beast they pulled the other mule out, but a few minutes later the animal died. By this time night had fallen. Both men were soaked to their skin, their wagon stuck in the icy river, and they were hundreds of yards from either shore.

²³Ibid.

In fear of further mishaps the two resolved to spend the night out on the ice. The next morning help was secured from some herdsmen, and the wagon was pulled to safety on the south shore.²⁴

Later in his life Edward Wynkoop was known as one of the foremost advocates of a humanitarian policy between the United States Government and the American Indian. On many occasions Wynkoop championed the cause of various Indian groups, often putting himself and his career in jeopardy. Later on his winter journey from the Rockies to Lecompton an incident occurred that would seem to suggest that Wynkoop had not yet decided that the best way to treat the American Indian was with understanding and compassion. Wynkoop and Steinberger were traveling through Pawnee country, and were within sight of the white settlement of Grand Island, on the Platte River. The two exhausted men were stopped by a band of Pawnees. Wynkoop described the Pawnees as having "succeeded in acquiring all of the vices of the whiteman without being troubled with any of his virtues." The Indians, upon learning that the men had crossed the plains, asked many questions of the weary travelers. They asked about the locations of different bands of Sioux, Cheyenne, and Arapaho Indians, and inquired where the two had last seen buffalo. Apparently Wynkoop and his partner grew tired of these questions and endeavored to move on. The Indians, however, detained them further.

After Wynkoop and Steinberger had answered all of the questions, they started to move on. Once again their progress was checked by the Pawnees. The two tired travelers were detained for another hour, during which the Indians took what few provisions the men had left. Finally the men were permitted to proceed. After they had pulled away from the main body of Pawnees, one of the Indians ran up behind the wagon. Wynkoop recognized this man as one

²⁴Ibid.

of the most obnoxious of the party that had accosted them. He halted the wagon, and, as the Pawnee ran up to the two men, he picked up a short heavy whip. Just as the man ran up to the spot where the Kansans were standing, Wynkoop lashed out and brought his whip across the face of the Indian. The two men then hurried into the settlement, leaving the Pawnee to his own misery.²⁵

The remainder of the journey was without further incidents. The two stopped at Omaha, Nebraska, arriving January 5, 1859, before proceeding on to LeCompton. In Omaha they caused quite a stir as they were the first to return from the new gold regions during this time when the frontier was aflame with rumors about the new el dorado. Clad in buckskins, moccasins, an otter skin cap, with "long matted hair falling below the shoulders, unshaven, dirty and sporting a brace of pistols and a bowie knife," Wynkoop checked into the Hernden House Hotel in Omaha.²⁶

Wynkoop and Steinberger remained in Omaha for a week or longer. Wherever they went they were pressed for information about the new gold fields in the Rocky Mountains. After they had been in Omaha three days they were contacted by William N. Byers and John H. Kellom. Byers and Kellom were writing a guidebook to the gold fields of the Rockies, anticipating a rush similar to the one that lured thousands to California in 1849. The book was to contain information about the climate, topography, natural beauty, and best routes to the region in the various seasons, as well as other data. Wynkoop and Steinberger gave information for the guide about which mines were being worked, how far the mountains had been penetrated, and where gold had actually been found. They mentioned that farming was possible, with irrigation, in

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Ibid.

the bottomlands. The two men listed and described the tools necessary for mining in the gold regions.²⁷

On January 20, 1859, Wynkoop and his companion were once again interviewed by some men who were compiling a guidebook to the gold mines. This time the interview took place in Kansas; probably Leavenworth or Lecompton. When asked by the various writers of these guides who had never been to the Rocky Mountains themselves, Wynkoop and Steinberger endorsed the South Platte River route.²⁸

Once back in Lecompton, Wynkoop set about having the Denver City Town Company legally incorporated. He commissioned his brother George, who was at that time living in Lecompton, to use his influence to secure passage of an act incorporating the Denver company. Soon afterwards George Wynkoop found out that there was already a bill pending to incorporate St. Charles, the claim Wynkoop, Larimer, and the others had jumped. Both Edward and his brother George tried in vain to have the Denver City Town Company substituted for the St. Charles Association on the charter, but the promoters of St. Charles stood firm, claiming that they were first on the site and that they had surveyed the land and intended to establish a town on it. The St. Charles promoters claimed that Edward Wynkoop and his associates had jumped their claim.²⁹ Indeed, there seemed to be a strong case favoring the St. Charles

²⁷William N. Byers and John Kellom, A Hand Book to the Gold Fields of Nebraska and Kansas (Chicago: D. B. Cooke & Co., 1859); LeRoy Hafen, ed., Pike's Peak Gold Rush Guidebooks of 1859 (Glendale: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1941), 219, 220; Hafen, ed., Colorado Gold Rush, Contemporary Letters and Reports 1858-1859 (Glendale: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1941), 177.

²⁸John Pratt and Henry Hunt, A Guide to the Gold Mines of Kansas (Chicago: C. Scott & Co., 1859); Hafen, Pike's Peak Gold Rush Guidebooks of 1859, 281.

²⁹Rocky Mountain News (weekly), Apr. 18, 1860; Smiley, History of Denver, 219.

promoters in their desire to have their company incorporated.

Wynkoop sized up the situation and decided to take a different approach. When it was clear that he could not get the Denver City bill through the legislature, he made peace with the St. Charles men and convinced them that it would be a good idea to admit himself, Larimer, and Charles Lawrence into the St. Charles organization.³⁰

Previous to this conflict of interests in the Kansas Territorial Legislature, Charles Nichols had appeared in Lecompton. Nichols, a member of the St. Charles Association, had remained at the townsite after the other members of the company had departed. Nichols was assigned the task of erecting a building on the claim to guarantee ownership. He was present when the combined parties from Leavenworth and Lecompton consisting of Wynkoop, Larimer, and the others jumped the claim. It was Nichols who had been threatened by the newly-arrived Kansans with bodily harm if he interfered with their intentions.³¹

The procedure utilized by Wynkoop, Larimer, and the others, in jumping the St. Charles claim, had not exactly been a peaceful one. William McGaa, one of the mountain men with an interest in the St. Charles Company, later wrote of this event. McGaa and Nichols were in the process of erecting an "improvement" on the claim when they were confronted by Larimer, Wynkoop, et al. The Kansans said that they were acting under orders from Governor Denver, and told McGaa and Nichols that if they weren't admitted as members of the St. Charles Town Association they would use their official powers to nullify the claim. The Wynkoop-Larimer party, McGaa claimed later, said

³⁰Smiley, History of Denver, 219.

³¹William McGaa, "A Statement Regarding the Formation of The St. Charles and Denver Town Companies," Colorado Magazine, 22 (1945), 127, 128.

they would tear down the cabin he had been building, and order him out of the area. It was also alleged that threats endangering the lives of McGaa and his family were made. McGaa and Nichols decided to admit the newly-arrived Kansans into the organization. A committee consisting of three or four of the Lecompton-Leavenworth party then reorganized the company and substituted a new name for the St. Charles Town Association. The new name, the Denver City Town Company, was approved and new by-laws and a constitution were drawn up. Charles Nichols soon afterwards left for Lecompton. Once there he related the events that had taken place at Cherry Creek to the Kansas Legislature.³²

Wynkoop had several powerful friends in the legislature and occupying other important positions in the territorial government. The St. Charles men, anxious to get their bill approved, realized that if they agreed to Wynkoop's suggestion that he, Larimer, and Lawrence be admitted into the St. Charles organization, the bill would be accepted with a minimum amount of difficulty. The St. Charles promoters felt that they could admit Wynkoop and the others without relinquishing their control of the company.³³

On February 11, 1859, Wynkoop, Larimer, and Lawrence were accepted into the St. Charles Town Association. At this time an act incorporating the association was enacted by the Kansas Territorial Legislature. Theodore Dixon, one of the original members of the St. Charles company later said that had he fully understood the consequences of permitting Wynkoop, Larimer, and Lawrence into the organization, he would have done all he could to prevent their admission. Evidently Dixon and other original members of the St. Charles Association were under the impression that nothing could be done with

³²Ibid.

³³Smiley, History of Denver, 219.

their townsite claim until they could return to Cherry Creek in the summer, Wynkoop left for the mountains soon afterwards.³⁴

Wynkoop remained in Lecompton until April. In the February 26, 1859 issue of the Herald of Freedom newspaper, printed in Topeka, Kansas Territory, it was announced that Wynkoop would be conducting a train of people from Lecompton to Denver City. The journey was to begin between April 1 and April 15. All persons who were interested in joining the train were to be fully provisioned for the period of the trip, and for one week after arrival in "Denver City."³⁵ The price per person with one hundred pounds of baggage was one hundred dollars. The terms specified that a fifty dollar deposit was required, and it was further stated that no applications would be accepted after March 15, 1859.³⁶

Once again Edward Wynkoop found himself making the journey across the plains to the Rockies, this time at the head of a train of hopeful gold seekers. When he arrived at Cherry Creek in late May or early June, he found that things had changed considerably. What had once been a squalid little collection of tents and crude log cabins had evolved into the beginning of a small town. Emigration to the gold region had begun in the early spring, and daily there arrived new parties of gold seekers.³⁷

The winter of 1858-1859 had not been an easy one for those who had

³⁴"An Act Incorporating the St. Charles Town Company," Private Laws of the Territory of Kansas Passed at the Fifth Session of the Legislative Assembly at Lecompton, January 1, 1859 and Held and Concluded at Lawrence (Lawrence: Herald of Freedom Press, 1859), 227; Smiley, History of Denver, 220.

³⁵It is interesting that Wynkoop would use "Denver City" in the newspaper notice. Certainly he was aware that the legal name incorporating the St. Charles Association had passed through the Kansas Territorial Legislature.

³⁶Hafen, Colorado Gold Rush, 271-272.

³⁷E. W. Wynkoop, "Manuscript Colorado History," Wynkoop Papers, SHSC.

remained behind at Cherry Creek. Weather permitting, most of the time was spent in the building of cabins. Two hundred cabins were built in the course of a few months. Attempts at mining were also made although the opinion that the mountains held the gold seemed to prevail. Because of snow conditions in the mountains mining activities were generally put off until the weather turned warm again. The winter had been unusually mild, enabling settlers to work on their dwellings most of the time. There were few comforts or social attractions, but there was occasional excitement in the form of dances and free-for-all fights. Dances were mostly attended by the local mountaineers and their Indian wives. For a number of months during the winter there were only three white women in the area. The settlers seemed to have been concerned mostly with cutting and hauling logs for their cabins.

Christmas and New Year were celebrated with pies, cakes, and speeches. There was no regular communication between the Cherry Creek settlements and Missouri River towns. At intervals mail was received, transported by express riders to Fort Laramie and brought to Cherry Creek by the Salt Lake mails. Occasionally pack trains from New Mexico brought fresh supplies. Many of the New Mexico traders set up businesses at the Cherry Creek settlements, anticipating the rush of the spring and summer.³⁸

During the winter of 1858-1859 "Pike's Peak fever" spread throughout the Missouri River Valley, and even as far as the Atlantic states. Reports received from the West were often exaggerated. Each new report put the towns on the edge of the frontier into a babel of excitement. Golden stories from the Rockies were music to the ears of many restless and disillusioned settlers

³⁸ Denver City and Auraria, The Commercial Emporium of The Pike's Peak Gold Regions in 1859 (St. Louis (?): 1859), 7, 8. Reprinted in Nolie Mumey, History of the Early Settlements of Denver (Glendale: Arthur H. Clark Co. 1942).

of eastern Kansas and Nebraska. Gamblers, farmers, adventurers, and forlorn town-boomers took increasing interest in the news from the West. For the men and women who filled the ranks of the poor, the bankrupt, and the weary, reports from the Pike's Peak country brought promise of better times and new hope.

Thousands of gold seekers made the journey across the plains in the spring of 1859. These hopeful adventurers formed an almost continuous line from the Missouri River towns to the Cherry Creek settlements. Many of the fortune seekers arrived in a destitute condition, expecting to "strike it rich" almost immediately after they reached Cherry Creek. Many of these new emigrants were under the false impression that gold was so plentiful and easy to find that they would be able to fill their pockets with nuggets of the precious mineral. It was found that there had often been a misunderstanding as to how extensive and accessible the gold deposits were. Indeed, it was found that there had been "many a slip between the cup and the lip."³⁹ However, all hope was not lost, for most gold seekers simply turned their high expectations and notions west to the mountains, which were still inaccessible because of snow. Here was where the gold was, it was thought. The argonauts had to be content to wait.

Daily the number of new arrivals from the East increased, making the journey across the plains in prairie schooners, wagons, and carts of every description. Often they came at rates of one to three hundred a day. Many, after seeing that gold was not as plentiful as they had thought, headed back home. Some of these disillusioned gold seekers stayed in the Cherry Creek settlements just long enough to sell their remaining possessions in order to raise enough capital to finance their trip home.

³⁹E. W. Wynkoop, "Manuscript Colorado History," Wynkoop Papers, SHSC.

It was true that some gold had been found, but the finds were disappointing. By the middle of April there were more than a thousand people in the Cherry Creek area, with many more scattered in a twenty-five mile radius of the budding settlements. Disillusioned parties heading back east increased in number. In tones of dejection they warned those they met not to proceed to the Cherry Creek area. Town lots grew cheaper by the day.

Many of the gold seekers had purchased guidebooks to the Pike's Peak region, like the one Byers and Kellom were writing when they interviewed Wynkoop and Steinberger in Omaha. These guidebooks, in many cases, were religiously followed. Now the discouraged argonauts vehemently execrated the men who had authored these guides. Wynkoop later wrote that "many curses loud and deep were leveled at the heads of those who were accused of bringing in false reports to the states." Wynkoop and Steinberger were among the very first to return to the Missouri River towns. Wynkoop also mentioned that upon recognition by one party of the discouraged gold seekers he nearly became a victim of "lynch law." The situation did not look good for the Cherry Creek settlements as the populace swore at both the land and their luck.⁴⁰

When the snow melted in the Rocky Mountains, the Cherry Creek settlements became almost totally deserted as the argonauts took to the nearby mountains in search of their fortunes. Most followed nearby Clear Creek or Boulder Creek into the Rockies. At the end of the first week in May no significant finds had been made. The second week in May 1859, officers of the Pike's Peak and Leavenworth City Express Company arrived, bringing the first stagecoaches and passengers. To the pioneers of the Cherry Creek communities this seemed to be an indication of the faith that business had in the perma-

⁴⁰ Ibid.

nency of the gold resources in the area. But still news from the mountains of a significant find was eagerly awaited.

On the eighteenth of May the good news came, when the discovery of the Gregory Diggings was announced. Four or five days later the evidence arrived, and for the first time there was concrete proof that gold existed in large quantities in the Rocky Mountains. The discovery made a great impact on the Cherry Creek settlements. Building was resumed, people seemed to have brightened their outlooks, and prosperity arrived as gold from the diggings began to circulate.

Edward Wynkoop arrived at Cherry Creek soon after the above events transpired. Members of the St. Charles Association appeared in the booming settlements a few weeks afterwards, in late June. The St. Charles men saw what had been done to their claim (by the Denver City Town Company) in their absence. Realizing that there was little they could do about the situation, most of the St. Charles members became members of the Denver City Town Company. Soon afterwards the St. Charles Town Association ceased to exist.

News of Gregory's strike spread like wildfire. The depression that had plagued Denver City and Auraria in the early spring now gave way to electrified enthusiasm. The two towns were alive with excitement and bustle as a seemingly unbroken train of wagons and people rolled in. During the midsummer months newcomers swarmed through the streets of the Cherry Creek settlements at the rate of five hundred a day.⁴¹

The summer of 1859 was one of excited activity around the Cherry Creek settlements. After the Gregory strike other important discoveries were made. From early spring, numbers of miners had been assembling at Arapahoe, a camp located near present day Golden, Colorado. Arapahoe was the starting point

⁴¹Smiley, History of Denver, 212-224.

not only for developers of gold mines in the mountains, but also for founders of the towns of Golden, Idaho, Mountain City, Central City and others.

There is evidence that Wynkoop, just as interested in getting rich as the next man, may have been one of the promoters and owners of Arapahoe City. Gold had been found there, and the enterprise looked promising. Wynkoop and his associates, however, soon found that the precious metal could not be mined in paying quantity. After a few months, Arapahoe City became defunct and vanished from the earth.⁴²

It will be remembered that Wynkoop was the appointed sheriff of Arapahoe County, Kansas Territory at this time. Because of his Arapahoe City endeavors, and because there were no funds in the Arapahoe County treasury to pay his salary, Wynkoop did not devote himself entirely to his official duties. None of the Arapahoe County officials did. As one early inhabitant said, in particular reference of the sheriff's duties, "if there was any hanging to do, the people did it and were not long about it."⁴³

Miners scattered out in all directions from the Cherry Creek settlements. After the Clear Creek discoveries began to yield profitable results, many different elements in society began to establish themselves in Denver City and Auraria. By late summer, 1859, the lawless element was strong among the newcomers to the Cherry Creek area. Gamblers, swindlers, "harpies," thieves, and bushwackers set up shop in the young communities, preying upon the miners and town residents.

It is not known when Edward Wynkoop returned to the Cherry Creek area from the unsuccessful Arapahoe City venture. Nor is it known how diligent

⁴²Albert B. Sanford, "Hal Sayre, the Fifty-Niner," The Trail, 18 (1925), 6.

⁴³William Larimer, Reminiscences of General William Larimer and his son William H. H. Larimer, two of the Founders of Denver City (Lancaster, Pa.: New Era Printing Co., 1918), 147.

he was in his pursuits as sheriff of Arapahoe County. In March 1859, while Wynkoop was still in eastern Kansas, a general election for officers of Arapahoe County was held. The purpose of the election was to replace the officials appointed by Governor Denver. In this election Wynkoop became, in absentia, the elected rather than the appointed sheriff of Arapahoe County.⁴⁴

Arapahoe County was destined to have a short life. As the population of the Cherry Creek and Pike's Peak areas increased so did the desire of the settlers for statehood. However, Congress took no action to satisfy the demands of the pioneers, causing the miners to initiate a movement for independence from Kansas. The plan was to create a state which would be called "Jefferson." This was thwarted, but on October 24, 1859, the Territory of Jefferson, unrecognized by the United States, was established by vote. With the organization of this new territory Wynkoop became sheriff of Arapahoe County, Jefferson Territory. He held this position until Colorado Territory was created by Congress on February 26, 1861.⁴⁵

During the autumn of 1859 feelings of the inhabitants of the Cherry Creek settlements became such that it was proposed that the two places be consolidated. The two towns, if united, could provide a stable government capable of maintaining law and order and protecting life and property. The provisional legislature of Jefferson Territory passed an act consolidating the towns of Auraria, Denver City, and Highland. Highland at the time existed on paper only. Following this "act" passed by an unauthorized legislature of an unauthorized territory, an election was held and a mayor and other city

⁴⁴Gene Ronald Marlatt, "Edward W. Wynkoop: An Investigation of his Role in the Sand Creek Controversy and other Indian Affairs, 1863-1868," (M. A. Thesis, University of Denver, 1961), 10.

⁴⁵Rocky Mountain News (daily), Apr. 13, 1882; John Decker Gerhart, "Early Colorado Statehood Movements and National Politics, 1860-1867," (M. A. Thesis, University of Denver, 1943), 11-14.

officers elected. The election was held on December 19, 1859. In one sense this was the beginning of the municipal government of Denver, but not in a legal sense. Although the election had been held under provisions of "law," the provisional government was, like the Jefferson Territorial Government, provisional. However, it was better than no city government at all. The action of the provisional legislature in consolidating the three towns, and the election held under the terms approved by it served to crystallize public sentiment in favor of dropping the names of the other two towns and calling the place simply "the city of Denver."

Wynkoop's duties as sheriff of Arapahoe County, Jefferson Territory, involved dealing with the usual problems that faced a frontier community in the West during this time period. Wynkoop seems to have been very proud of his role in several duels between citizens of Denver. While sheriff of Arapahoe County, Kansas Territory, he attempted to stop a duel between William P. McClure, a Denver lawyer and real estate broker, and Richard Whitsitt, one of the members of the LeCompton party. Sheriff Wynkoop called upon the crowd of onlookers who had gathered to witness the spectacle to act as a posse and stop the duel before it started. The crowd refused the request and Wynkoop stood aside. The duelers fired and McClure received a minor wound. Whitsitt emerged from the duel unscathed.⁴⁶

In March 1860, another duel occurred. On this occasion it was between L. W. Bliss, acting governor of Jefferson Territory, and Dr. J. S. Stone, a member of the legislative assembly. Bliss was a Union sympathizer, and Stone "a Southern man." Bliss asked Wynkoop to act as his second. Wynkoop agreed to do this. The duel proved to be victorious for Bliss. Stone was severely

⁴⁶ Rocky Mountain News (w), Oct. 27, 1859; Scrapbook, Wynkoop Papers, MNM; E. W. Wynkoop, "Manuscript Colorado History," Wynkoop Papers, SHSC.

wounded, and died seven months later. In October 1861, after Colorado Territory had been established, Wynkoop himself was nearly involved in a duel with the same W. P. McClure who had been wounded by Whitsitt in the earlier duel. The duel was prevented, however, by a milliner who intervened and appealed to both men not to go any further in their dispute.⁴⁷

Wynkoop's other duties as sheriff included attaching property for debt, arresting murderers, investigating homicides, suicides, and kidnappings. In this last case Wynkoop rescued the woman he was to marry the next year. He was also elected second lieutenant of the Jefferson Rangers, a crime fighting vigilante organization that lasted only as long as the Territory of Jefferson.⁴⁸

During this period Wynkoop's duties as sheriff did not prevent him from becoming involved in other activities in Denver. He found time to be an actor in a number of plays staged by the Amateur Dramatic Association of Denver, an organization which he served as president. Wynkoop was best remembered for his role in the play The Drunkard for which he received a flattering review for his portrayal as Edward Middleton, a drunkard. Other plays in which he acted included Skatara, The Mountain Cheiftain in which he played Hardicamp, a mountaineer; and Lady of the Lake, by Sir Walter Scott. These plays, as well as other dramatic presentations caused Wynkoop to be remembered as one of Denver's most talented amateur actors.⁴⁹

Wynkoop also found time apart from his duties as sheriff and amateur

⁴⁷Rocky Mountain News (w), Oct. 17, 1860; Julia S. Lambert, "Plain Tales of the Plains," The Trail, 8 (1916), 7-8.

⁴⁸Rocky Mountain News (w), Sept. 26, Dec. 26, Feb. 8, 1860; Ibid. (d), Nov. 23, 1860; "Another Homicide," "Probable Suicide," (unidentified newspapers articles), Scrapbook, Wynkoop Papers, MNM.

⁴⁹Rocky Mountain News (w), Feb. 2, Mar. 5, 1861; Scrapbook, Wynkoop Papers, MNM.

actor to be a bartender at the Criterion Saloon. The Criterion was probably the most notorious of the drinking and gambling establishments in Denver at this time. The saloon was owned by an infamous character named Charles Harrison, and was known as a meeting place for criminals and other undesirables. Fights and gunplay were not at all uncommon visitors to an evening's activities at the Criterion.⁵⁰

The city government organized under the Jefferson Territory "charter" had become weak and inefficient before June of 1860. In late summer the government had almost completely disintegrated, and a citizens meeting was called in September to provide some form of city government that would hold the city together until the organization of a bona-fide territorial government. Another meeting was held at which a new "city constitution" was adopted, and an election was called for the first Monday in October. In this election the "constitution" was ratified and new city officials were elected.

By terms of the "city constitution" of October 1860, elections were to be held semi-annually, in April and in October. When Colorado became a territory in February 1861, Wynkoop ceased to be sheriff of Arapahoe County. He decided to run for the office of city marshal of Denver in the upcoming elections of April. His opponent was James R. Shaffer, a prominent Denverite. The race for the office of marshal seems to have generated the most enthusiasm in the election. Shaffer was backed by the Rocky Mountain News and appeared as a candidate on both the Citizens' and People's tickets; while Wynkoop was supported by another newspaper, the Daily Denver Mountaineer, and was a part of the Workingman's Independent ticket and the People's Independent ticket.⁵¹

⁵⁰Lambert, "Plain Tales of the Plains," 12-13.

⁵¹Smiley, History of Denver, 634; Rocky Mountain News (d), Apr. 4, Mar. 29, 1861.

The election was characterized by mudslinging and ballot-box stuffing. Shaffer emerged the victor, but on the basis of frauds committed during the election, city officials decided that there must be a new election to be held on Friday, April 5, 1861. Both men had many supporters, but Wynkoop probably had more enemies because of his opposition to creation of the municipal government in 1860. Wynkoop had opposed the municipal government plan because the creation of a Denver City government would threaten his authority as sheriff of Arapahoe County. Despite Wynkoop's opposition to the idea, municipal government had become a reality. Wynkoop showed his contempt for the new city government by engaging in such acts as supporting W. P. McClure, a county official who had flouted the authority of Denver City Government in November 1860. McClure had been arrested for threatening the life of a prominent Denverite named O. J. Goldrick. McClure refused to pay the fine charged him by the court and was jailed for the night, but early the next morning a group of his friends broke into the jail and freed him.⁵²

Rumor had it that Edward Wynkoop led the group of McClure's liberators. This rumor was thought to be true because it was pointed out that Wynkoop was a friend of McClure's, and the latter had sought refuge in the Criterion Saloon where Wynkoop was bartender. Further to substantiate the rumor, Wynkoop appeared as McClure's representative when he decided to surrender himself to city authorities. Whether Wynkoop was actually involved in the controversy to the degree that Denverites thought is not known, but apparently a majority of the people believed the rumors, and this fact, brought out by the Rocky Mountain News, may have contributed to his defeat.⁵³

⁵²Rocky Mountain News (d), Apr. 3, 4, 1861; Daily Denver Mountaineer Apr. 5, 1861; Scrapbook, Wynkoop Papers, MNM; Rocky Mountain News (w), Nov. 3, 1860.

⁵³Rocky Mountain News (d), Apr. 4, 1861; Ibid. (w), Nov. 3, 1860.

CHAPTER II

THE WAR YEARS

His defeat in the race for Denver City marshal behind him, Wynkoop turned to prospecting until July 26, 1861. On this date he received a commission as second lieutenant in the First Regiment of Colorado Infantry Volunteers. Wynkoop had been recruited by John P. Slough, a Denver lawyer who at that time commanded Company "A." James R. Shaffer, the man who had defeated Wynkoop in the recent election, was the first lieutenant of the company. Wynkoop helped recruit men for the company by going to Central City and other mountain towns soliciting volunteers.¹

In one month enough men had been recruited to form ten companies. The regiment camped on the South Platte River about two miles from the center of Denver in 1861, at a place they named "Camp Weld," after Secretary of Colorado Territory Lewis Weld. On August 26, 1861, Slough was appointed colonel of the First Colorado Regiment; Samuel F. Tappan became lieutenant colonel; John M. Chivington, major; and Wynkoop was made captain of Company "A," with Shaffer as first lieutenant.²

¹Rocky Mountain News (w), Aug. 14, 1861; Ovando J. Hollister, Boldly They Rode, A History of the First Colorado Regiment Volunteers (Lakewood, Colo.: Golden Press, 1949), 185. The troop was organized by Governor of Colorado William Gilpin, a strong Union supporter who feared that Confederate elements in Colorado might disrupt the territory's governmental structure. Although he had received no authority to do so, Gilpin commissioned a number of men to open recruiting offices in the larger towns of Colorado. Drafts issued by Gilpin to Colorado merchants for supplies for the regiment were not honored by Washington, however, and affected parties successfully petitioned for his recall. Gilpin was removed from office early in 1862. His recall did not affect the status of the First Colorado Regiment.

²Hollister, Boldly They Rode, 185.

During this time while the Colorado Volunteers were being organized and drilled, Confederate forces were making dangerous advances toward Colorado and the Far West. General Henry H. Sibley had started a march from Texas through New Mexico Territory. The Confederates wanted to extend their power to the Pacific Ocean and seize control of western mines. It was hoped that in carrying out this mission the cause of the South would be strengthened.

While the Colorado Volunteers trained at Camp Weld to meet this threat, Edward Wynkoop married Louisa M. Brown of Denver, on August 21, 1861. The woman he married was born Louisa Matilda Brown in London, England, on September 15, 1836. Upon the death of her father, her mother married a man named Wakeley. The Wakeley family lived for periods of time in Paris, France, and New York, New York. In New York, early in 1859, word was out about the new el dorado on the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains. The family decided to make the journey to the new gold country. After reaching Denver City, Wakely set up a photography studio. Louisa was persuaded to join Thorne's Star Company, a professional theatrical group then playing Denver and the surrounding mining camps.³

While with Thorne's, Louisa Brown played the part of Nanette in Cross of Gold and the part of Mrs. Gregory in the play Two Gregories, or Luck in a Name at the Apollo Hall in Denver, October 3, 1859. Later she played the part of Lady Anne in Richard III. It was during this time that she made the acquaintance of Edward Wynkoop, who was a member of the Denver Amateur Dramatic Association. Louisa made her living traveling to the different mining camps to entertain the miners. She performed as an actress and dancer and became a favorite of miners. Louisa went under two names. Since she was the stepdaughter of Wakeley she was sometimes known as Louisa or "Rose" Wakeley. It seems

³Rocky Mountain News (w), Aug. 24, 1861; F. M. Wynkoop, "Commemoration to Mrs. Edward W. Wynkoop," Wynkoop Papers, MNM.

that she was best known, however, in the Colorado mining camps as "Mademoiselle Haydee." It appears that Mademoiselle Haydee was the darling of the gold regions, being "attractive . . . fascinating," with an "elegant figure, graceful" in all her motions, and "lively and vivacious" as well as "ambitious and presuming."⁴

In 1860, before their marriage, Mademoiselle Haydee had been "kidnapped" by one Thomas Evans. Wynkoop, acting in his official capacity as sheriff, apprehended the pair and brought them back to Denver. Actually Mademoiselle Haydee may not have been an unwilling participant in the affair. Nevertheless the lady soon found Wynkoop more to her liking, for less than two months after their marriage their first child, Edward Estill Wynkoop, was born.⁵

Meanwhile General Sibley and his troops had marched into New Mexico Territory and in December 1861, declared it a Southern territory. Sibley then marched toward Fort Craig, where the commander of Union forces, Colonel E. R. S. Canby, had concentrated his troops. Sibley reached Fort Craig on February 12, 1862, after marching up the Rio Grande Valley from the El Paso, Texas, area. A few miles from Fort Craig, at a place called Valverde, the two forces clashed on February 21, 1862. The outcome of the battle was a victory for the Southern troops when they captured the Union artillery. This victory permitted the Confederate force to continue their march northward, capturing Albuquerque and Santa Fe.⁶

⁴F. M. Wynkoop, "Commemoration," Wynkoop Papers, MNM; Hal Sayre, "Early Central City Theatricals and other Reminiscences," Colorado Magazine, 6 (1929), 47-53; Rocky Mountain News (w), Feb. 7, July 24, 1861.

⁵Rocky Mountain News (w), Nov. 20, 1860; Ibid. (d), Nov. 23, 1860; E. E. Wynkoop, "Edward Wanshear Wynkoop," Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society, 13 (1913-1914), 71.

⁶William C. Whitford, Colorado Volunteers in the Civil War (Denver: State Historical Society of Colorado, 1906), 66.

Prior to the Battle of Valverde, on February 14, 1862, Lewis Weld, acting governor of Colorado Territory, received an order from Major General David Hunter, commanding the Department of Kansas, requesting that "all available forces" be sent to reinforce Canby. Two days after this order was received the First Colorado Regiment left Camp Weld. On March 7, they reached the Purgatoire River, near present day Trinidad, Colorado. Here they rendezvoused with two companies of the First Colorado Regiment from Fort Wise (Fort Lyon) under the command of Colonel Tappan. The regiment then continued south, reaching Fort Union, New Mexico Territory, on March 10. The Colorado troops remained at Fort Union until March 22. At Fort Union Colonel John Slough assumed command of all forces in the northern district of New Mexico and decided to attack the rebels before they reached Fort Union.⁷

On the twenty-second he broke camp and with a force of 1,342 men that included 916 men of the First Colorado started marching southwest toward Santa Fe on the Santa Fe Trail. On March 25, Slough and his command reached Bernal Springs where he ordered a detachment of 418 men under Wynkoop to make a reconnaissance in advance of the main column. Wynkoop was senior captain of the regiment and was chosen for the task because Major John Chivington, who ordinarily would have led such an expedition, was taken ill and had remained behind at Fort Union. Chivington's illness was apparently not serious, however, because he hurried after the force and rejoined it late on the twenty-fifth. After being told of the reconnaissance mission he demanded the right to command the expedition, and was duly satisfied.⁸

⁷United States War Department, The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880-1902), Series 1, Vol. 9, 630.

⁸Ibid., 534; John M. Chivington, "The Pet Lambs," The Denver Republican, Apr. 20, 1890

On March 26, Chivington's command and Sibley's advance guard met in Apache Canyon, the western approach to Glorieta Pass. Wynkoop played a leading role in the battle as his Company "A," along with Companies "E" and "D" under Captains Anthony and Downing had been deployed by Chivington along the slopes of the canyon. These troops then swept down upon the Confederates at the same time the Union cavalry made their final charge upon the enemy. This combined attack won the battle for the Union forces.⁹

Two days later the Union and Confederate forces met on the field of Glorieta Pass, a few miles east of Apache Canyon. This battle proved to be the most decisive battle of the Civil War in the West. After much hard fighting Lieutenant Colonel William Scurry, the Confederate commander, forced Slough to retreat. The rebels had numerical superiority over the Union troops, and it is generally thought that this was the reason for the retreat. On March 29 a truce was signed by Slough and Scurry. Scurry then suddenly retreated toward Santa Fe.

The Confederate retreat was caused by a brilliant maneuver by Major Chivington. Chivington and four hundred men, including Wynkoop's company, flanked the Confederate troops and destroyed their supply wagons and horses at Johnson's Ranch, a point several miles to the rear of the main Confederate forces. This single maneuver effectively prevented any further Southern advance in New Mexico, and was also a serious blow to the enemy. Chivington praised Wynkoop and thirty of his men for silencing enemy gun positions at Johnson's Ranch. At best, however, the Battle of Glorieta can only be thought of as a "draw."¹⁰

After the Battle of Glorieta, Union troops returned to Fort Union and

⁹War of the Rebellion, Series 1, Vol. 9, 530-531, 535, 539.

¹⁰Ibid., 535, 539.

remained there until orders were received from Colonel Canby to come to Albuquerque to aid him in a plan to force Sibley to withdraw from New Mexico. Confederate troops had already begun their retreat, and, after a skirmish at Peralta hurried south and out of New Mexico Territory. After this little fighting took place in New Mexico.¹¹

Slough resigned his command soon after the Battle of Glorieta. Chivington was promoted to colonel (over Lieutenant Colonel Tappan) in response to a petition presented to Canby by the officers of the regiment. Wynkoop was a signer of the petition. On April 14, 1862, Wynkoop, because of his "distinguished services" at the two battles, was promoted to major, filling the position vacated by Chivington.¹²

After the Confederates withdrew, the First Colorado Regiment was divided and garrisoned at several places in New Mexico. Major Wynkoop was placed in command of Camp Valverde, near Fort Craig, on the Rio Grande. He remained there until the latter part of the year, in command of four companies of Colorado Volunteers, about 335 men. On November 1, 1862, pursuant to orders of the Secretary of War and the election of Governor John Evans of Colorado Territory, the First Regiment Colorado Volunteers commanded by Chivington was transferred from infantry into a cavalry regiment. The new unit was designated the First Cavalry of Colorado.¹³

About the same time Indian depredations in Colorado had increased, and citizens of the territory called for a return of the First Colorado. Wynkoop's

¹¹At Socorro, New Mexico, a plan of attack on the retreating Confederates was worked out by Wynkoop and another officer. To the disgust of the Colorado Volunteers, however, Canby came to the front and squashed the plan. To the Colorado Volunteers, the skirmish at Peralta was the most harmless battle of campaign.

¹²Hollister, Boldly They Rode, 185; Whitford, Colorado Volunteers, 153.

¹³War of the Rebellion, Series 1, Vol. 15, 574; Hollister, Boldly They Rode, 148.

command moved to Fort Garland, then to Fort Lyon (formerly Fort Wise) in late October, and returned to Denver early in 1863. Wynkoop was in command of Camp Weld in July 1863, when depredations by Ute Indians were reported. In response to the hostilities Wynkoop received orders from Chivington to proceed to Fort Halleck to punish the Utes for stealing stock belonging to the Overland Stage Company.¹⁴

On July 11, Wynkoop and six companies of the First Colorado Cavalry departed Denver on a long and fruitless chase through northwestern Colorado. Although Wynkoop failed in his "determination to penetrate to the villages and hiding places of the red thieves and murderers, and administer a lesson the survivors" would long remember,¹⁵ the expedition did succeed in quieting the Utes, and no further depredations were reported. After the Ute Indian expedition, Wynkoop divided his time between duty in Denver and on the plains. In May 1864, he was assigned to duty at Fort Lyon, in southeastern Colorado. At Fort Lyon he was in a position to deal with the Southern Cheyennes and Arapaho Indians, who lived in the area.

A new era of Indian-white relations on the south central plains was opened with the Pike's Peak gold rush of 1859. In more ways than not repercussions from the large influx of Anglo-Americans proved both far reaching and devastating to the life of the plains Indians. The incidence of alcohol, disease, starvation, depopulation, war, and a disregard for the Indian's rights are a few of the results brought on by contact with the white man. In eleven short years these factors as well as others were directly responsible for reducing the influence of Indians on the south central plains to a negligible factor.

¹⁴Rocky Mountain News (w), July 16, 1863.

¹⁵Ibid.

During the early 1860's relations between the plains Indians and the whites began to break down. It was not until the middle of the decade, however, that they went completely awry. In the early sixties the Rocky Mountain News pointed out that the white men were living on land that still belonged to the Cheyennes, Arapahoes, Kiowas, and Utes. After a series of editorials, a memorial was sent to the President on the subject of extinguishing Indian title to the land. The News further pointed out that it seemed rather odd that a territorial government had been organized on lands not legally owned. The News called for a treaty to resolve the situation.¹⁶

At the time depredations caused by Indians were not unheard of, both among rival bands and with whites. These incidents served to alarm inhabitants of the towns of Colorado Territory. Groups of Indians camped near Denver and other towns, causing further apprehension by local citizens. The Rocky Mountain News called for federal action in order to avoid a "destructive and expensive Indian war" caused by settlers and townspeople seeking reprisals on their own. Scares were common; it was even rumored that Denver was to be attacked by a force of two thousand Cheyennes and Arapahoes. The clamor demanding sufficient troops, and an Indian agent from the government grew more serious in tone as the number of conflicts between Indians and whites increased.¹⁷

In the Treaty of Fort Wise in September 1860, Commissioner of Indian Affairs A. B. Greenwood talked the Arapahoes and Cheyennes into ceding lands granted to them in present eastern Colorado by the Treaty of Fort Laramie, with the exception of a six hundred square mile area in southeastern Colorado. This area lay between Sand Creek and the Arkansas River. Under the terms of

¹⁶Ibid., Jan. 4, Mar. 14, Apr. 11, 1860.

¹⁷Ibid., June 13, Aug. 29, June 27, 1860.

the Treaty of Fort Wise the Indians were to receive annuities totaling three hundred and fifty thousand dollars over a fifteen year period, and each tribe member was to be given forty acres of the land for agricultural purposes. Despite the provisions of the Treaty of Fort Wise, depredations increased during the spring of 1861. By June, however, Indian affairs became peaceful, probably because Indians stayed away from Denver.¹⁸

In the middle of July 1862, reports of raiding along the Platte River not far from Denver began to be heard. Evans, as both governor and ex officio superintendent of Indian Affairs for Colorado Territory, hurried to the scene of the disturbances with a detachment of Second Colorado Volunteers. According to one account, the Indians had looted "almost every house" in the area. In August, Sioux Indians living in the area of what today is Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota, went on a bloody rampage that resulted in four hundred whites slain and hundreds more fleeing for their lives to Fort Ridgely. The uprising caused much worry in Colorado. "Friendly" Indians of Minnesota had committed horrible atrocities, why could not the Colorado Indians do the same? In addition it was often thought that Confederate agents were working against peaceful Indian-white relations. As long as there were Indians around strong defensive measures including an effective military force were needed.¹⁹

As the influx of settlers continued Evans wanted to shrink Indian holdings in Colorado. He advocated sending delegations of Utes, Cheyennes, and Arapahoes to Washington so that treaties could be made with them. In the

¹⁸ Charles Kappler, comp. and ed., Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904), Vol. 2, 807-811; LeRoy R. Hafen and Anne W. Hafen, Relations with the Indians of the Plains 1857-1861 (Glendale: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1959), 283; David Lavender, Bent's Fort (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1954), 344-346; Rocky Mountain News (w), Jan. 16, 1861.

¹⁹ Rocky Mountain News (w), June 28, Sept. 18, 1862.

case of the Cheyennes and Arapahoes, the Treaty of Fort Wise had never been put into effect. There was much confusion about what lands were relinquished and which Indians ceded them. Commissioner of Indian Affairs William P. Dole first interpreted the boundary line as the South Platte River. A United States attorney in Denver asked that the country north and west of the South Platte River be surrendered by treaty. Later Commissioner Dole changed his mind and decided all lands south of the North Platte were included in the cession of the Treaty of Fort Wise. Once it was agreed what the boundaries of the Indians' lands were to be, Dole sent Evans and two Indian agents instructions "to settle the matter with the Indians according to his (Evans') understanding of the facts." Evans had to convince the Indians, whether they signed the treaty or not, to go to the region designated as their reservation by the Treaty of Fort Wise.²⁰

In the early part of 1864 the only important Indian conflict in Colorado was between the Indians themselves. Intertribal warfare remained one of the biggest problems for the Indian agents to contend with. In April relations between Indians and whites worsened when Indians supposedly stole one hundred and seventy-five head of cattle near the source of Sand Creek in southeastern Colorado. Fifty-four men under Lieutenant George S. Eayres with two twelve-pound howitzers pursued the Indians in a campaign lasting ten days in which nineteen head of cattle were recovered and two Cheyenne villages destroyed. In other engagements brought about by the cattle theft, an Indian camp was destroyed, and two soldiers lost their lives. What developed out of this situation has often been referred to as "the Cheyenne War." Black Kettle,

²⁰ Ibid., Feb. 5, 19, May 7, June 11, 18, Sept. 3, 1863; Harry E. Kelsey, John Evans, Frontier Capitalist (Denver: State Historical Society of Colorado, 1969), 236; Donald Berthrong, The Southern Cheyennes (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), 166.

one of the principal chiefs of the Southern Cheyennes, later defined the engagement between a company of fifteen mounted troops under Lieutenant Clark Dunn, First Colorado Cavalry, and a small band of Cheyennes on April 12, 1864, as the beginning of the war.²¹

Another incident further enraged the white population of Colorado. A family of four was murdered, reputedly by Northern Arapahoes, in Elbert County, Colorado Territory. The mutilated bodies of the victims were brought to Denver and put on public display. This incident gave rise to false rumors of vast Indian threats that threw the citizens of Denver and surrounding areas into hysteria. Following the murder of the family of four in Elbert County, uneasy calm prevailed throughout Colorado Territory. In July, the month long peace was broken. Indian raids were made on way stations along the South Platte River. In August, attacks by Arapahoes, Cheyennes, and Sioux took place for two hundred and fifty miles along the South Platte River. Colorado Territory, Nebraska Territory, and Kansas were effected by the raids. People in Denver agreed that the territory had an Indian war on its hands.²²

In an "Appeal to the People," on August 10, 1864, Governor Evans requested citizens to organize volunteer companies for their protection and to kill all hostile Indians as a patriotic gesture. A day later he called for the people to go out and hunt Indians. The governor gave his permission that all property captured from hostile Indians could be kept, and promised a reward for stolen property recovered. By decree of the governor, all Indians were

²¹ Berthrong, The Southern Cheyennes, 175-181; Rocky Mountain News (w), Apr. 20, 27, 1864; Stan Hoig, The Sand Creek Massacre (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961), 36-42, 47-49; George B. Grinnell, The Fighting Cheyennes (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1956), 140-142.

²² Elmer R. Burkey, "The Site of the Hungate Murder by Indians in 1864," Colorado Magazine, 13 (July, 1935), 142; Hoig, The Sand Creek Massacre, 58-62; Rocky Mountain News (w), July 20, 27, Aug. 31, 1864; Berthrong, The Southern Cheyennes, 195, 200-201.

fair game except those who had answered an earlier order to rendezvous at forts Lyon, Larned, Laramie, or Camp Collins. Evans asked the citizens to avoid contact with these "friendly Indians."²³

At the same time, Captain George Tritch attempted to encourage more people to join the militia. His appeal was an emotional one. Meanwhile, Governor Evans had received the War Department's authorization to enlist a volunteer regiment for the period of one hundred days. With the War Department authorization began a widespread campaign to enlist volunteers for the temporary regiment. By the end of August, telegraph lines were down, freight and mails cut off, and crops remained unharvested. Joining the voluntary regiment seemed to be the first step in alleviating the troubles that plagued Colorado Territory during this period.²⁴

On May 9, 1864, Major Edward Wynkoop, who had been serving as commander of Camp Weld since his unsuccessful Ute Indian expedition, was appointed commander of Fort Lyon, located on the Arkansas River route. Fort Lyon had its share of Indian difficulties. On August 11, 1864, a small group of Indians chased a soldier near the fort. A detachment of soldiers was sent out from the fort, pursued the Indians and skirmished with them. Later the same day an express rider from the fort was driven back by four Indians. On August 17, Indians succeeded in driving off some horses and mules from the Indian agency near the fort. Sometime after this incident two soldiers en route to Fort Lyon from the agency were killed and scalped by Indians. Wynkoop had them brought to the fort and buried. He also had to send an escort of troops to

²³Rocky Mountain News (w), Aug. 10, 17, 1864. The "earlier order" alluded to here is Evans' proclamation of June 27, 1864. See: United States Interior Department, Office of Indian Affairs, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1864 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1865), 375.

²⁴Rocky Mountain News (w), Aug. 17, 1864; Hoig, The Sand Creek Massacre, 129.

accompany each stagecoach between Fort Lyon and Bent's Old Fort.²⁵

The situation looked so grave that Wynkoop issued orders to "kill any Indians that could be reached." On September 3, 1864, a detachment of Wynkoop's men going to Denver to be mustered out of the army met three Cheyenne Indians--One Eye, a chief; Min-im-mie, a young Indian; and One Eye's squaw. The Indians made gestures of good will and were brought to the fort. They turned out to be a delegation sent by Chief Black Kettle, and bore a letter from him addressed to the Indian agent at Fort Lyon. The letter said that Black Kettle's band of Southern Cheyennes wanted peace, but separate terms would have to be worked out with the Kiowas, Comanches, Arapahoes, Apaches, and Sioux. Black Kettle also mentioned that he was willing to exchange prisoners, adding that he had seven whites.²⁶

The letter from Black Kettle was probably written in response to a letter from Colonel William Bent informing the Indians of Governor Evans' ultimatum that all Indians must go to the various "places of safety," where they would be protected while United States soldiers hunted down the hostiles. This proclamation, issued by Evans in June 1864, further warned the Arapahoes and Cheyennes living in the Arkansas River area to report to the Indian agent at Fort Lyon, who would show them a place of safety and give them provisions.²⁷

Wynkoop questioned the three Cheyennes and found that their band as well as some Arapahoes was camped at a place known to them as "the bunch of timbers" in the Smoky Hill region about one hundred and forty miles northeast of Fort

²⁵War of the Rebellion, Series 1, Vol. 34, Pt. 2, 206, 581-582, Vol. 41, Pt. 1, 237-240; Annual Report, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1864, 375.

²⁶E. W. Wynkoop, "Manuscript Colorado History," Wynkoop Papers, SHSC; Annual Report, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1864, 375.

²⁷Annual Report, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1864, 378.

Lyon. Wynkoop was told that about two thousand Indians had gathered there and that all were anxious to make peace. The three Indians were confined to the guard house, and Wynkoop made preparations to go to "the bunch of timbers" to meet with Black Kettle and those chiefs who desired peace. Wynkoop's officers made every attempt to persuade him not to leave the fort. Considering the numerical superiority of the Indians the concern of the officers was understandable. Wynkoop was "extremely anxious . . . to effect the release of the white prisoners" held by the Indians. Moreover, he felt he could safely leave his command since it had recently been reinforced.²⁸

On September 6, 1864, Wynkoop left Fort Lyon at the head of a column of 127 men, two howitzers, and three Indians. He had accepted this force as volunteers for the mission, and made certain he left the fort adequately garrisoned. The expedition reached the Smoky Hill region four days later. Once there they found themselves confronted by six to eight hundred Indian warriors drawn up in line of battle.²⁹

One Eye was promptly sent forward to inform the Indians of the peaceful intentions of the expedition. On September 11, a council was held. The Southern Cheyennes were represented by Black Kettle, White Antelope, Bull Bear, and Sitting Bear; the Arapahoes by Left Hand, Neva, and Little Raven. Wynkoop, Captain Silas Soule, and two other officers represented the army. Wynkoop began the proceedings by informing the Indians that if they desired peace, they should show their good faith by giving up their prisoners. He also said that although he did not have the power to conclude terms of peace he would

²⁸United States Congress, Senate, "Sand Creek Massacre," 39 Cong., 2 Sess., Senate Executive Document No. 26 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1867), 84, (Serial 1277); E. W. Wynkoop, "Manuscript Colorado History," Wynkoop Papers, SHSC; Annual Report, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1864, 375.

²⁹Annual Report, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1864, 375.

take some of the chiefs to Denver to talk with Evans.³⁰

Black Kettle replied that the Cheyennes and Arapahoes had always wanted peace with the whites, and stated that the fights between the two groups that had taken place recently had been mistakes on the part of the troopers. It was only after these incidents, Black Kettle said, that the Southern Cheyennes had resorted to war. A similar explanation was given as the reason the Arapahoes were drawn into the war. Black Kettle then said that if he gave up his prisoners he wanted assurances of peace from Wynkoop. Wynkoop replied that he was not in a position to do more than help procure peace for them. He told the chiefs he would wait three days for their decision, and marched his command fifteen miles away and established a camp in a reasonably protected spot.³¹

Apparently some of Wynkoop's men felt the pressure of the situation. There was even some talk of returning to Fort Lyon without orders to do so. One trooper also said that he did not have faith in Major Wynkoop when that officer had been drinking. This comment may have been made purposely to dis-color Wynkoop's military record before that military commission that investigated the Sand Creek affair. Although heavy drinking officers were not uncommon in the United States Army, and Wynkoop was known as a drinker, it is doubtful that he was so intoxicated that he lost his senses at any time during the expedition.³²

While Wynkoop and his soldiers were waiting for the Indians to come to a decision, four white prisoners were delivered to them. The chiefs stated

³⁰Ibid., 378-379.

³¹"Sand Creek Massacre," Senate Executive Document No. 26, 85, 99.

³²Ibid., 206, 208; E. W. Wynkoop, "Manuscript Colorado History," Wynkoop Papers, SHSC.

that three other white prisoners were with another band of Indians somewhere to the north, and these, too, would be brought to Wynkoop as soon as possible. At the end of the three day period the chiefs agreed to trust Wynkoop and went with him to Fort Lyon. On September 18, Black Kettle, White Antelope, and Bull Bear of the Southern Cheyennes; and Neva, No-ta-me, Boisee, and Heap Buffalo of the Arapahoes left for Denver with Wynkoop, two officers, an interpreter, and forty men. Before leaving the fort, Wynkoop sent an express to Governor Evans informing him of the Smoky Hill council and of his departure with the chiefs for Denver.³³

On September 26, 1864, the procession of mounted men and wagons reached Denver. Two days later Governor Evans, Colonel George Shoup of the Third Colorado Volunteer Cavalry, Major Wynkoop, and a number of others met with the seven Cheyenne and Arapaho chiefs at Camp Weld. Evans told the chiefs to make peace with the military authorities and further advised them to show their friendship by assisting the soldiers in the Indian war. Although Evans did not make peace with the chiefs, they apparently were satisfied with the outcome of the council. Black Kettle told the governor that he would do all he could to encourage his people to help the soldiers.³⁴

Colonel John Chivington added an interesting statement at the termination of the council. He stated that his "rule of fighting white men or Indians is to fight them until they lay down their arms and submit to military authority." He also added, "they are nearer Major Wynkoop than anyone else, and they can go to him when they get ready to do that" (lay down their arms and submit to military authority). The inference is clear--if the Indians turned themselves

³³Annual Report, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1864, 377-379.

³⁴"Sand Creek Massacre, " Senate Executive Document No. 26, 213-217.

over to the Fort Lyon military they would be safe from attack by soldiers.³⁵

As the council terminated and Wynkoop made preparations to return to Fort Lyon, he was questioned as to what he planned to do with the Indians. He replied that he would bring all of them into the vicinity of Fort Lyon until the proper authorities could make peace with them. The final outcome of the Camp Weld council was that Wynkoop was left with the responsibility for dealing with the Southern Cheyennes and Arapahoes until he could receive instructions from the commander of the Department of Kansas, General S. R. Curtis.³⁶

On October 3, 1864, Wynkoop and his military escort and the chiefs departed Denver for Fort Lyon, arriving there on October 14. At this time Wynkoop held the first of several conferences with Black Kettle and other chiefs, including Left Hand and Little Raven of the Arapahoes. Wynkoop advised them to bring their people to the vicinity of the post where they could stay under his observation until he received instructions from department headquarters. He also urged them to bring in the three remaining white prisoners. Black Kettle agreed to do this as soon as possible. Wynkoop then dispatched Lieutenant W. W. Denison to General Curtis with a report of the Smoky Hill and Camp Weld councils and requested instructions.³⁷

On October 24 or 25, 557 Arapahoes came in and camped near Fort Lyon. Rations were issued to them and they were permitted to go into the fort at different times. On November 2, 1864, under Special Order No. 4 issued October 17 by General Curtis, Major Scott J. Anthony arrived at Fort Lyon

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Ibid., 96.

³⁷Ibid., 61; Rocky Mountain News (w), Oct. 5, 1864: United States Congress, Senate, "Massacre of Cheyenne Indians," 38 Cong., 2 Sess., Senate Report No. 142 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1865), 81-82, (Serial 1214).

and assumed command of the garrison. Anthony found 653 Arapaho Indians under Little Raven, Left Hand, and Neva, camped about two miles from the fort. The Arapahoes were daily visitors to the fort and were given supplies by the quartermaster.³⁸

Anthony took command immediately. He gave orders to arrest all Indians coming onto the post, took possession of their arms and stolen stock, and informed them that they were not to enter the fort except as prisoners of war. The reason for this was an order from General Curtis which stated that Indians and their allies could not be allowed inside United States forts "except blindfolded." The Indians were also cautioned against camping in the vicinity of Fort Lyon. Just as the Arapahoes were preparing to leave the vicinity of the fort, Black Kettle and a delegation of fifty or sixty Southern Cheyennes came in to talk with Anthony. A council, which was attended by Wynkoop, was held, and Anthony reiterated that Indians could not visit the post. He did inform them, however, that they could go to Sand Creek if they wanted. Anthony promised the Indians he would let them know when he received orders from headquarters to make peace with them.³⁹

Wynkoop believed that he had been relieved from his command because "various false rumors reached headquarters in regard to my course . . ." concerning the Indians. He was aware that Anthony's orders to assume command of the post contained a clause ordering him to investigate rumors that "certain officers had issued stores, goods, or supplies to hostile Indians in direct

³⁸"Sand Creek Massacre," Senate Executive Document No. 26, 61; "Massacre of Cheyenne Indians," Senate Report No. 142, 70.

³⁹"Massacre of Cheyenne Indians," Senate Report No. 142, 18, 20; Sand Creek Massacre," Senate Executive Document No. 26, 146. This order from Curtis, called "General Field Orders No. 2" was issued July 31, 1864. Wynkoop later claimed that he never received the order.

violation of orders from the general commanding the department." It was also said that Wynkoop had permitted the Indians to enter the fort against orders issued by General Curtis, and that he had left his district without orders by taking the chiefs to Denver to confer with Evans.⁴⁰

Because of the above developments, Wynkoop felt that he would have to justify his actions when he spoke to his superior, General Curtis. In order to present a defense of his actions he prepared three documents before leaving Fort Lyon. The first document was a letter signed by the junior officers under Wynkoop's command stating that all of the junior officers felt that Wynkoop's action with the Indians was "the only proper one" and had resulted in the saving of many lives and much valuable property. The second document was a letter signed by twenty eight "citizens of the Arkansas Valley of the Colorado Territory" who approved of Wynkoop's policy toward the Indians. The third document was Major Anthony's endorsement of the preceeding documents, along with a statement penned by Anthony which said that Wynkoop had "acted for the best."⁴¹

Wynkoop set out by stagecoach for district headquarters at Fort Riley on November 26, 1864. He arrived there about December 5 and was assigned command of the garrison. He then wrote Curtis, department commander, and requested permission for an interview. This was granted, and Wynkoop proceeded to Fort Leavenworth where he explained his actions. He also presented the documents which expressed approval of his actions. Wynkoop seems to have made a very convincing argument in his favor, because Curtis reassigned him commander of

⁴⁰"Massacre of Cheyenne Indians," Senate Report No. 142, 82; Grinnell, The Fighting Cheyennes, 165-166.

⁴¹"Sand Creek Massacre," Senate Executive Document No. 26, 93-94; United States Interior Department, Office of Indian Affairs, Letters Received, Upper Arkansas Agency. Hereafter cited as OIA, LR, (followed by Indian Agency).

Fort Lyon in January, 1865.⁴²

On the morning of November 28, 1864, two days after Wynkoop left Fort Lyon for Fort Riley, Colonel John Chivington arrived at Fort Lyon with seven hundred mounted men and two pieces of artillery. Chivington had done everything in his power to keep the movements of his troops and his intentions under a shroud of secrecy. He took precautions to prevent the Indians then camped at Sand Creek from learning of his approach. Days prior to Chivington's movement into the area all travel between Fort Lyon and Denver was stopped; even the mail was halted. Once at Fort Lyon one of his first acts was to throw a guard around the fort to prevent anyone from leaving the post and informing the Indians of the arrival of the troops.⁴³

At Fort Lyon, Major Anthony joined Chivington's troops with one hundred and twenty-five men and two pieces of artillery. On the night of November 28, the entire contingent left Fort Lyon and by forced march arrived at the Indian camp on Sand Creek shortly after daybreak on the twenty-ninth. The Indian camp was said to have consisted of about one hundred lodges of Southern Cheyennes under Black Kettle, and from eight to ten lodges of Arapahoes under Left Hand. Black Kettle noticed the approach of the soldiers and, becoming alarmed, raised an American flag and a small white flag over his lodge. What followed was a bloodbath as the soldiers descended into the village and indiscriminately slaughtered men, women, and children.⁴⁴

The troops stayed at the site of the attack two nights, killing a few more Indians and finally putting the village to the torch. On December 1,

⁴²"Sand Creek Massacre," Senate Executive Document No. 26, 92.

⁴³"Massacre of Cheyenne Indians," Senate Report No. 142, 16, 44, 108;
"Sand Creek Massacre," Senate Executive Document No. 26, 165.

⁴⁴"Massacre of Cheyenne Indians," Senate Report No. 142, ii, iii, iv, 108.

Chivington's force was reformed and marched south toward the Arkansas River where it was reported that Little Raven and a band of Arapahoes were camped. Unable to find Little Raven and his band Chivington ordered his troops to head back to Fort Lyon, which they reached December 10. Chivington and his soldiers left the post soon afterwards and arrived in Denver December 22. Six days later most of the troops which comprised the Third Regiment of the Colorado Volunteers were mustered out of the service.⁴⁵

At first Chivington's attack at Sand Creek was commended by the people of Colorado. By the end of the year, however, they questioned the correctness of his action. Many citizens began to refer to the attack as a "massacre" of women and children instead of a great victory as Chivington claimed. Accounts of horrible atrocities and mutilations by the soldiers were circulated, and it was further asserted that the troops had attacked friendly Indians instead of hostiles.

It is not known who started the cry that Sand Creek was a massacre and demanded that the incident be fully investigated. It may have been some of the officers that had been under Wynkoop's command at Fort Lyon who knew that the Indians camped at Sand Creek were friendly. Or, it may have been Indian traders who felt that Chivington had frustrated their business ventures with the Arapahoes and Southern Cheyennes. In late December 1864, a Denver newspaper announced that the affair was to be made the subject of a congressional investigation. The newspaper added that certain unknown "high officials" in Colorado had written Washington to say that Indians at Sand Creek were killed after surrendering, and that a large proportion of them were women and

⁴⁵ Hoig, The Sand Creek Massacre, 159-161.

children.⁴⁶

Wynkoop, upon hearing of the attack at Sand Creek, went "wild with rage." Major General Henry W. Halleck, the army Chief of Staff, ordered Curtis to investigate the conduct of Chivington at Sand Creek. Curtis in turn directed Wynkoop, then commander of Fort Riley, to proceed to Fort Lyon, assume control of his old post, and "investigate and immediately report in regard to late Indian proceedings" in the vicinity of Fort Lyon. Wynkoop returned to Fort Lyon on January 14, 1865, and assumed command of the post the following day. He immediately began taking testimony and affidavits from people involved in the Sand Creek affair. On the fifteenth he wrote a scathing report to Curtis at district headquarters, which was forwarded to Washington. He also set about strengthening the defenses of the post.⁴⁷

Wynkoop began his report by describing events that led to the attack at Sand Creek. Then he launched into a discussion of the attack itself, stating the thesis that the affair was not an honorable one. He condemned Chivington's actions, and was quick to point out that although Chivington had claimed that five to six hundred Indians had been killed, Captain Henry Booth, the district inspector, had only counted sixty-nine bodies, two-thirds of which were women and children. Major Anthony and another Chivington sympathizer testified that they had seen various atrocities committed. Wynkoop further proved that atrocities had been committed with the testimony of men and officers involved in the attack. Included in the report were affidavits

⁴⁶Ibid., 163; "Sand Creek Massacre," Senate Executive Document No. 26, 25; War of the Rebellion, Series 1, Vol. 43, Pt. 1, 503-504; Rocky Mountain News (w), Dec. 29, 1864. One of these "high officials" was later disclosed to be Chief Justice of Colorado Benjamin Hall.

⁴⁷War of the Rebellion, Series 1, Vol. 43, Pt. 1, 589, Vol. 41, Pt. 4, 959-962, 971; "Massacre of Cheyenne Indians," Senate Report No. 142, 81.

from men who were not at Sand Creek but had heard about the affair.⁴⁸

Wynkoop charged that Chivington had incited his men to commit atrocities at Sand Creek although there is no concrete proof of this charge. Wynkoop also accused Chivington of attacking Indians that he knew were on friendly terms with the United States and who were, in effect, under assurances of safety by the United States Army. This second charge is probably true. It has been concluded that Chivington must have been informed that Black Kettle and his people, and the Arapahoes, had peaceful intentions.

Two things should be considered in reference to the Wynkoop report. First, Wynkoop seems to have devoted a large portion of the report to proving that the Indians were peaceful and he had had a good policy towards them. Second, Wynkoop mentioned Chivington only in the most derogatory way, on one occasion referring to him as an "inhuman monster" and a horrible murderer. The Wynkoop report appears not to have been conducted along the lines of an impartial and conscientious inquiry to determine the true state of affairs. Actually, the entire document is not a report but a carefully worded attack against Chivington. Wynkoop's investigation, however, did focus attention on the gravity of the affair.

On January 10, 1865, the House of Representatives passed the motion "that the Committee on the Conduct of the War be required to inquire into and report all the facts connected with the late attack of the third regiment of Colorado Volunteers, under Colonel Chivington, on a village of the Cheyenne tribe of Indians, near Fort Lyon." From March 13 through March 15 this congressional committee heard testimony in Washington relative to the massacre. The committee collected affidavits, correspondence, and official reports

⁴⁸"Massacre of Cheyenne Indians," Senate Report No. 142, 82-83; Frank Hall, History of the State of Colorado (Chicago: Blakely Printing Co., 1889), Vol. 1, 350; War of the Rebellion, Series 1, Vol. 41, Pt. 1, 959-962.

relative to what they titled "Massacre of Cheyenne Indians." At the same time another congressional inquiry was under way, this one by a joint committee of Congress. This group took testimony in Washington and then traveled west to Colorado Territory. At Fort Lyon Wynkoop gave the congressmen a guided tour of the Sand Creek Battlefield. The group then traveled to New Mexico Territory, to Santa Fe, where they got Kit Carson's opinion of the fiasco.⁴⁹

The most complete and thorough investigation of the Sand Creek Massacre, however, took place in Colorado under the direction of the army. On February 1, 1865, a military commission was ordered for the purpose of investigating "the conduct of the late Colonel J. M. Chivington, First Regiment Colorado Cavalry, in his recent campaign against the Indians." In Denver and at Fort Lyon this commission took direct testimony from Chivington and others involved in the affair. The proceedings continued until May 30, 1865, when the commission adjourned. This had been a fact-finding investigation and the commission drew no conclusions from the testimony heard and had no power to make any recommendations. No action was taken against Chivington or any of the officers or men involved in the Sand Creek controversy by the military commission or by either of the congressional committees.⁵⁰

On June 17, 1865, after the Sand Creek investigations had ended, Major Wynkoop was promoted to brevet lieutenant colonel and reassigned as chief of

⁴⁹"Massacre of Cheyenne Indians," Senate Report No. 142, i; United States Congress, Senate, "Chivington Massacre," 39 Cong., 2 Sess., Senate Report No. 156 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1867), 26-90, (Serial 1279). Testimony was heard from Evans, Jesse Leavenworth, Anthony, and four others involved in the incident.

⁵⁰Hoig, The Sand Creek Massacre, 169, 173. Chivington resigned his commission on January 4, 1865, hence the words "the late . . ." Action probably would have been taken against him had he remained in the military.

cavalry for the District of the Upper Arkansas. This military district was commanded by Brevet Brigadier General James H. Ford. Wynkoop, his wife, and their two children, Edward Estill and Emily, moved into quarters at Fort Riley, Kansas.⁵¹

Under orders from Major General Grenville M. Dodge, commanding the Department of the Missouri, Ford was assembling a large force of troops with the intention of attacking hostile tribes committing depredations south of the Arkansas River. Black Kettle and the rest of his group of Southern Cheyennes who had survived Sand Creek, their Arapaho allies, as well as bands of Kiowas, Comanches, and Kiowa-Apaches were at this time south of the Arkansas. General Ford was anxious for war, as was Major General Dodge. Ford took the Chivington affair to mean that "war to the knife" was imminent, as did Dodge. Another reason supporting the idea that it would be beneficial to rid the area of its Indian inhabitants was that the Leavenworth, Pawnee and Western Railroad (more commonly known as the Union Pacific, Eastern Division) wanted a route through the area between the Arkansas River and the Smoky Hill country which was a buffalo range and the favorite hunting grounds of the Southern Cheyennes.⁵²

Kiowa-Comanche Indian Agent Jesse Leavenworth did much to prevent another Sand Creek Massacre. Ford had amassed one of the largest bodies of troops ever assembled to operate against the Indians of the southern plains, about twelve hundred men. Leavenworth set about the task of promoting the peaceful coexistence of the Indians south of the Arkansas and the military. Military officials soon reported to the Indian department that Leavenworth was a hand-

⁵¹War of the Rebellion, Series 1, Vol 18, Pt. 1, 913.

⁵²Grenville M. Dodge, The Battle of Atlanta and other Campaigns, Addresses, etc. (Council Bluffs: Monarch Printing Co., 1910), 63.

icap to their operations.. Leavenworth, in turn, was reprimanded by his superior, Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles E. Mix, who was responding to a request from a higher authority. Mix ordered Leavenworth to take orders from the army and do nothing until he first consulted General Dodge.⁵³

Leavenworth, quite angry at this point and very eager to prevent hostilities, took his case to Washington in person. He asserted that peace could be made with the Indians living south of the Arkansas River. In Washington he had conferences with the Indian Affairs Committee, which gave him assurances of their support. On his return trip, Leavenworth stopped at St. Louis where General Dodge promised no interference with Leavenworth's efforts to make a peaceful settlement with the Indians. Once back in Indian country, however, Leavenworth learned that his efforts had accomplished no appreciable change in the attitude of departmental military officials.

On June 14, 1865, Dodge ordered Ford to attack the Indians south of the Arkansas unless the tribes contacted Ford within a few days. Ford informed Leavenworth of Dodge's orders. He then faltered for a week and finally informed Dodge that he thought it best not to send any troops south until Leavenworth was heard from again. Ford added that he thought Leavenworth would succeed in making peace with the Indians. Four days after this communication, Ford was relieved of the Upper Arkansas District command. Dodge replaced Ford with Major General John B. Sanborn. By midsummer the Indians were ready to talk peace, but Sanborn's behavior seemed to indicate that he wanted war. Later he changed his mind, however, and wrote to Leavenworth that he was ready to talk with the Indians.⁵⁴

⁵³Mix to Leavenworth, Aug. 29, 1865, OIA, Letters Sent.

⁵⁴Dodge to Ford, June 14, 1865, Ford to Dodge, July 3, 7, 1865, War of the Rebellion, Series 1, Vol. 48, Part 2, 1044-1045, 1065; Ford to Leavenworth, June 25, 1865, Sanborn to Leavenworth, July 13, 22, 1865, Leavenworth to Sanborn, Aug. 1, 1865, OIA, LR, Kiowa, Comanche and Apache Agency.

Leavenworth reported to Sanborn on August 4, 1865, that seventy-five Indians from the Arapaho, Comanche, Southern Cheyenne, Kiowa, and Kiowa-Apache tribes, including some important chiefs, had met with him at the mouth of the Little Arkansas River. The Indians had expressed a desire for peace.

Sanborn traveled to the Little Arkansas and met with the chiefs himself. Evidently he was impressed with the meeting, and wrote Dodge of the peaceful intentions of the Indians. Dodge reluctantly proceeded to make arrangements for a treaty council to be held in early October.⁵⁵

On October 14, 1865, a commission that included Kit Carson, William Bent, Leavenworth, and General William S. Harney concluded treaties with the Southern Cheyennes and Arapahoes, and the Kiowas, Comanches, and Kiowa-Apaches, on the Little Arkansas River near present day Wichita, Kansas. Wynkoop was along as commander of the military escort that accompanied the commissioners to the council. After twelve days of talks the Southern Cheyennes and Arapahoes unconditionally surrendered to the army and agreed to give up the triangular area between Sand Creek and the Arkansas River left to them in the Treaty of Fort Wise in 1861. By the terms of the new treaty, often referred to as the Treaty of the Little Arkansas, they were assigned a reservation in Kansas immediately south of the Arkansas River and were promised annuities for forty years. The commissioners apologized for Chivington's action, and long speeches were delivered by chiefs Black Kettle and Little Raven.⁵⁶

For Wynkoop the situation presented some anxious moments. He was later

⁵⁵Leavenworth to Sanborn, Aug. 4, 1865, Sanborn to Leavenworth, Aug. 9, 1865, Sanborn to Dodge, Aug. 17, 1865, War of the Rebellion Series 1, Vol. 48, Pt. 2, 1164, 1175, 1193.

⁵⁶Kappler, Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties, Vol 2, 887-895; Annual Report, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1865, 699-719; "Diary of Samuel A. Kingman at Indian Treaty of 1865," Kansas Historical Quarterly, 5 (1931-1932), 445. Wynkoop's name appears on the treaty with the Southern Cheyennes and Arapahoes as a witness.

to write:

It was the first time I had seen the Cheyenne Indians since I had left them on Sand Creek with assurances of safety a few days before the massacre, and I was uncertain of my reception, presuming that in all probability they would connect me with that disaster, it would be but natural for them to suppose that I had led them into the snare.

Black Kettle's band was camped about a mile from Wynkoop's field headquarters. The day after Wynkoop and the commissioners arrived at the Little Arkansas he rode out to Black Kettle's camp. He was immediately recognized upon riding into the camp, and was received with kindness, although he wrote that ". . . some of the old squaws reminded by my presence of their affliction raised a most dismal wail." He was led to Black Kettle's lodge, where he was told that "not for one moment had any of them doubts of my good faith; through their extraordinarily natural intelligence they had seemed to comprehend the whole state of affairs." Black Kettle had made good his escape from the massacre, but his wife had received ten wounds and his brother White Antelope had died.⁵⁷

The Indians told the commissioners during the talks that Leavenworth and Wynkoop were the only white men who still held the respect of the tribes. In the introduction to proceedings it was reported "It will be seen that the Indians have expressed a desire that Major E. W. Wynkoop should be appointed agent for the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes." Black Kettle told the commissioners that he wanted Wynkoop to live with his people, and Little Raven requested that Wynkoop be among those attending to the distribution of goods for the Southern Cheyennes and Arapahoes following the treaty proceedings.⁵⁸

The treaties were concluded in October 1865. Soon afterwards Wynkoop journeyed to Washington, D. C. After amendments to the treaty with the South-

⁵⁷E. W. Wynkoop, "Manuscript Colorado History," SHSC.

⁵⁸Annual Report, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1865, 700, 710.

ern Cheyennes and Arapahoes were made by the Senate, on December 6, Wynkoop was selected by the Secretary of the Interior for duty as a special Indian agent. He visited Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and New York, New York, before returning west to his new post. It should be noted that Wynkoop was still an officer in the United States Cavalry.

On his return trip he stopped at St. Louis on December 23 and took delivery of goods to be distributed to the Cheyennes and Arapahoes. In St. Louis he had a conference with Major General John Pope commanding the Military Division of the Missouri. Continuing his return journey, he arrived at Leavenworth, Kansas, on December 30. Requesting an interview with Major General Dodge, he was told that the general was absent from the area. Wynkoop remained at Leavenworth and the interview took place a week later, on January 6, 1866. Dodge furnished Wynkoop with transportation to carry the goods intended for the Indians to Fort Zarah, Kansas, which was to be the special agent's headquarters.⁵⁹

⁵⁹Wynkoop to Cooley, Jan. 15, 1866, OIA, LR, Upper Arkansas Agency.

CHAPTER III

INDIAN AGENT PERIOD

A change in Edward Wynkoop's attitude towards American Indians had earlier occurred when he intercepted the letter from Black Kettle to the Indian agent at Fort Lyon in 1864. Wynkoop wrote later that:

I was bewildered with an exhibition of such patriotism on the part of the two savages (One Eye and Min-im-mie, messengers bearing the letter from Black Kettle) and felt myself in the presence of Superior beings; and these were the representatives of a race that I heretofore looked upon without exception as being cruel, treacherous, and bloodthirsty without feeling of affection for friend or kindred.¹

The Smoky Hill and Camp Weld councils further convinced him of the Indians' good intentions and strong desire for peace. Following his return to Fort Lyon after the Camp Weld council with Evans, Wynkoop held another meeting with the Indians and advised them to bring in their villages to a place near the post where he could prevent any difficulties with other whites. He then sent a full report on his dealings with the Indians to General Curtis at Leavenworth. In the report he concluded, "I think that if some terms are made with these Indians, I can arrange matters so, by bringing their villages under my direct control, that I can answer for their fidelity."² Less than a month later he was relieved of command of Fort Lyon, and Chivington's attack at

¹E. W. Wynkoop, "Manuscript Colorado History," Wynkoop Papers, SHSC. The messengers from Black Kettle had risked their lives in coming to Fort Lyon since Wynkoop issued orders to "kill any Indians that could be reached." In fact, Wynkoop reprimanded the soldiers who brought the messengers into the fort for not following his standing orders to kill all Indians.

²Ibid.

Sand Creek followed soon afterward. Wynkoop seems to have suffered a tremendous feeling of guilt over Sand Creek, as indicated by his vehemence in exposing the affair. As a special Indian agent and later as a regular Indian agent for the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes, he was in a position to help steer a course through Indian difficulties to follow.

Wynkoop's official instructions regarding his duties as special Indian agent for the Upper Arkansas Agency were "to bring about a union of the Cheyenne and Arapahoe Indians who have been north of the Platte River during the past season, with that portion of said tribes on the Upper Arkansas River with whom treaties have been recently negotiated." Major General Dodge was ordered to cooperate with Wynkoop in every way consistent with the safety of the overland routes.³

One of his first tasks was to submit the Treaty of the Little Arkansas as amended by the Senate to the Cheyennes and Arapahoes for their signatures. Wynkoop was in a sensitive position because the time had come and passed when certain distributions should have been made in accordance with the provisions of the treaty. The Indians were dissatisfied as a consequence, and considered broken the pledges made to them by the government. Further complicating matters, none of the Southern Cheyennes living north of the Platte River had participated in the truce and treaty signed by Black Kettle and his band at the Little Arkansas. These Indians did not demonstrate any willingness to forget the Sand Creek massacre. Among them were the Dog Soldiers, a warrior society within the Southern Cheyenne tribe. These Indians had no idea that peace had been made with white men. Wynkoop was assigned the job of contacting these Indians, informing them of the provisions of the treaty, and obtain-

³Secretary of the Interior James Harlan to Cooley, Dec. 6, 1865, OIA, LR, Upper Arkansas Agency; Berthrong, The Southern Cheyennes, 257.

ing their signatures on the document.⁴

Wynkoop left Fort Zarah for Fort Larned, on the Arkansas River, and arrived there in mid February 1866. It was his desire to council with those Cheyennes who had not participated in the Treaty of the Little Arkansas. He sent runners to the different bands requesting that they assemble at Bluff Creek, eighty miles south of the Arkansas River. Special Indian Agent Wynkoop, Cheyenne and Arapaho Indian Agent I. C. Taylor, and an escort of a company of cavalry traveled to the designated spot. Once again Wynkoop found himself enduring the hardships involved with traveling in the dead of winter. Several animals were lost while fording the Arkansas.⁵

Arriving at Bluff Creek on February 25, 1866, Wynkoop found chiefs Black Kettle, Medicine Arrows, and Big Head. These last two chiefs were important leaders of Cheyenne bands that had just come south. When Wynkoop arrived the Dog Soldiers had not yet come in. Two days later, however, they appeared. Wynkoop wrote that "... many of them did not greet me very cordially and one particularly refused his hand, covering his face with his blanket. I was told by the interpreter that he was the son of Porcupine Bear, a chief who had been killed at Sand Creek, and that in all probability he would give me trouble." Wynkoop called the council for the next day. That night, one of the interpreters entered Wynkoop's tent and reported that Young Porcupine Bear had threatened that if Wynkoop insisted upon his signing of the treaty he would kill Wynkoop. Young Porcupine Bear was one of the principal chiefs of

⁴E. W. Wynkoop, "Manuscript Colorado History," SHSC. Wynkoop was not happy with the amendments to the treaty. He felt that the treaty before the amendments was "in every way satisfactory to both parties . . . good for both the whites and the Indians." When the treaty was submitted to the Senate Wynkoop felt that the amendments "intirely (sic) changed the face of the document."

⁵Ibid.

the Dog Soldiers, and it was necessary that his signature be procured.⁶

The council was held the next day, some fifteen or twenty yards from Wynkoop's tent. The chiefs were seated in a circle with Wynkoop in the center. Beside him was a box on which the treaty rested. Wynkoop faced the tent, and in the circle between him and the tent sat Young Porcupine Bear. Inside the tent, lying on the ground looking through the sights of a cocked Spencer rifle, was Wynkoop's brother John. The rifle was aimed at Young Porcupine Bear, the side to the tent having been raised a few inches to permit the younger Wynkoop a good view of the proceedings.⁷

During the council Wynkoop addressed most of his remarks to Medicine Arrows and Big Head. He suggested that they and other leaders accept the Treaty of the Little Arkansas. The two chiefs at first objected and refused to sign the treaty. Wynkoop finally prevailed, though, and they signed a paper accepting the terms of the Treaty of the Little Arkansas. He then called upon the other chiefs to come forward to sign the document. Even Young Porcupine Bear, after a little urging from George Bent, put his mark on the document. During the talks Wynkoop also freed a sixteen-year-old white girl who had been captured in August 1865.⁸

At the talks at Bluff Creek, Wynkoop learned that a few days earlier four Cheyennes had killed and scalped a youth six miles east of Fort Dodge. After completing his business at Bluff Creek Wynkoop investigated the incident. He found that the boy's father had swapped ten one-dollar green backs for ten ten-dollar bills by convincing the Indians that it was a fair trade. When the Indians learned that they had been cheated they returned to the

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid.; Berthrong, The Southern Cheyennes, 258.

settler's home and killed his son in revenge. The chiefs of the Southern Cheyennes agreed to surrender the four braves involved in the murder. It appears, however, that the army did not exert much pressure in attempting to gain custody of the culprits. Wynkoop may have urged delicate handling of the matter to the point where nothing was done. Under different circumstances the incident could have easily produced serious reprisals.⁹

On April 4, 1866, a Cheyenne chief named Little Robe and those Indians of the soldier societies who had not signed the articles of the Treaty of the Little Arkansas marked the document. In letters to General Pope and Commissioner of Indian Affairs Dennis Cooley, Wynkoop proclaimed the whole of Southern Cheyennes to be at peace and the routes of travel through their country safe. He added that the peace had come about because agreements had been made not only with the Cheyenne chiefs but also with the warrior societies. As long as the government fulfilled its promises, Wynkoop added, the Cheyennes would observe the peace. He also noted that even though the Indians were sad because they had to give up their favorite hunting grounds, the Smoky Hill country, they wanted peace.¹⁰

The Cheyennes remained quiet during the spring and early summer of 1866. During this period there is some evidence that Wynkoop, still a cavalry officer, may have used his position with the Indians to engage in a commercial venture. Although strictly forbidden by the Indian department, he may have operated a private mercantile concern in an abandoned hospital at Fort Zarah. Leavenworth wrote Commissioner Cooley on the matter, but admitted that there

⁹Wynkoop to Major General John Pope, Mar. 12, 1866, Dodge to Pope, Mar. 14, 1866, OIA, LR, Upper Arkansas Agency; Berthrong, The Southern Cheyennes, 259.

¹⁰Wynkoop to Pope, Apr. 5, 1866, Wynkoop to Cooley, Apr. 8, 1866, OIA, LR, Upper Arkansas Agency.

was no proof that Wynkoop was actually involved in the Indian trade.¹¹

In early May 1866, Wynkoop learned that the Dog Soldiers had told a trader that they would not accept their share of annuity goods and would go to war before giving up the Smoky Hill country. The Treaty of the Little Arkansas still had not been ratified by the Senate. Under pressure from warriors, Black Kettle was forced to repudiate the cession of the Smoky Hill country in the 1865 treaty. In a plan to appease the Indians Major Wynkoop was instructed to purchase one thousand dollars worth of goods for immediate distribution among the Cheyennes and Arapahoes. He was told by Commissioner Cooley to express regret over delay in the ratification of the treaty, and to warn the Indians that if the government was forced to go to war with them it would be very bad for them.¹²

Wynkoop then traveled to the Smoky Hill country and found that the situation had worsened. Cheyenne and Arapaho Indian Agent Taylor was no help, since he remained at Fort Zarah, "constantly in a state of intoxication." At the same time Taylor complained to Commissioner Cooley that Wynkoop was trying to undermine his influence among the Indians. Apparently the commissioner of Indian Affairs ignored Taylor's complaints as nothing was done to restrain Wynkoop's activities. On August 14, 1866, Wynkoop held a council with eight Cheyenne chiefs, including some leaders of the soldier societies. The conversations were amicable, but the chiefs said that it was hard for them to give up their last hunting ground. They also told the special agent that they wanted six hundred ponies purchased with money to be paid as a remunera-

¹¹Leavenworth to Cooley, July 25, 1866, OIA, LR, Kiowa, Comanche and Apache Agency.

¹²Harlan to Cooley, July 25, 1866, OIA, LR, Upper Arkansas Agency; Cooley to Wynkoop, July 25, 1866, in Annual Report, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1866, 278-279.

tion for Sand Creek losses. They also requested that two Indian children taken by Chivington's men during the attack be returned.¹³

In late August parties of Cheyenne warriors began visiting Fort Wallace and the stations along the Smoky Hill road. These warriors under Spotted Horse and Roman Nose warned employees of the stage company to leave the area in fifteen days. The Indians told an army scout that either the whites would abandon the Smoky Hill road or the Cheyennes would close it. No depredations were committed but in September a party of Cheyennes under Spotted Horse stampeded the horse herd of the cavalry at Fort Wallace. In mid-October the Bureau of Indian Affairs sent two special agents to meet the Cheyennes and Arapahoes at Fort Zarah. The purpose of the councils was to try to gain tribal approval of the Senate amendments to the Treaty of the Little Arkansas. At one of the talks Black Kettle, Little Robe, and other chiefs were forced by the warriors in the soldier societies to withdraw their assent to the amendments.¹⁴

Wynkoop journeyed to Washington sometime in mid or late August. There he was appointed Indian agent to the Cheyennes, Arapahoes, Kiowas, and Kiowa-Apaches, replacing the alcoholic Taylor. His appointment was signed by President Andrew Johnson on September 20, 1866. He returned to Fort Ellsworth, Kansas, and after sizing up the situation, believed that the only chance to gain assent to the amendments was to separate those who refused from the more amenable groups, and then to exact submission from the recalcitrant. Wynkoop initiated a series of councils to put his plan into motion. While these

¹³Wynkoop to Cooley, Aug. 11, 14, 1866, Taylor to Cooley, Aug. 15, 1866, OIA, LR, Upper Arkansas Agency. This council is commonly referred to as the "Fort Ellsworth council" and was attended by Black Kettle, Little Wolf, Big Head, Roman Nose, Sitting Bear, Little Black Kettle, and The Man That Shot the Rea.

¹⁴Berthrong, The Southern Cheyennes, 262, 263, 264.

councils were taking place, news was received that a group of Cheyenne warriors had killed two station keepers and burned the station at Chalk Bluff on the Smoky Hill road. The two special agents and Wynkoop temporarily abandoned further talks and began working on the chiefs again. Black Kettle and Little Robe finally agreed to return to Fort Zarah by mid-November.¹⁵

When the councils were renewed at Fort Zarah in November, the chiefs signed the amendments to the Treaty of the Little Arkansas. The chiefs may have marked the document at this time because they were free from coercion because the warriors had moved north and west from Fort Zarah. Wynkoop moved his headquarters from Fort Zarah to Fort Larned some time after the councils. He reported that the Cheyennes were satisfied with the results of the councils. Major General Winfield Scott Hancock who at this time commanded the Department of the Missouri, however, was unwilling to forget the depredations that had taken place on the Smoky Hill road. He ordered the surrender of those Indians guilty of killing the station keepers and stealing the stock at Fort Wallace. Hancock further threatened to attack the Cheyennes unless they responded to his request. Immediate plans to launch an expedition against the Indians were delayed at Wynkoop's request so that he could complete his investigations and verify which tribe was guilty of the depredations.¹⁶

Indian difficulties in the south-central plains area seemed inevitable

¹⁵ Appointment, Department of the Interior, Wynkoop Papers, MNM; He was mustered out and discharged from the cavalry on July 11, 1866; United States War Department, Office of the Adjutant General, General Orders, Division of the Missouri, Special Orders No. 330, July 11, 1866; Berthrong, The Southern Cheyennes, 264; Wynkoop to Davidson, Oct. 25, 1866, Wynkoop to Cooley, Oct. 26, 1866, OIA, LR, Upper Arkansas Agency.

¹⁶ Berthrong, The Southern Cheyennes, 264, 265; Wynkoop to Bogy, Nov. 26, 1866, Wynkoop to Murphy, Dec. 2, 1866, OIA, LR, Upper Arkansas Agency.

during the summer of 1866, and Lieutenant General William Tecumseh Sherman decided to make a personal inspection of the trouble spots. Following his tour he submitted his recommendations to General U. S. Grant. One of them was that the Cheyennes and five other tribes of the central and southern plains be settled south of the Arkansas River and east of Fort Union, New Mexico. This would leave a wide belt, east and west, between the Platte and Arkansas rivers, in which lay the railroad.

During the winter of 1866-1867 all hopes for peace on the plains faded. Sioux had cut down a group of soldiers under the command of Brevet Lieutenant Colonel William J. Fetterman. Major General Hancock also had gathered concrete proof that the Cheyennes were responsible for the killings on the Smoky Hill road and singled them out for a spring campaign. Wynkoop denied that the Indians under his charge had committed any acts of violence since the councils of October and November. "I have been among them constantly and never knew them to feel better satisfied or exhibit such a pacific feeling," he wrote Commissioner of Indian Affairs Lewis V. Bogy. Nevertheless Hancock felt he had all the proof he needed, and made arrangements for a spring offensive.¹⁷

Sherman approved of Hancock's intended campaign against the Cheyennes. Hancock warned Wynkoop that the purpose of his march was to demonstrate to the Indians that the government possessed the power to punish any tribe that committed depredations. Wynkoop was instructed to inform the Indians of his agency that Hancock was fully prepared for war, but if they "abandon their

¹⁷ Hancock to Wynkoop, Dec. 17, 1866, Wynkoop to Hancock, Dec. 26, 1866, Winfield S. Hancock, Reports of Major General W. S. Hancock Upon Indian Affairs, With Accompanying Exhibits (Washington: McGill & Witherow, 1867), 14, 15; Wynkoop to Bogy, Feb. 21, 1867, United States Congress, Senate, "Progress of Indian Hostilities," 40 Cong., 1 Sess., Senate Executive Document No. 13 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1867), 75, (Serial 1308).

habit of infesting the country transversed by our overland routes, threatening, robbing, and intimidating travelers," no action would be taken against them. Hancock moved his force of fourteen hundred men from Fort Riley to Fort Larned. Included in the expedition were James Butler (Wild Bill) Hickok and future Africa explorer Henry M. Stanley. At Fort Larned, where Wynkoop's Indian agency was located, messengers were sent to find the Cheyennes who agreed to come in for a council.¹⁸

Fourteen Cheyenne tribal leaders met with Wynkoop and Hancock on April 12, 1867. After speeches by the Indians, Hancock told them he was going to march his troops to their camps. Wynkoop, at the request of one of the chiefs, Tall Bull, told Hancock that the Indians would probably flee as the troops approached. Wynkoop reminded Hancock that the Cheyennes' memories of the Sand Creek massacre were still fresh, but Wynkoop's appeals failed, and the next day Hancock moved his command out of Fort Larned and up Pawnee Fork. Wynkoop rode along with the column. On April 14, as Hancock moved his troops within a few miles of a large Indian camp, they were met by a battle line of Cheyenne and Sioux warriors. Wynkoop broke some of the tension when he rode forward alone and assured the Indians of their safety. He urged them to keep their people in camp, and then escorted Roman Nose and some other chiefs to meet Hancock and his second-in-command, Lieutenant Colonel George A. Custer. The men met midway between the lines.¹⁹

Roman Nose acted as sole spokesman. After a brief discussion, Hancock ordered the march resumed. The troops came to the Indian camp standing in a

¹⁸ Hancock to Wynkoop, Mar. 11, 1867, United States War Department, U. S. Army Commands, Division of the Missouri, Letters Sent.

¹⁹ Annual Report, Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1867, 311, 312. For a short version of the parley at Fort Larned see: Henry M. Stanley, My Early Travels and Adventures in America and Asia (New York: Charles Scribners' Sons, 1895), Vol. 1, 30-35.

grove of trees on the north branch of Pawnee Fork. Two hundred and fifty Cheyenne and Sioux lodges were pitched there; however, the camp was abandoned because the women and children had fled. Hancock, irritated by the flight of the people, sent for the chiefs again. He demanded that they bring their women and children back to the village.

That night the chiefs and warriors also fled. Hancock discovered their absence and ordered Custer and his Seventh Cavalry to pursue. Wynkoop, immediately after the Indians had fled, judged the Hancock expedition as "disastrous." And wrote Commissioner of Indian Affairs N. G. Taylor that the campaign would end in a general war in which the unprotected settlers and mail station keepers would suffer. Wynkoop also pleaded with Hancock not to burn the Cheyenne and Sioux village because such an act would only make the Indians angrier. Hancock vacillated for several days on the question of burning the lodges, and on April 18, informed Wynkoop that the village would not be destroyed.²⁰

Custer sent back two reports to Hancock. The fleeing Indians were assumed to have committed depredations over a thirty-five mile stretch of the Smoky Hill Road. Hancock, upon learning of this, ordered the Cheyenne and Sioux village burned to the ground. Custer rode to the point on the road where the greatest damage had taken place and found three station attendants dead and mutilated. He informed Hancock of the incident but was careful to point out that there was no evidence that Cheyenne or Sioux Indians were responsible for it.²¹

²⁰ Wynkoop to Taylor, Apr. 15, 18, 1867, OIA, LR, Upper Arkansas Agency; Berthrong, The Southern Cheyennes, 277, 278.

²¹ Hancock's journal in: United States Congress, House, "Difficulties with Indian Tribes," 41 Cong., 2 Sess., House Executive Document No. 240 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1870), 65-67, 96, (Serial 1418).

Wynkoop reacted bitterly to Hancock's action. Two days after the village was burned, he wrote Taylor that the Cheyennes had done nothing to deserve punishment. He further maintained that the Indians of his agency had been forced into war. Jesse Leavenworth agreed with Wynkoop, and Kansas Superintendent of Indian Affairs Thomas Murphy informed the commissioner that because of the Hancock expedition the Cheyennes and Sioux were now in full flight. No one could anticipate what might happen.²²

Some Cheyenne warriors were killed west of Fort Dodge on April 19, 1867, by troopers of the Seventh Cavalry. Wynkoop complained, and declared that the Indians were guiltless and the cavalry's attack unprovoked. Hancock's actions did provoke a general Indian war. General Hancock had fought superbly in the Civil War at Gettysburg and in almost every major battle of the Army of the Potomac. His military career, however, had given him little knowledge of Indians. Wynkoop, an ex-military man himself, was prepared to go along with Hancock's intended "show of force" to the plains Indians, but he recognized that if Hancock burned the Indians village on Pawnee Fork injury already done would be compounded and war a certainty. It is true that the Cheyennes and Sioux were not totally guiltless, but Hancock's ineptness is generally conceded as the immediate cause of Indian hostilities along the Kansas frontier.

The attitudes of the plains tribes in 1866-1867 presented a dilemma in which the army so often found itself. The chiefs and other principals of the Cheyennes, Arapahoes, Kiowas and Comanches wanted peace even at the expense of their historic hunting grounds. The young men and especially the warrior societies, however, were difficult to restrain in this period following the Civil War when overland travel and the advance of the railroad made them

²²Wynkoop to Taylor, Apr. 21, 1867, Murphy to Taylor, May 13, 1867, OIA, LR, Upper Arkansas Agency.

less amenable to tribal leadership. Wynkoop could see the problem of singling out the guilty few without alarming the many.

Hostilities continued until August 1867. General Sherman was forced to terminate offensive military operations because Congress had established an Indian Peace Commission. The commission was formed in response to the report of the Joint Special Committee on the Condition of Indian Tribes, the insistence of Indian sympathizers, and the demands of those who advocated punishment and army control on the Indians. Four civilians including Commissioner Taylor and three army officers including Sherman, William Harney, and Alfred Terry were chosen by President Johnson to serve on the commission.

In August 1867, the commissioners sent word to General Hancock and Superintendent Murphy that all of the Indians of the southern plains were to gather near Fort Larned at an appropriate time. It was their intention to separate the hostile from friendly Indians and to place them on permanent reservations. A messenger was sent to those Cheyennes, Arapahoes, and Kiowa-Apaches known to be friendly to the government. Black Kettle, Little Raven, and Poor Bear were contacted and invited to the conference to be held in October. When the chiefs appeared Little Raven was openly friendly to the whites, while Black Kettle was sullen and morose. George Bent explained to Wynkoop that Black Kettle had little influence outside of his own band, and had incurred the ridicule of the Cheyenne soldier societies for his peace overtures. This probably explained Black Kettle's temperament.²³

Murphy and Wynkoop made preparations for the arrival of the Indian Peace Commission by rounding up all the Indians they could. Little Raven, Black

²³Robert G. Athearn, William Tecumseh Sherman and the Settlement of the West (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1956), 173-183; United States Congress, House, "Report of the Indian Peace Commissioners," 40 Cong., 2 Sess., House Executive Document No. 97 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1867), 2-3, (Serial 1337); Berthrong, The Southern Cheyennes, 290.

Kettle, and Poor Bear met with Murphy at Fort Larned on September 8, 1867. They informed him that councils with the Indian Peace Commission could only be held on Medicine Lodge Creek, well away from the army posts on the Arkansas River. Murphy and Wynkoop left for Medicine Lodge Creek nine days later, guided by forty warriors of the Arapahoes, Cheyennes, and Kiowa-Apaches. The two men had with them a large train carrying provisions, and it took them three days to reach the council grounds sixty miles south of Fort Larned. There fourteen hundred Indians, most of them Arapahoes, waited for the two men. Twenty miles away was a large encampment of Kiowas under Satanta, and Comanches under Ten Bears.²⁴

In the evening after the arrival of Murphy and Wynkoop, six young Cheyennes came into camp and agreed to take a messenger with a letter inviting a large village of Cheyennes who were at that time hostile to the councils. It was determined that the village, under Roman Nose and four other chiefs, was on the Cimarron River three days' ride to the west. Murphy decided that in view of the central location of Medicine Lodge Creek to the different tribes the spot would indeed be a good place for the council. He wrote a letter to this effect, further adding that the area was well supplied with wood, water, and grass, and was a favorite resort of the Indians.²⁵

On September 27, Roman Nose and some Cheyennes came to Medicine Lodge Creek to meet with Murphy and Wynkoop. Murphy urged the Cheyennes to attend the conference. The Indians said that they were impressed that the two men had come to Medicine Lodge Creek without troops, and said that the only reason they were hostile was because Hancock had burned their village. They promised to consider the invitation, and left for their village on the Cimarron soon

²⁴Berthrong, The Southern Cheyennes, 292, 293.

²⁵Ibid.

afterwards. Twenty-five hundred Indians had gathered at Medicine Lodge Creek by this time. Wynkoop and Murphy handed out food and beef to them. Only one hundred and fifty Cheyennes under Black Kettle were present, however. Murphy wrote to the commissioner advising that the Cheyennes be paid for property lost when Hancock burned their village.²⁶

Murphy and Wynkoop told the Indians to wait at Medicine Lodge Creek for their return with the Indian Peace Commission. The two men arrived back at Fort Larned on October 8. The commissioners arrived at the fort three days later, bringing with them an impressive entourage that included secretaries, aides, drivers, cooks, interpreters, newspaper reporters, and two companies of cavalry with Gatling guns. Wynkoop was waiting to greet the press at the sutler's store and saloon. The correspondents, which included Henry M. Stanley, were shown into a rear room where Wynkoop offered them a drink from his private liquor chest. They discussed the efforts made by Wynkoop and Murphy in collecting Indians and then holding them at Medicine Lodge Creek. Wynkoop said that some of the work had been done by friendly Indians. Stanley later was to write that although Wynkoop had had his share of troubles with his Cheyenne and Arapahoes, the experience had not destroyed his good humor. Stanley had met Wynkoop on the Hancock expedition, and was not impressed with him. But as the group sat in the sutler's saloon and the agent talked freely, Stanley changed his mind. He reported that Wynkoop was a fine gentleman and a good Indian administrator.²⁷

The correspondents learned that a number of tribal leaders were at Fort Larned. These Indians would travel to Medicine Lodge Creek with the commissioners. After the newspaper men had been poured more than a few drinks by

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Douglas Jones, The Treaty of Medicine Lodge (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1966), 48, 49, 50.

Wynkoop, ten Indians were led into the room. Among them were Satanta, the Kiowa war leader, and Little Raven, the Arapaho chief. Wynkoop offered the Indians a small drink of whiskey, which they all accepted. Satanta talked uninterrupted to the correspondents. The party lasted for about an hour and a half after the Indians arrived. Wynkoop continued to give the tribesmen a sip of whiskey from time to time. Then the group moved outdoors, mounted their horses and ambulances, and followed the Peace Commission train as it pulled out of the fort towards Medicine Lodge Creek.²⁸

The first night on the journey to Medicine Lodge Creek the commissioners held a small meeting. Kansas Governor Samuel Crawford spoke with the commission, informing them that he wanted Leavenworth removed from his job as Comanche and Kiowa Indian agent. He also spoke of replacing Wynkoop, too, pointing out that he was in bad standing with the Cheyennes. But after a short while it was decided that it would be a terrible blow to both men to relieve them just before the treaty council they had both worked so hard to organize. There is no indication that either agent was ever told that the Kansas governor had suggested that they be replaced. Wynkoop was not at this meeting, and Leavenworth had returned to Larned.²⁹

On the morning of October 12, the Peace Commission waited for Leavenworth and Wynkoop to join them before continuing their journey. The agents arrived about noon, bringing with them thirty wagons loaded with Indian gifts, and two companies of infantry riding in army ambulances. Two days later, on October 14, the Peace Commission arrived at Medicine Lodge Creek. Murphy estimated that there were probably about 3,126 Indians present at the Medicine Lodge camp, and another twelve hundred on the Cimarron. Black Kettle's band

²⁸Ibid., 50, 51, 54.

²⁹Ibid., 63.

of about one hundred and fifty was the only Cheyenne representation at hand.³⁰

Most of the Indians agreed to meet with the commissioners on October 19. The night of the fifteenth a small group of Cheyennes rode into the commissioners' camp. General Harney recognized chiefs Gray Head and Tall Bull. After a private meeting between the two chiefs and Harney, they rode out of the camp. The following day the Peace Commission began calling witnesses to find out the details of Hancock's expedition. Wynkoop, the first witness, insisted that Hancock had been misinformed about the Kansas situation from start to finish. He also claimed that the Pawnee Fork village had been friendly. The Indian agent also said that an Indian girl who had been raped and left in the abandoned Cheyenne camp had been assaulted by soldiers of the Seventh Cavalry. The girl had died a few days later. Wynkoop's accusation caused quite a stir. Soldiers had been in or near the edge of the village for some time after it had been abandoned. Although Wynkoop made a favorable impression on most of the press gang, his accusation that the Seventh Cavalry had ravished the girl was considered fantastic. Wynkoop's accusation was undoubtedly an effort to further discredit the army's relations with the Indians during the spring and summer of 1867. Needless to say his claims were denied by the army officers.³¹

As a direct result of the Hancock hearing at Medicine Lodge, there was a reconciliation between Wynkoop and some of the Cheyenne leaders. Many of the Cheyenne warriors who had been at the Pawnee Fork village had assumed Wynkoop led the Hancock expedition to their camp. With the conclusion of the hearing, during which several Cheyenne leaders were called upon to give testimony, the reporters noted that Tall Bull and Gray Head went to Wynkoop

³⁰Ibid., 66, 72, 73, 74, 77.

³¹Ibid., 84, 85, 89; Berthrong, The Southern Cheyennes, 277.

and shook his hand.³²

Cheyenne leaders played an insignificant role in the councils preceeding the Treaty of Medicine Lodge Creek. The most important talks, held on October 19 and 20, were attended by only two minor Cheyenne chiefs. During the councils a small delegation of Cheyenne chiefs headed by Little Robe came to the commissioners and said that their people were holding their Medicine Arrow ceremony, and no member of the tribe was allowed to leave the camp. Little Robe asked the commissioners to wait and assured them that the whole Cheyenne nation would then make peace. The commissioners were anxious to leave, having already concluded a treaty with the Kiowas and Comanches. After some discussion they resolved to wait until October 26 for the Cheyennes.³³

On October 28, 1867, two days after the deadline laid down by the commissioners, the Cheyennes and Arapahoes signed the Treaty of Medicine Lodge Creek. Among the provisions agreed upon by the Indians was their acceptance of a reservation bounded by the 37th parallel and the Cimarron and Arkansas Rivers. Following the signing of the treaty more than two thousand Cheyennes, including five hundred warriors, accepted presents from the commissioners. Soon afterwards they departed for their camps on the Cimarron River south of Fort Dodge, where they spent the fall and winter of 1867-68.³⁴

The treaty did not mean that the Cheyennes and Arapahoes intended to abandon their conflicts with other Indian tribes. In November 1867, a war party of Cheyennes and Arapahoes engaged a group of Kaws near Fort Zarah. In this fight the Cheyennes and Arapahoes lost five warriors killed and seven severely wounded. The confederated tribes planned retaliatory measures

³²Jones, The Treaty of Medicine Lodge, 98.

³³Stanley, Early Travels, Vol. 1, 234-235, 236, 245-247, 258-262.

³⁴Kappler, Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties, Vol. 2, 984-989; Berthrong, The Southern Cheyennes, 297, 298, 299.

in the spring of 1868. Wynkoop was quite worried about this, fearing "a bloody war" between the two tribes and the Kaws. He realized that large parties of plains Indians would cause alarm along the Kansas frontier. Wynkoop remained in contact with the Cheyennes through one of his interpreters, John S. Smith, who lived in the Cimarron River camps. Wynkoop wrote Murphy in January 1868, that the Cheyennes were in need of food. He suggested that flour, sugar, and coffee be issued to his charges.³⁵

Actually the Cheyennes and Arapahoes were not as destitute as Wynkoop seems to have thought. During the winter of 1867-68 most of the Indians were camped below the Arkansas. They had staged a successful winter buffalo hunt, and had provided themselves with an ample supply of food and buffalo robes for trade. By spring, though, food shortages began to grow serious. Wynkoop came out from Fort Larned occasionally to distribute what supplies he could. The problem was that the Treaty of Medicine Lodge Creek had not yet been ratified and there was no money to buy food or clothing as promised in the treaty. The Indians told Wynkoop that if they had arms and ammunition they could go down to the Red River and kill enough buffalo to supply their people. Wynkoop had no arms or ammunition to distribute to the Indians in his jurisdiction.

Wynkoop believed that over eighty tons of beef, sixty tons of flour, twenty tons of bacon, five tons of coffee, ten tons of sugar, and four and one-half tons of salt would go far in keeping the Cheyennes and Arapahoes happy and separated from their old habits. Meanwhile members of both tribes were trading buffalo robes for liquor, and whole bands were getting drunk. Wynkoop, apparently, did not feel that the problem was serious enough to

³⁵Wynkoop to Murphy, Nov. 30, 1867, Jan. 8, 9, 21, 1868, OIA, LR, Upper Arkansas Agency; Robert M. Utley, Frontier Regulars (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1973), 138.

merit his attention. To add to indications that trouble was perhaps ahead, the young warriors of both tribes were roaming the Arkansas River Valley in search of enemy Kaws.³⁶

Small bands began drifting northward to the Smoky Hill hunting grounds in the spring. By the terms of the treaty the Indians were only allowed north when buffalo were in sufficient numbers. The increase in the number of Southern Cheyennes and Arapahoes camping near or north of the Arkansas River gave rise to rumors that depredations were soon to follow. In May, General Sheridan, new commander of the Department of the Missouri, accused the Southern Cheyennes of depredations at Fort Zarah and on the Smoky Hill road. Wynkoop hurried to Black Kettle's village and begged the chiefs to be patient and to try to restrain the young men. Black Kettle told Wynkoop that because they had received no supplies they considered that the government had broken faith with them.³⁷

Late in May the Cheyennes tried to strike the Kaws with a large war party of at least three hundred warriors. The Cheyennes were forced to withdraw after attacking a Kaw camp at Council Grove, Kansas. As the Indians returned to their country they stopped at Fort Larned where Little Robe told Wynkoop of the raid. Little Robe admitted to Wynkoop that his young men had stolen some cattle for food; however, he insisted that the Cheyennes did not disturb any buildings or people other than Kaws.³⁸

Following the raid on the Kaws, the Secretary of Interior ordered

³⁶ Report of Distribution of Subsistence, April 25, 1868, Wynkoop to Murphy, Apr. 10, 1868, CIA, LR, Upper Arkansas Agency; Berthrong, The Southern Cheyennes, 301.

³⁷ Berthrong, The Southern Cheyennes, 301, 302.

³⁸ Albert G. Boone to Taylor, June 4, 1868, Wynkoop to Murphy, June 12, 1868, Stover to Murphy, Sept. 10, 1868, Annual Report, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1868, 64-66, 261; Berthrong, The Southern Cheyennes, 303, 304.

Wynkoop not to issue promised arms and ammunition to the Cheyennes. He was allowed to issue these annuity goods to the Araphoes. The Cheyennes were disappointed and resentful when Wynkoop carried out this order. They also began to grow restless. It was feared that the Southern Cheyennes might commit depredations against whites because of their dissatisfaction. On July 23, 1868, Indian Commissioner Taylor modified the order preventing the delivery of annuities to the Indians. It was hoped that this would preserve the peace in the Indian country around Fort Larned, a hot issue with the army. Taylor directed Wynkoop to use his discretion in distributing arms and ammunition.³⁹

Wynkoop received this order on August 1, 1868, and immediately sent for the Southern Cheyennes to come to Fort Larned to receive their annuities. On August 9, he delivered about one hundred and sixty revolvers, eighty Lancaster rifles, twelve kegs of powder, one and one-half kegs of lead, and fifteen thousand percussion caps as well as other annuity goods to Cheyennes that had gathered at Fort Larned. He reported his action to his superior, Superintendent Murphy. Wynkoop told Murphy that the Southern Cheyennes were pleased with their goods, especially the arms and ammunition. Afterwards he had delivered a long speech to them. Wynkoop advised Murphy that "I am perfectly satisfied that there will be no trouble with them this season . . ." Both Wynkoop and Murphy justified the distribution of arms on the grounds that the Cheyennes needed them for their fall hunt.⁴⁰

The Indians assured Wynkoop that they were going to their hunting

³⁹United States Congress, Senate, "Battle of the Washita," 40 Cong., 3 Sess., Senate Executive Document No. 13 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1868), 6, 7, 8, (Serial 1360).

⁴⁰Ibid., 9; Utley, Frontier Regulars, 138; Murphy to Taylor, Aug. 1, 1868, Wynkoop to Murphy, Aug. 10, 1868, Annual Report, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1868, 68, 70; Berthrong, The Southern Cheyennes, 304, 305.

grounds. However, on August 10, one day after he had distributed their annuity goods to them, two hundred Southern Cheyennes and about twenty Sioux robbed and pillaged settlements in the Saline Valley of Kansas. Two days later they attacked the Solomon River Valley in Kansas. These raids marked the beginning of a new Indian war in southern Kansas and Colorado. Wynkoop immediately called for the punishment of those guilty.⁴¹

Following the raids Wynkoop was severely criticized for issuing guns and ammunition to the Southern Cheyennes. He was said to possess "naive faith in the character of the Indians." Many believed that the Cheyennes had been planning the war all the time and had held back only because they did not have enough guns and ammunition. Some modern historians have concluded that this was the case, and one has referred to Wynkoop as a "soft-hearted federal agent."⁴²

Wynkoop wrote Murphy that the majority of the Cheyennes and their chiefs regretted the raids, but "were powerless to restrain their young men." Early in September the Cheyennes were credited with more depredations. They staged a raid on a beef herd in the Purgatoire Valley of Colorado. In the raid one trooper of the Seventh Cavalry was killed and another wounded. This convinced Wynkoop that all of the Indians of his Upper Arkansas Agency were far south of the Arkansas River. The Indians were out of his reach and under the jurisdiction of the military. On September 20, he wrote Superintendent Murphy requesting twenty days leave to visit Philadelphia to attend to important private business. He was granted the leave of absence, and set out

⁴¹"Report of an interview between Colonel E. W. Wynkoop, United States Indian Agent, and Little Rock, a Cheyenne Chief, at Fort Larned, Kansas, August 19, 1868 . . ." in Annual Report, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1868, 72; Berthrong, The Southern Cheyennes, 305, 306, Utley, Frontier Regulars, 138.

⁴²Billington, Westward Expansion, 661.

immediately for Pennsylvania.⁴³

Wynkoop responded to his many critics by claiming that the Southern Cheyennes were not responsible for the commencement of hostilities. He accused the United States Government of precipitating the Indian war of 1868. He said that the Indians had committed depredations in the Saline and Solomon River valleys because the government had withheld their annuities. In an interview with General Philip Sheridan, commander of the Department of the Missouri, he introduced another explanation for the war. He told Sheridan that a Sioux medicine man may have made the Southern Cheyennes believe that they could force the whites to leave the Smoky Hill country as the Sioux had compelled the abandonment of the Powder River country.⁴⁴

Before leaving for the east, Wynkoop held a conference with some chiefs of the Southern Cheyennes and was forced to recognize that they were guilty of hostilities. Although he made this admission with reluctance, he asserted that not all the Cheyennes were guilty of committing depredations. On August 19, 1868, he proposed that he be allowed to take the innocent Indians under protection. His plan was to locate them near Fort Larned. The plan had practical applications. However, before it could be put into effect it had to receive approval from General Sherman, commander of the Military Division of the Missouri. Sherman delayed his decision on the plan, and on September

⁴³ Wynkoop to Murphy, Aug. 19, 1868, Murphy to Mix, Aug. 22, 1868, Annual Report, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1868, 70-71; Wynkoop to Murphy, Sept. 3, 20, 1868, OIA, LR, Upper Arkansas Agency.

⁴⁴ United States Congress, Senate, "Indian Battle on the Washita," 40 Cong., 3 Sess., Senate Executive Document No. 18 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1868), 16, 17, (Serial 1360); Wynkoop to Mix, Oct. 7, 1868, OIA, LR, Upper Arkansas Agency; United States Congress, House, "Annual Report, Secretary of War, 1868," 40 Cong., 3 Sess., House Executive Document No. 1 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1868), 12, (Serial 1367).

3, Wynkoop wrote that it was too late for his plan to have any effect.⁴⁵

On September 18, Sherman rejected the plan, asserting that the hostile as well as the peaceful Indians would congregate at Fort Larned. He pointed out that there was no way to distinguish "good" Indians from the "bad." Instead, Sherman suggested that Indian agents collect all of the peaceful Indians at Fort Cobb, in what is now the state of Oklahoma. The Office of Indian Affairs accepted the plan, and Indian Agents Wynkoop and Albert G. Boone, Comanche and Kiowa agent, were ordered to proceed to Fort Cobb to begin the execution of the "Sherman plan."⁴⁶

Wynkoop was in Philadelphia when he was ordered to Fort Cobb. He had just submitted a second report on the Indian war to his superiors. In the report he accused the government of negligence and lethargy in fulfilling their promises to the Indians. He further condemned the government for not making a decision on his plan to protect the friendly Southern Cheyennes at Fort Larned. Following the depredations in the fall of 1868, General Sheridan had carefully prepared plans for a punitive expedition against the Indians of the southern plains. He decided that the best time to strike the Indians was in winter, and trained his troops for a winter war. His plan was to send three bodies of troops against the Indians. Two were to move eastward from Fort Lyon, Colorado, and Fort Bascom, New Mexico. These troops were to drive the Indians into the Washita River Valley. There they would be struck by the main army operating from Fort Hays, Kansas.⁴⁷

The plan was put into effect, and all three bodies of troops left their

⁴⁵"Battle of the Washita," Senate Executive Document No. 13, 16-17, 18-19.

⁴⁶Ibid., 1-2, 34.

⁴⁷Ibid., 18.

posts in pursuit of the Indians. As the troops were closing in, on November 20, chiefs Black Kettle and Little Robe came in to Fort Cobb to confer with General William B. Hazen. The two chiefs wanted to talk peace, but Hazen told them that he did not have the authority to make any type of an agreement with them. The chiefs were told that only Sheridan could establish peace. They were told that if they were sincere in their desire for peace they should go to Sheridan.⁴⁸

Wynkoop was en route to Fort Cobb where General Hazen was gathering peaceful Indians when he learned of Sheridan's intention of attacking the winter camps of the Indians in the Washita Valley. On November 29, he resigned his commission as Indian agent. In his letter of resignation to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Taylor, Wynkoop stated that while traveling to Fort Cobb he had learned that "some five different columns of troops" were in the field whose objective point was the Washita River. He wrote that the regular troops were under the command of officers who would not allow atrocities to be committed. He pointed out, however, that volunteer troops were also operating in the field under sanction of the government, as well as Ute and Osage Indians who were the deadly enemies of many plains Indians. Wynkoop warned that these latter two groups might very well murder all Indians they came into contact with, regardless of sex or age. Wynkoop wrote Taylor that he would go to Washington to settle his accounts as soon as possible.⁴⁹

Unknown to Wynkoop, who was on the trail headed for Fort Cobb, two days before he resigned, on November 27, 1868, Lieutenant Colonel George Custer

⁴⁸"Indian Battle on the Washita," Senate Executive Document No. 18, 22, 23.

⁴⁹"Difficulties with Indian Tribes," House Executive Document No. 240, 4-5.

attacked a group of Indians in the Washita River Valley. The Indians turned out to be fifty-one Cheyenne lodges belonging to Wynnkoop's old friend Black Kettle, who had been attacked under similar circumstances four years earlier at Sand Creek. The Indians were flushed from their lodges by Custer's dawn attack. Frantically they searched for cover as four attack groups of cavalry swept into the valley from four directions to the tune of "Garryowen." Black Kettle and his wife were not as lucky as they had been during the attack at Sand Creek, and were cut down early in the fight. Just one day earlier Black Kettle had returned from Fort Cobb where he had gone in search of peace. Chief Little Robe also perished in the attack. Custer burned the village and reported one hundred and three Indians killed.

The real impact on the Indians lay not in the deaths but in the destruction of their village, food, shelter, transportation (875 ponies were slaughtered) and other possessions, and in the demonstrations that troops could seek them out in the winter. It was reported that "photographs and daguerreotypes, clothing, and bedding, from the houses of the people massacred on the Soloman and Saline" rivers was found in the Cheyenne camp. In an interview with Black Kettle's sister, who was captured, Sheridan was told that three war parties had been sent toward Fort Larned a few days prior to Custer's attack. She also told him that another war party had returned to the camp November 26, one day before the attack. In fact it was the trail of this returning war party, made after a snow storm, that led Custer to Black Kettle's village. This party brought back three scalps, one of which formerly belonged to an expressman killed near Fort Dodge. The mail the men had been carrying was found in Black Kettle's camp following the battle. At the time of the battle the Cheyennes had four white captives, two of whom

were killed at the first attack.⁵⁰

So it would appear that some of Black Kettle's band of Southern Cheyennes was hostile at the time of the attack. Wynkoop, despite the conclusiveness of the evidence, refused to admit that the Indians were hostile. The Indians had been "massacred" and were victims of injustice, he held, and the Indian war of 1868 had been caused totally by the United States Government. The Battle of the Washita was only the opening gun of army maneuvers against the Indians of the southern plains. Humanitarians condemned Custer for slaughtering women and children, and the Indian fighter found himself compared with Chivington at Sand Creek.

Wynkoop's conclusions about the Battle of the Washita are significant because in a way they summarize his actions and judgements in his relations with the Indians. His faith in the "noble redman" was never to be shaken. He was, as one expert put it, an "incurable Indian sympathizer," from the time of the Smoky Hill council until the end of his life. To Wynkoop the Indian was always virtuous and always a victim of injustice and exploitation.⁵¹

⁵⁰ "Annual Report, Secretary of War, 1868," House Executive Document No. 1, 48; "Indian Battle on the Washita," Senate Executive Document No. 18, 34-35.

⁵¹ Marlatt Thesis, "Edward W. Wynkoop," 126.

CHAPTER IV

THE LATER YEARS

Several factors led to Wynkoop's departure from Indian country, but none was of greater importance than the Cheyenne-Arapaho assault through the Saline and Solomon valleys during the second week of August 1868. In the raid a dozen settlers were murdered; women were outraged; children were taken captive; property was either stolen or destroyed, and by the time it was over most settlers had fled from the area. Less than one week prior to the raid Sherman had placed all Indian agents under the jurisdiction of district and departmental military commanders, and with the tribes in open defiance of the Medicine Lodge Treaty that had just been ratified, all obstacles standing in the way of offensive military operations seemed to have been removed. General Sheridan promised Kansas Governor Samuel Crawford that an extensive war would be waged upon the Indians, and Sherman bragged that the war might obliterate past treaties and "erase the name Cheyenne, Arapaho, Kiowa, etc., and unite the fragments under some new name."¹

Wynkoop's reaction to the above developments was to be expected. He was both angry and embarrassed, because all evidence seemed to verify the fact that he had been deceived by the very Indians whose interests he had championed since Chivington's attack at Sank Creek. It was at this time that he concluded that the Cheyennes and Arapahoes were "completely in the hands of the military," and left on September 21, for Philadelphia. In response

¹William E. Unrau, "The Role of the Indian Agent in the Settlement of the South-Central Plains, 1861-1868," (Ph. D. Dissertation, University of Colorado, 1963), 288, 289.

to stories about the Indian agent whose Indians had reduced the Kansas country side to a barren and blood-soaked wasteland, he wrote to Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Mix and complained that "had each member of Congress seen what I have of the injustices practiced toward these Indians, they would imagine that there was not sufficient money in the U. S. Treasury to appropriate for their benefit." However, at this time (early October) in Indian country Sheridan, Custer, and Governor Crawford were completing plans for their winter campaign against the Cheyennes and Arapahoes who had fled south to the Washita. There was little chance that Wynkoop's letter could have made much impact; nevertheless there was a message of credulity in his message to Mix.²

To his critics, Wynkoop's biggest mistake was his decision to issue arms and powder to these Indians just a few days before their assault through the Saline and Solomon Valley settlements. This sequence of events--first the distribution, then the attack--suggested a relationship, a deliberate plan by the tribes to use their newly acquired weapons against settlers. Actually there is little evidence to prove that such was the case.

Donald Berthrong in his The Southern Cheyennes concluded that it was "impossible to determine exactly why the Cheyennes raided." Probably the most plausible explanation is the one furnished by Lieutenant Frederick H. Beecher, who, on the basis of personal contact with the Indians, reported that the Cheyennes had recently suffered a defeat at the hands of the Pawnees. These Cheyennes, Beecher said, consumed large quantities of whiskey on their return trip to their villages, which led to wanton attacks on Anglo

²Wynkoop to Murphy, Sept. 20, 1868, Murphy to Mix, Sept. 21, 1868, OIA, LR, Upper Arkansas Agency; "Battle of the Washita," Senate Executive Document No. 13, 26-27; Unrau Dissertation, "The Role of the Indian Agent," 289, 290.

inhabitants of the area. As for the question of weapons, Sherman was advised that prior to the Saline and Solomon outrages the Indians were selling their guns and ammunition to local settlers. The Indians also had other sources of ammunition than the issue authorized by Wynkoop. An Indian trader named William Griffenstein supplied five hundred pounds of lead and two hundred and fifty pounds of powder to Cheyenne Indians whom he considered to be friendly.³

Much more significant than Wynkoop's issue of arms as a catalyst in the Saline and Solomon Valley incidents was the general discontent that characterized the Cheyennes and Arapahoes from the date of the Medicine Lodge council until August 1868. At Medicine Lodge Creek the government had agreed to supply the tribes with arms and ammunition, but this promise was not fulfilled until Wynkoop's distribution ten months later. Also, the settlement of inter-tribal disputes was ignored despite the fact that relations between the Cheyennes and Arapahoes and the Kaws and Osages were rapidly deteriorating. At Medicine Lodge Creek, while the treaty talks were in progress, ponies belonging to the Arapahoes were stolen by Kaws and Osages.⁴

The prevailing opinion of the time seemed to indicate that forays between the various tribes were nothing more than normal patterns of warfare that antedated the white man's arrival in the south-central plains. It was clear to Wynkoop and a few others, however, that inter-tribal hostility during the winter and spring months of 1868, was in large measure the product of competition over the diminishing buffalo supply.

From the date of the Medicine Lodge council until June 1868, the South-

³Berthrong, The Southern Cheyennes, 306; Unrau Dissertation, "The Role of the Indian Agent," 291, 292.

⁴Murphy to Mix, Dec. 11, 1867, OIA, LR, Central Superintendency; Wynkoop to Murphy, July 1, 1867, Nov. 30, 1867, OIA, LR, Upper Arkansas Agency.

ern Cheyennes remained peaceful. In spite of their treatment by the Kaws and the fact that their supplies had run out, there were no reports of depredations. Nevertheless a special agent who toured Wynkoop's agency in early May 1868, advised Commissioner Taylor that unless subsistence were provided there would be real trouble. On June 3, as predicted by Wynkoop in a report to Kansas Superintendent Murphy dated May 15, Cheyennes rode through the streets of Council Grove on their way to the Kaw Agency. No one was killed and no women were outraged. The two tribes confronted each other for awhile, then the aggressors departed for Fort Larned. The "raid" netted the Cheyennes some sugar and coffee offered by Council Grove townsmen, seven beeves from local ranchers and eleven more from a party of Texan drovers who happened to be in the vicinity. Later, at Fort Larned, the Cheyennes made it clear to Wynkoop that they wished to pay for the stock that had been offered to them when the government made their annuities available.⁵

July found Wynkoop and the Cheyennes at Fort Larned awaiting the delivery of annuities which were scheduled for that month. They were not prepared, however, for the manner in which the Council Grove incident was blown out of proportion. Rumors circulated that the Cheyennes were going to return "to finish off" the settlement. It was reported that eight hundred Cheyenne warriors were ready to attack Council Grove. Superintendent Murphy tried to reassure the settlers, but his efforts came to no avail. For Wynkoop and the Cheyennes the climax of the whole affair came on June 25. Indicating the effectiveness of frontier rumor and the breakdown of communication between the Indian agents and Washington, Commissioner Taylor ordered Wynkoop to withhold all arms and ammunition from his Indians until assurances were had

⁵Wynkoop to Murphy, May 15, 1868, OIA, LR, Upper Arkansas Agency; Wynkoop to Murphy, June 3, 1868, Annual Report, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1868, 64-66.

that there would be no more raids patterned after the attack on the Kaw Reservation.⁶

The Cheyennes were angry at Taylor's order, and informed Wynkoop that they would not accept any annuities until the arms and ammunition promised to them at Medicine Lodge were delivered. After nearly a month had passed, Commissioner Taylor began to doubt that his prohibition of the arms issue had been the wisest policy. No new reports of Cheyenne hostility had reached Washington, and on July 23, the commissioner reversed himself and informed Wynkoop that if his Indians could be trusted the Indian department would not be opposed to the distribution of weapons and powder. The authorization was so worded that if any trouble developed it would be Wynkoop, not Taylor and The Indian department's high officials who would be responsible. It seems that Taylor was inconsistent here. In placing Wynkoop back in the limelight the commissioner apparently forgot that in June, when he had ordered the prohibition, he had failed to consult with Wynkoop. Furthermore, Commissioner Taylor had ignored Wynkoop's defense of the Cheyennes' behavior at the time of the "attack" on Council Grove. On August 1, in the presence of General Alfred Sully and Superintendent Murphy, Wynkoop distributed the controversial consignment to the Arapahoes; the Cheyennes received theirs on August 9. Since Sully did not protest, Wynkoop felt assured that military authorities saw nothing irregular in the action.⁷

Then came the Saline and Solomon Valley attacks and the end of Wynkoop's influence on the plains. The fact that Sully had not opposed Wynkoop's

⁶Taylor to Murphy, June 25, 1868, Annual Report, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1868, 66.

⁷Wynkoop to Murphy, July 20, Aug. 10, 1868, OIA, LR, Upper Arkansas Agency; Taylor to Wynkoop, July 23, 1868, OIA, Letters Sent; Unrau Dissertation "The Role of the Indian Agent," 296, 297, 298.

distribution of the arms and powder, or that the Kaw expedition had been greatly exaggerated and distorted, or that a number of warriors had left for Pawnee country prior to the arms distribution, made little difference. Public opinion demanded the head of some official, and the logical choice was the man closest to the Indians, the Cheyenne-Arapaho agent who specialized in arming hostile Indians, Edward Wynkoop. Even though his days as an Indian agent were numbered, Wynkoop worked hard to separate the peaceful bands from those now on the warpath. However, his ideas and proposals were cast aside by Sherman who advised Taylor that as long as Wynkoop remained at Fort Larned, the warriors would flock to him for protection. On September 21, the day Wynkoop left for Philadelphia, Commissioner Taylor received a request from General John M. Schofield that Wynkoop's Upper Arkansas Agency be closed.⁸

As Wynkoop wrote to Superintendent Murphy in his request for temporary leave in order to go to Philadelphia, the Indians of his agency were now in the hands of the army. Events unfolded rapidly. After Major George A. Forsyth's indecisive encounter with the Dog Soldiers in late September on the Arikaree branch of the Republican River eighty-five miles north of Fort Wallace, General Philip Sheridan obtained War Department approval for a winter campaign against those Southern Cheyennes and Arapahoes responsible for the Saline and Solomon Valley atrocities. Troop movements against the two tribes culminated in the Battle of the Washita, November 27, 1868, which brought forth a final outburst from Wynkoop. He had been ordered to return to the frontier in October to congregate his Indians at Fort Cobb. While on the trail he found out that several military columns were advancing towards

⁸ Wynkoop to Murphy, Aug. 19, 1868, OIA, LR, Upper Arkansas Agency; Sherman to Taylor, Sept. 19, 1868, Schofield to Taylor, Sept. 21, 1868, "Battle of the Washita," Senate Executive Document No. 13, 22, 24.

encampments of his Indians, and promptly resigned his position.

Thus in the last days of 1868, the removal of Wynkoop had been accomplished. Generals Sherman, Sheridan, and Hazen were now faced with the problem of feeding starving Indians with the meager funds at their disposal, and they were among the first to understand the difficult task of running an Indian agency. In December 1868, they were informed that a delegation of Quakers would visit the plains to study conditions of the Indians and make plans to carry out President-elect Grant's plan to appoint church officials as Indian agents. A Quaker agent by the name of Brinton Darlington was selected to fill the post vacated by Edward Wynkoop, and with Darlington's arrival at Fort Sill in June 1869, one era of Indian department administration on the frontier had come to a close. In the meantime Wynkoop, in distant Philadelphia, had time to reflect on the role he had played in the settlement of the south-central plains.

On December 21, 1868, in Philadelphia, Wynkoop was invited by Peter Cooper, head of the United States Indian Commission in New York, to appear before the commission and tell why he resigned as Indian agent. This organization was a citizens' pressure group that boasted a galaxy of big-name philanthropists. It is not known whether Wynkoop had any regrets about resigning his commission as Indian agent. Evidently there was some talk about appointing him a superintendent of Indian affairs in March 1869. This probably came about as a result of his appearance before the United States Indian Commission. Nevertheless the appointment did not come through, and it is not known whether Wynkoop would have accepted the position after quitting his other job with the Indian department under protest.⁹

⁹Cooper to Wynkoop, Dec. 21, 1868, Cooper to Grant, Mar. 19, 1869 (copy), Wynkoop Papers, MNM.

In Pennsylvania Wynkoop went into partnership with his brother John in the blast furnace business. The joint venture was called the "Stanhope Furnace" and was located about one mile east of Pinegrove, Pennsylvania, in Schuylkill County. Their business was roasting phosphorous ores in order to produce iron. The enterprise continued until the Panic of 1873 forced them out of business. Following the failure of the iron making business, Wynkoop engaged in a "struggle for existence" for several years.¹⁰

In 1874 the discovery of gold in the Black Hills of Dakota by General Custer's expedition almost caused a nationwide panic. Under the terms of the treaty signed at the Fort Laramie Peace Council October 10, 1868, the Sioux Indians were to retain the Black Hills region, which was sacred to them. The discovery of gold caused General Sheridan to reiterate General Hancock's statement of two years before that any invasion of the Black Hills region would be met with resistance by the military. But soon hopeful gold seekers began to go there.

To Edward Wynkoop, then engaged in a "struggle for existence" in Pennsylvania, the Black Hills seemed to have the same appeal that Pike's Peak did in 1858. In the early part of 1875 he journeyed to Colorado and in March traveled north to the Black Hills country. While on the trail he and his party were attacked by Sioux Indians, and Wynkoop was wounded. The travelers also had to contend with severe snow storms. In the Black Hills area Wynkoop went first to Custer City, where it was reported that some mining strikes had been made. At Custer City he was elected to the command of a civilian body of three hundred men called the "Black Hills Rangers," organized to fight Indians. Organizations such as this were common throughout the West. Wyn-

¹⁰"The Stanhope Furnace," (unidentified newspaper article), Scrapbook, Wynkoop Papers, MNM; E. E. Wynkoop, "Edward Wanshear Wynkoop," 78.

koop's second-in-command was Captain Jack Crawford, the famous "poet scout of the plains." The two men struck up a friendship which was to last until Wynkoop's death.¹¹

Custer City had sprung up as a mining town not long before Wynkoop entered the Black Hills region. Soon, however, the town died, and most of its inhabitants, estimated at between fifteen and twenty-five thousand, headed for a new camp, Deadwood Gulch. Wynkoop, Crawford, and their Black Hills Rangers fought Indians for a while; then it appears that they, too, went to Deadwood. The mining camp of Deadwood Gulch was quite an exciting place during this time. It was situated at the head of a dead-end canyon where the road ended against a canyon wall. Laid out in April 1876, it consisted of one main street which wove in and out among tree stumps and pot holes. Strung along the street were the familiar buildings of a frontier town. For every store there were three saloons. The citizens of Deadwood were completely lawless. A few of the famous and infamous who were there included: California Joe, Colorado Charlie, "Wild" Bill Hickok, "Doc" Holliday, and Wyatt Earp.

Once in Deadwood Wynkoop became the owner of a claim called the "Lulu Lode." An assay of the ore removed from the claim yielded \$952 a ton. He earned a fair living by working the claim but later sold the mine at a modest price. The mine proved to be quite profitable after he had sold it. Wynkoop then worked for the Deadwood newspaper, the Black Hills Pioneer, the only newspaper in the town in 1876. Apparently he still headed the Black Hills Rangers.¹²

On June 21, 1876, he left the Black Hills for the East. He and some

¹¹E. E. Wynkoop, "Edward Wanshear Wynkoop," 78.

¹²Ibid., 78.

friends floated down the Missouri River to civilization, and from there he returned to Pennsylvania. It was his intention, he wrote in an article for a Pennsylvania newspaper, to go to Washington D. C. to get permission to raise a regiment of volunteers in the Black Hills area to fight Indians. He felt that a government sanctioned group would be more effective than his Black Hills Rangers. Wynkoop wanted to return to the Black Hills in July, but never did so, for he remained in Pennsylvania.¹³

Back once again in his native state, Wynkoop engaged in a variety of occupations. He was appointed superintendent of a blast furnace at Dauphin, Pennsylvania, on the Susquehanna River. Something had failed as yet to close this furnace, and it continued to operate for awhile. But after a time it too closed down. It was said that operation was to be resumed as soon as the receivers arrived, and Wynkoop was retained as superintendent. However, it appears that it was at this time that Wynkoop and family relocated to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.¹⁴

Wynkoop was a good Republican, and while he and his family were living in Harrisburg he was appointed special agent in the General Land Office for Colorado on March 23, 1882. He was hired at a salary of twelve hundred dollars a year. His appointment came under the Timber Culture Act of March 13, 1873, which allowed a homesteader to apply for one hundred and sixty acres in addition to the one hundred and sixty acres allotted him under the Homestead Act of 1862 if he would plant at least one fourth of the land in trees within four years. Wynkoop worked out of the General Land Office in Pueblo, Colorado. Part of his job was to approve applications for land and to see

¹³Ibid., 78.

¹⁴F. M. Wynkoop, "Intimate Notes Relative to Colonel Edward W. Wynkoop," Wynkoop Papers, MNM.

that the timber was actually planted. He was also to oversee lands in the public domain, making certain that cutting of timber was done with permission through the regular channels. His job was roughly comparable to that of a regional forester today.¹⁵

In 1883, he was transferred to the General Land Office for the Santa Fe District, New Mexico. His family joined him at this point. Wynkoop's duties were the same in Santa Fe. On one occasion Joseph Rutledge, an operator of a sawmill, had started to cut timber unlawfully on restricted land near Santa Fe. He was ordered to desist. Rutledge then called upon U. S. Timber Agent Wynkoop and, according to one account, tried to bribe him. Wynkoop is alleged to have thrown the startled sawmill owner out the door and into the street.¹⁶

At this time Wynkoop was nominated Department Commander of the Grand Army of the Republic at the First Encampment of the organization at Las Vegas, New Mexico. He was subsequently elected to the post in an election held on February 22, 1884. One of his first acts was to endorse a plan to erect a monument over the grave of Kit Carson at Taos, New Mexico. Wynkoop was elected chairman of the committee, and issued a circular letter on April 7, 1884, urging donations. It was later decided that besides marking the famous scout's grave with a marble tablet, a monument to the memory of "dear old Kit" should be erected elsewhere. Santa Fe was given the first opportunity to accept the monument, with Las Vegas to receive second choice.¹⁷

Wynkoop's term of office as Department Commander of the G. A. R. expired February 27, 1885. However, he continued to serve as chairman of the Kit

¹⁵Appointment, Department of the Interior, March 23, 1882, Wynkoop Papers, MNM.

¹⁶"Instructions of Duties, Edward Wynkoop, Special Agent in the General Land Office," F. M. Wynkoop, "Commemoration to Mrs. Edward W. Wynkoop," Wynkoop Papers, MNM.

¹⁷Circular, G. A. R., Apr. 7, 1884, Wynkoop Papers, MNM.

Carson Monument Committee. The monument was dedicated Memorial Day (May 30) 1885. Wynkoop was on hand when the memorial was unveiled. The monument was erected in Santa Fe in front of the United States Court House at the end of Lincoln Avenue, where it still stands today.¹⁸

As an employee of the General Land Office, Wynkoop was replaced by a new appointee upon the advent of the Cleveland administration in 1885. In December 1884, he apparently sought the position of warden of the territorial penitentiary at Santa Fe. His old friend Captain Jack Crawford supported him by writing a letter to Governor Lebaron Bradford Prince recommending the appointment as warden. Crawford, who fancied himself something of a poet and often referred to himself as the "poet lariette of the West" ended his letter to Governor Prince with an impromptu poem:

I love the true and the brave,
I worship the brave and the true,
I hate a coward and knave,
and Governor, so do you;

I love an old pioneer,
whoes (sic) soul looks out of his eyes,
the man who never knew fear,
and never was found in disguise.

and that is why I love Ned,
and why I again ask pardon,
but he who faced rebbel (sic) and red,
is surely fit for a warden.¹⁹

-Captain Jack Crawford

Despite Captain Jack's prose, Wynkoop was not appointed warden of the territorial penitentiary, at least not at that time. He continued to live in Santa Fe for the next few years, and seems to have "waited out" Grover Cleveland's first term as President. By 1889 he appears to have been pretty desperate for some type of job. Besides applying for reappointment as a

¹⁸Unidentified newspaper article, Scrapbook, Wynkoop Papers, MNM.

¹⁹Crawford to Prince, Dec. 5, 1884 (copy), Wynkoop Papers, MNM.

special agent for the General Land Office, he had influential friends write Washington in an attempt to secure some type of position under the new administration of Benjamin Harrison.²⁰

Wynkoop seems to have been adamant in seeking an appointment as special agent of the General Land Office for the Santa Fe District. In a letter to Secretary of the Interior J. W. Noble he pointed out that the man currently holding the position was an ex-Confederate officer from Mississippi. All of Wynkoop's letters and those of his friends were filed in Noble's office.²¹

There is evidence that Wynkoop and another man, H. F. Swope, engaged in mining activities in the Cerrillos and Dolores mining districts about fifteen or twenty miles south of Santa Fe during this period. Wynkoop's name was also mentioned at this time as a candidate for the positions of U. S. marshal of New Mexico and postmaster of Santa Fe. Apparently he had the support of several newspapers in the territory who felt that he was a good man for the jobs.²²

On December 2, 1889, Wynkoop was appointed adjutant general of the Territorial Militia of New Mexico. He received his appointment and commission on the above date from Governor Prince, and qualified the same day by taking the oath of office and filing a bond of five thousand dollars. While serving as adjutant general, Wynkoop was called to Las Vegas, New Mexico, to quell disturbances by a white cap association which was a group of native ranchers

²⁰Wynkoop to Noble, Mar. 30, 1889, S. A. Sheldon to "To Whom it May Concern," Mar. 4, 1889, Prince to "To Whom it May Concern," Feb. 12, 1889, A. J. Fountain to Harrison, Mar. 4, 1889, H. M. Teller to Noble, March 21, 1889, Francis Downs to Harrison, Mar. 23, 1889, Endorsement from General Powell Clayton and the New Mexico Delegation, Mar. 27, 1889, H. Crampton to Noble, Mar. 23, 1889, Curtis to Noble, Mar. 27, 1889, (all copies), Wynkoop Papers, MNM.

²¹Wynkoop to Noble, May 3, 1889, Wynkoop Papers, MNM.

²²Unidentified newspaper clippings, Scrapbook, Wynkoop Papers, MNM.

who banded together to cut fences and night ride against Anglos who has settled on the Las Vegas Land Grant. Since April 1889 the white caps had killed three men, severely wounded two others and a station agent, and attacked and wounded another. Indictments for the white caps were issued by the court, and the local sheriff was charged with making the arrests. As the association was a strong secret organization existing in the mountains, Las Vegas Sheriff Felipe Lopez was worried about retaliatory measures the white caps might take if a large number of them were arrested.²³

The sheriff requested that Wynkoop come to Las Vegas. He arrived in the city the night of December 11, bringing with him fifty rifles and one thousand cartridges. On the thirteenth, Sheriff Lopez arrested ten of the white caps, including some leaders. Large crowds gathered in the vicinity of the courthouse and jail. However, there was no trouble, and Wynkoop left Las Vegas for Santa Fe soon afterwards.²⁴

Wynkoop's sortie to Las Vegas acting in his official capacity as adjutant general for the Territory of New Mexico gave him the opportunity to observe the state of some of the militia units of New Mexico. He remarked that some years earlier there had been some excellent local military organizations in various cities in the territory but pointed out that they had since fallen apart. He recommended that militia organizations throughout New Mexico be revitalized. He sent his recommendations to Governor Prince, who promised to look into the matter.

²³ Territory of New Mexico, Records of the Adjutant General, General Accounts and Misc. Records (Roll 88), Territorial Archives of New Mexico; Las Vegas Daily Optic, Dec. 12, 1889.

²⁴ Las Vegas Daily Optic, Dec. 12, 13, 1889.

²⁵ Ibid., Dec. 14, 1889; Territory of New Mexico, Records of the Territorial Governors, Letters Received by Governor Prince, Jan. - Mar. 1890, (Roll 105); Ibid., Letters Sent by Gov. Prince, Jan. - Dec. 1890, (Roll 114), Territorial Archives of New Mexico.

On March 20, 1890, Wynkoop resigned as adjutant general to accept an appointment as superintendent and warden of the territorial penitentiary. Governor Prince was responsible for the appointment. As superintendent and warden of the penitentiary Wynkoop was responsible for many improvements. After two months in the administration of the prison, Wynkoop saw to it that a hospital for the inmates was started. He drew up plans for the building, and, by using convict labor, erected the building without cost to the territory.²⁶

He also advocated the serving of vegetables to prisoners. A four acre garden plot was planted on the grounds of the prison, and Wynkoop estimated that enough vegetables to supply the prisoners throughout the year could be grown in the garden. Irrigation was used to water the garden and convict labor was once again utilized. Wynkoop also saw to it that an old sewer was replaced with a new one. He supervised the inmates in the manufacture of bricks to be used in the construction of the insane asylum at Las Vegas, the university at Albuquerque, the agricultural college at Las Cruces, the School of Mines at Socorro, and other public buildings. At the time there were ninety-three convicts, two of whom were women. Louisa Wynkoop, as matron of the institution, also performed her duties well.²⁷

Wynkoop's health began to decline during this period. He was frequently ill, but still performed his duties as warden. He held the office for little more than a year, when, through a political deal, he was voted out

²⁶Wynkoop to Prince, Mar. 20, 1890, Records of the Adjutant General, General Accounts and Misc. Records; The Santa Fe Daily New Mexican, Mar. 21, 1890; "The Territorial Penitentiary," (unidentified newspaper article), Scrapbook, Wynkoop Papers, MNM.

²⁷"The Territorial Penitentiary," (unidentified newspaper article), Scrapbook, Wynkoop Papers, MNM.

of office by a newly-appointed board of penitentiary managers.²⁸

Following his removal from office Wynkoop moved his family back to Santa Fe. His health continued to decline. Finally, on September 11, 1891, at the age of fifty-five years, he died, after ailing for a year, of an attack of "la grippe having brought on muscular rheumatism, which about last January resulted in inflammation of the bladder, the final cause of death." The funeral was held two days later at the Episcopal Church in Santa Fe, with Bishop J. Mills Kendrick officiating. Wynkoop was buried in the National Cemetery in Santa Fe. He left a widow, two daughters and three sons. The children included Edward Estill, born 1862; Emily, born 1864; Angeline, born 1866; Francis Murray, born 1869; and Charles Wansaer, born 1871.²⁹

Throughout the southwest, and as far north as Montana and the Dakotas, newspapers mentioned his death and followed with praise of his character and achievements. In Denver, the town he had helped to establish, a street was named for him. Captain Jack Crawford expressed his feelings for his friend in a poem:

In Memoriam--Ned Wynkoop

A golden chain, whose never dimming luster
The roseate warmth of comrade love revealed,
bound close the hearts of two who oft did muster
'Neath Union's flag, upon tented field.
They fought in widely separated regions;
One on the grand Potomac's battle breast,
The Other battled with the redskin legions
And equi-fearless Southrons in the west.

When the white dove of peace, with downy pinions,
Sailed o'er the heads of late contending foes,
And all the Southland's poor, mistaken minions
Lay crushed beneath the Union's heavy blows,
These comrades met far out amid the mountains,
And each fell captive to that chain of love,

²⁸E. E. Wynkoop, "Edward Wanshear Wynkoop," 79.

²⁹The Santa Fe Daily, New Mexican, Sept. 12, 1891; R. Wynkoop, Wynkoop Genealogy, 121.

While from their hearts, in clear, unsullied fountains,
Flowed friendship pure as if from heaven above.

Oft clasped their hands in true fraternal greeting,
When life's tide threw them in each other's way.
And love was stronger at the final meeting
Than 'twas before their heads were touched with gray.
They parted-in their hearts there was no presage
Of what hung o'er one comrade's loyal head,
Till to the other came the woeful message,
On swift electric wings, "Ned Wynkoop's dead."

For one dark hour that golden chain seemed broken;
My stricken heart was rent with keenest pain;
And loud I cried to God to send a token
That he I loved on earth would live again.
Then came a voice, "The chain is yet unriven;
New Links are added-links of holier love-
It reaches now from earth to highest heaven-
From your bruised heart to comrade's heart above."³⁰
-Captain Jack Crawford

Louisa Wynkoop went to Denver following the death of her husband. She took her two daughters with her. The young men of the family remained in Santa Fe, where they engaged in the printing business with the exception of Francis, who was at the time employed as a guard at the penitentiary. Later he too would make a name for himself as a printer in New Mexico.³¹

³⁰E. E. Wynkoop, "Edward Wanshear Wynkoop," 79.

³¹F. M. Wynkoop, "Commemoration to Mrs. Edward W. Wynkoop," Wynkoop Papers, MNM.

CONCLUSION

Edward Wansaer Wynkoop's life extended over the last half of the nineteenth century. From the time he stepped off the steamer in Leavenworth, Kansas, in 1856, until his death in Santa Fe in 1891, he was a witness, if not an active participant, to numerous events of historical significance in the trans-Mississippi West. Although Wynkoop's entire life has been summarized by this thesis, his most significant roles in the history of this time period were as antagonist of Colonel John M. Chivington in the Sand Creek controversy of 1864, and as United States Indian agent for the Upper Arkansas Agency from 1865-1868.

Wynkoop was something of a paradox. While he possessed unique qualities that set him off from the average pioneers of the day, there are indications that he was just as human as any other man on the frontier. He liked to drink and gamble, and could use profanity effectively. He was apparently not very strict in his moral practices either, as his marriage to Mademoiselle Haydee in August 1861, and the birth of their first child two months later indicate. His involvement in near duels, and (possibly) jail breaks would seem to suggest that, at least in his youth, Wynkoop was somewhat typical of the rowdy frontiersmen in the West.

Like most of the people who crossed the Mississippi River and traveled west in the last century, Wynkoop was an opportunist. He sought to better his own position and later that of his family as well. He was just as interested in getting ahead as the next man, as his actions as a claim jumper, miner, town site promoter and local politician would seem to indicate. But

Wynkoop was an opportunist with principles. He stood up for what he felt was right and spoke out against what he felt was unjust, even at the expense of a job or career.

He possessed a number of physical and mental gifts that enabled him to play an important and often decisive role in the events with which he was associated. These traits, which would seem to indicate that Wynkoop was an atypical settler of the trans-Mississippi West, include striking physical characteristics, a talent for extemporaneous speaking, the ability to write well, a political mind, and bravery. He was a good leader, and knew how to manipulate both men and public opinion to his advantage. Because of his temperament he was capable of integrity, fidelity, and humanitarianism.

Wynkoop was also an untypical frontiersman because he was sincerely interested in the welfare of the Indians with whom he dealt. An agent to the Cheyennes and Arapahoes he was forced to contend with the threat of irresponsible military action patterned after the massacre at Sand Creek, as well as the uncompromising attitudes of railroad promoters, land speculators, town promoters, Indian traders, and the settlers themselves. Wynkoop was agent to the Cheyennes and Arapahoes during their most critical historical period. During this time the lives of the members of both tribes were being radically changed. These Indians were being hemmed in by the westward advance of potential homesteaders and ranchers, by the eastward movement of settlers who had initially come west to the Colorado mines, by the Union Pacific Railroad on the northern border, and by increasing numbers of emigrants arriving in north-central Texas.

From the time of the Smoky Hill council in 1864 Wynkoop became an outstanding champion of Indian rights and character. The position from which he could exercise his influence to the greatest degree in this direction was

that of Indian agent. His activities in this capacity were often believed to be a hindrance to the normal process of settlement. Needless to say, Wynkoop the Indian agent was not very popular among the settlers and military men of the south-central plains region. And yet he never changed his principles to accomodate his critics. He had himself been a military man, and he, too, was interested in placing the Indians under his jurisdiction on reservations far removed from whites and the onslaught of western settlement. But Wynkoop occupied the position closest to the Indians, and because of his position he often differed with policy makers on how rapidly the government's plans for the Indians could be put into effect. Wynkoop also had his own ideas on what should be the lot of the individual Indian while the details of the removal of his tribe were being worked out.

If Edward Wynkoop's contribution to the history of the American West were measured in terms of towns founded, miles of railroad track laid on the prairie, acres of sod broken, fortunes accumulated or decisive military campaigns devised, it would be slight. Wynkoop did play a significant role, however, in the settlement of the trans-Mississippi West. Contrary to the constant predictions of settlers, there were no major Indian uprisings from the date of the Sand Creek massacre to August, 1868, when Wynkoop was either an Indian agent or a concerned military officer.

Wynkoop as Indian agent realized that when Congress cut back army appropriations, the only alternative was a reliance on state and territorial volunteers. Very often these volunteers wanted to punish an entire tribe for the hostile act of an individual warrior. Wynkoop was instrumental in preventing these infuriated men from operating on the pattern set by Chivington and his One Hundred Days men. United States Indian Agent Wynkoop also helped prepare the way for Congress and the Peace Commissioners to conclude the

treaties of 1865 and 1867, and land cessions that went with these agreements, Wynkoop demanded that regular army commanders clarify their objectives and intentions, and in this way helped to keep the peace on the frontier.

In the sixties the question of Indian policy was debated by Congress, military authorities, peace commissioners, and journalists. In the final analysis, however, their arguments came down to a problem over which the agent had no control--economy in federal expenditures. On the frontier, settlers complained of Indian depredations, the failure of the regular army to perform its assigned tasks, and corruption in the operation of federal agencies. These complaints also were brought about by conditions over which the Indian agent had no control. The settlers often came to the West naive of the many obstacles to be overcome in establishing themselves there. A few of the problems to be dealt with were monotony, transportation, distance, prices, markets, and weather. It was not difficult for them to substitute the so-called "Indian menace" for the more realistic reasons underlying their predicaments. The Indian agent, and Wynkoop was no exception, often assumed the role of frontier scapegoat. This came about because the Indian agent was more intimately involved in the process of settlement than frugal congressmen and compromising Indian commissioners. It made little difference to the settlers that official investigations conducted by the Indian department exonerated the more prominent agents, or that for nearly half a decade Wynkoop was instrumental in preventing what could have been a major Indian uprising.

For Edward Wynkoop his life in a real sense ended with his resignation from the Indian department. After the resignation the spotlight was taken off him; he no longer played a leading role in the shaping of the American West. This is not to say that he didn't continue to be a respected and influential man. Following the resignation he seems to have drifted around

the country in a "struggle for existence." Not that he wasn't "successful" in the family sense, for he did have respectable jobs until he died; but it is as if his major contributions had been completed by 1868.

What is more important is the development and maturing of the mind of the man. The controversial Indian agent who resigned his commission in protest of what he felt was an uncalled for military scheme to attack the Indians under his charge was a far cry from the youth of twenty-two who had horse-whipped a Pawnee Indian. Edward Wynkoop was clearly a product of the West.

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I. Manuscript Materials

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- a. Manuscript Division, State Historical Society of Colorado
Edward W. Wynkoop Papers.

2. Santa Fe, New Mexico

- a. History Division, Museum of New Mexico
Edward W. Wynkoop Papers.
- b. State Records Center and Archives
Territorial Archives of New Mexico
Records of the Adjutant General, General Accounts and Misc.
Records (Roll 88).
Records of the Territorial Governors,
Letters Received by Governor Prince, 1890 (Roll 105).
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3. Washington, D. C.

- a. National Archives
Records of the Office of Indian Affairs
Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs
Central Superintendency, 1861-1868.
Kiowa, Comanche and Apache Agency, 1864-1868.
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Records of the War Department
Office of the Adjutant General, General Orders, Division of
Missouri, 1865-1868.
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II. Government Documents

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