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The Expansionist Cause: Union Civil War Commemorations as Weapons of Colonization in the American West

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THE EXPANSIONIST CAUSE: UNION CIVIL WAR COMMEMORATIONS AS WEAPONS OF COLONIZATION IN THE AMERICAN WEST

by

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ABSTRACT

Eastern collective remembrances of the American Civil War have dominated discussions of the war's causes and consequences. The West was located far from major Civil War battlefields and historic sites and therefore deemed peripheral to the war and its legacy. Consequently, historians' eastern-focused arguments about the war's historical memory have largely been applied to account for all Union veterans and their families' experiences, even though the evidence is grounded predominantly in source materials from east of the Mississippi River. Using analytical methods of gender and race, *The Expansionist Cause* examines Union Civil War commemoration in the trans-Mississippi West to argue that the Civil War meant something distinctly different to these veterans and their families than to their eastern counterparts.

In their collective remembrances, western Union veterans and their families celebrated white expansion and supremacy as the ultimate inheritance of the Civil War, and in doing so, they constructed a legacy of the war that bolstered Anglo-American hegemony in the West. Similar to white southerners who crafted the Lost Cause to disempower African Americans, Union veterans and their families wielded Civil War commemorations as a weapon to colonize Native peoples in the West. By rooting their defense of western colonization in the shadow of the Civil War, they used collective remembrances of the Union cause as a "good war" to secure an American empire and erase the violence of colonization. These distinctions reveal a larger significance of the war to the Civil War generation, and underscore how western Union veterans and their families connected the war to the larger national narrative to disempower Indigenous people. Memory making, therefore, served as a crucial weapon in western colonization.

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DEDICATION

In memory of my dad, Brent C. Peterson

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DUV	Daughters of Union Veterans
GAR	Grand Army of the Republic
LGAR	Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic
SUV	Sons of Union Veterans
WRC	Woman's Relief Corps

CHAPTER I – "TWIN RELICS OF BARBARISM AND SAVAGERY": INTRODUCING UNION CIVIL WAR COMMEMORATIONS AS TOOLS OF WESTERN COLONIZATION

On the morning of August 8, 1974, Michael McCabe of Taos Pueblo allegedly placed a hard hat atop his head, clutched a hammer and chisel, and confidently strode across the Santa Fe Plaza toward the historic Soldiers' Monument. Fooling spectators into believing he was an authorized official, he pressed the chisel to the face of the monument and began chipping away at the inscribed stone. When he had finished, he had gouged out the word "savage" from an inscription that dedicated the obelisk to "the heroes who have fallen in the various battles with savage Indians in the Territory of New Mexico."[1] Amidst American Indian Movement (AIM) representatives' requests to remove the monument and a 1973 promise by the Santa Fe City Council to alter the inscription, his actions were one moment in a long history of controversy surrounding the cenotaph.[2] As early as 1907 New Mexicans debated the obelisk's description of Confederates as "Rebels," and calls to remove the monument for its representation of Indigenous Americans appeared as early as the 1950s.[3]

[1] Joe Schubert, "Monument's Word Removed," *Santa Fe New Mexican,* August 8, 1974.

[2] "State Aide Says, Monument, Grant Tied," *Santa Fe New Mexican,* September 25, 1973; "'Savage' Indian an honor?" *Santa Fe New Mexican,* November 25, 1973.

[3] Isabella Alves and Kyle Land, "A History of Controversy," *Albuquerque Journal,* October 18, 2020. See also Chris Wilson, *The Myth of Santa Fe: Creating a Modern Regional Tradition* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997).

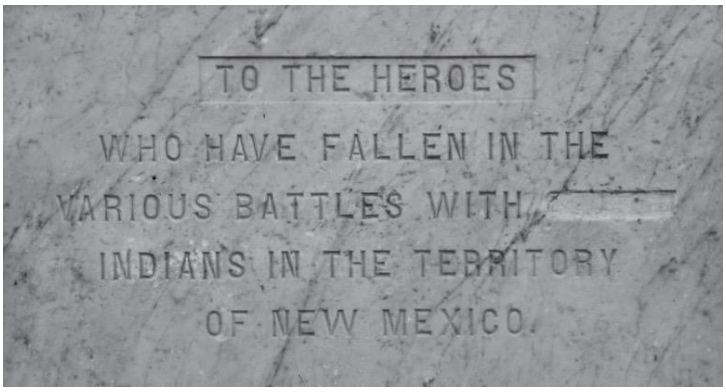

Figure 1. Photograph of Santa Fe, New Mexico Soldiers' Monument's altered inscription[4]

Twentieth-century critics of the monument pointed to its dehumanizing description of Native peoples. Valentine Cordova, the chairman of the All-Indian Pueblo Council, argued that while "rebel" was a southern badge of honor, "savage" continued to be "a derogatory word."[5] However, New Mexico state historian Myra Ellen Jenkins led the 1970s charge to preserve the monument. In an unironic defense of its inscription she declared, "any war memorial is an anachronism 10 years after it is built. It is a piece of history which reflects the attitudes and prejudices of the time it was built." Those who opposed amending or removing the monument argued doing so would "rewrite history."[6]

Others insisted the inscription on the monument was reasonable.[7] Author Oliver La Farge editorialized, "the monument refers to 'savage Indians,' it means exactly what it says, and furthermore, the term is accurate." He quipped, "I know of no recorded case of

[4] *Civil War Monument (Santa Fe, New Mexico)*, 2016, accessed June 21, 2022, https://perma.cc/LHQ6-ZE3W.

[5] "Panel Delays Action on Plaza Monument," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, August 24, 1973.

[6] "You Can't Rewrite History." See also "'Savage' Indian an honor?"; Terry Gilkyson, "Hopefully Right," letter to the editor, *Santa Few New Mexican*, August 17, 1973.

[7] Gilkyson, "Hopefully Right"; "You Can't Rewrite History"; Oliver La Farge, "Oliver la Farge Recounts Plaza History: Meaning of Monument Often Overlooked," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, July 27, 1973; Joe E. Montoya, "Leave Monument," letter to the editor, *Santa Fe New Mexican*, October 11, 1973.

the Comanches killing anyone with kindness."[8] Pro-monument factions—including Anglo, Hispanic, and Native supporters—asserted that the inscription fairly distinguished between peaceable Pueblos and "savage Indians," who they defined as "marauding bands of Navajos, Apaches, and Comanches."[9]

Often overlooked by twentieth-century proponents and opponents alike was the complex connection the monument held to the Union cause in the American Civil War. Dedicated in 1867 and completed the following year, the Santa Fe Soldiers' Monument originally intended to memorialize Union Soldiers who died during the Civil War. Early drafts of the panels included an inscription honoring "the memory of the gallant dead of the war of the rebellion who fell in this territory" defending and preserving the West.[10] Located in front of the Palace of Governors—the then-capitol of the state—the final version of the obelisk featured panels honoring the sacrifices "heroes of the Federal Army" made fighting "the rebels" at the battles of Valverde, Glorieta Pass, Apache Pass, and Peralta as well as the "savage Indians" at "various battles." As Jenkins pointed out, the Santa Fe Soldiers Monument "reflect[ed] the attitudes and prejudices of the time" it was constructed.[11] Originally intended to honor Civil War dead, the New Mexico State Legislature refused to appropriate the necessary funds to complete the monument unless

[8] La Farge, "Oliver la Farge Recounts Plaza History."
[9] "You Can't Rewrite History."
[10] "Report of the Soldiers Monument Commission, 1867–1868," New Mexico Secretary of State Records, New Mexico State Archives, Santa Fe, New Mexico, microfilm, roll 39.
[11] Myra Ellen Jenkins, "To Move or Not to Move?: Archivist Opposes Plans to Change Santa Fe Plaza," letter to the editor, *Santa Fe New Mexican*, October 1, 1967.

it also included a direct reference to fighting Native Americans in New Mexico Territory.[12]

The decision to recognize the Union Army's dead as part of an effort to secure the West from Confederate and Native control was not unusual. Rather, it reflected the connections Union veterans and their families living west of the Mississippi River drew connections between securing a free-soil West and colonizing Indigenous tribes. Like those who erected the Santa Fe Soldiers' Monument, they crafted an expansionist narrative of the Civil War that bolstered their settler-colonial project. By celebrating western settler colonialism as emblematic of and essential to Union victory, they depicted colonization as a justifiable and even commendable extension of the Union cause. The Santa Fe Soldiers' Monument was not irregular; rather it was representative of a much larger effort by Union veterans and their families to craft a collective memory of the Civil War to bolster settler colonialism in the trans-Mississippi West.

Incentivized by the Homestead Act of 1862, which transferred western lands from public to private domain, thousands of Union veterans and their families moved west to communities like Santa Fe after the Civil War. An amendment to the Act in 1870 allowed Union veterans to apply the years of their military service to the requirement that settlers live on the land for five years before the government deeded it to them at no cost. In the process they became settler colonizers who, while claiming the land for the United States, displaced Native populations and bolstered the idea that loyalty to the Union entitled one to western lands.

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[12] "Chapter XV," *Laws of the Territory of New Mexico: Passed by the Legislative Assembly, Session 1865-66* (Santa Fe: Manderfield & Tucker, 1866), 70–75, accessed November 22, 2021, https://perma.cc/K4AX-BE36.

Veterans and their families also established civil governments and businesses, and became active community members. Like their eastern counterparts, they also began forming local Union veteran and auxiliary associations. Western Union veterans and their families crafted collective memories—or constructed narratives about the past designed to define contemporary values—of the American Civil War to defend their role as settler colonizers. While numerous scholars have examined the experiences of Union and Confederate veterans and their efforts to construct distinctive memories of the war, their analysis has focused largely on the eastern half of the United States, which they have erroneously applied to America at-large. This approach fails to account for the unique experiences of Union veterans who served in the trans-Mississippi theater fighting against Indigenous populations during the Civil War, as well as the thousands of Union veterans and their families who moved west after 1865.

Their remote location far removed from famed battle sites east of the Mississippi River meant western settlers could not preserve and directly commemorate major Civil War battle sites. Many of these men and women also lived in the trans-Mississippi West during the Civil War, and therefore, could not claim a clear and direct connection to the traditional wartime significance that celebrated the reunification of northern and southern states. In response, they crafted a uniquely western-centric meaning for the war that is not represented in current historians' thinking on this topic.

Western veterans and their families focused as much on the region's development and free-soil expansion as they did on their contributions to the war. Union victory, as they remembered and memorialized it, allowed veteran-settlers and the US Army to move westward and colonize Indigenous peoples and their lands. Furthermore,

westerners contended that their avid participation in Civil War commemorative associations symbolized the highest forms of American manhood and womanhood. Therefore, they employed their collective memory of the Civil War in the West to defend western settler colonialism and wield those collective remembrances as tools of colonization.

These complex and distinct motivations are missed when scholars transpose their understanding of eastern veterans onto those in the West or when they neglect to distinguish between the experiences of western Union veterans and western colonizers who did not serve during the Civil War. In doing so, historians have not only failed to understand fundamental movements within the veteran experience, but they have also ignored connections between the Civil War and the postwar West that dramatically influenced the expansionist movement that dominated America in the late-nineteenth century.

Using analytical methods of gender and race, this dissertation will connect several important strands of historiography that have focused on the lives of Civil War veterans, the memory of the American Civil War, and the process of settler colonialism through the lens of the trans-Mississippi West. These approaches reveal that the war meant something distinctly different to veterans and their families in the West than those in the East. In their celebrations of the Civil War, western veterans and their families celebrated white expansion and supremacy and constructed a narrative of the war that bolstered Anglo-American (meaning US-born, English-speaking white) hegemony in the West.

These distinctions reveal a larger significance of the war to the Civil War generation, and underscore how these veterans and their families connected the war to the larger national narrative. Together, Union veterans and their families saw their contributions to the Union and abolition as making an equally large contribution to the nation. These important connections are missing in the current historiography.

One popular method of analyzing Civil War memory has been to explore how veterans in the East reentered civilian life after the war. As early as 1865, many Union veterans joined commemorative associations, such as the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), and in the early 1880s, northern women formed official auxiliaries to veterans' organizations, including the Woman's Relief Corps (WRC).[13] Looking almost exclusively at the eastern chapters of these organizations, historians have analyzed these associations in order to understand the process of reunion and reconciliation between northerners and southerners, especially veterans, after the end of the war.

David W. Blight, for example, argues that white supremacy was central to reunion in *Race and Reunion*. By embracing rhetoric centered on themes of brotherhood and sacrificing the African American war experience, white northerners and southerners were able to work towards reunion and reconciliation in the post-war years.[14] In *Remembering*

[13] In the conclusion of *Embattled Courage: The Experience of Combat During the Civil War* (New York: Free Press, 1987), Gerald F. Linderman argues that once Union veterans returned home many were unable to discuss the grim realities of their combat experiences in ways the civilian public could understand, and participation in the GAR suffered. It was not until the early 1880s that GAR departments thrived. Veterans emerged from their "hibernation" and began describing their service in idealistic terms of courage and valor that civilians understood but veterans no longer believed. Historians, including David Blight and Caroline E. Janney, have challenged Linderman's hibernation thesis in their own work.

[14] David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001). See also Carol Reardon, *Pickett's Charge: In History & Memory* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), which examines the North and South's movement toward reconciliation by analyzing the fateful third day of Gettysburg in memory. Pickett's Charge, and therefore Gettysburg, gained a special place in the process of national reconciliation, which Blue and Gray reunions at Gettysburg came to symbolize.

the Civil War, Caroline E. Janney challenges Blight's work by arguing that reconciliation between the North and South was not as simple and immediate as historians such as Blight previously believed. She concludes that although feelings of reconciliation were encouraged through Blue and Gray reunions, southerners and northerners continued to fervently defend sectional memories of the war. Northerners still insisted the war was fought to restore the Union and end slavery, and although the Union's war aims were successfully achieved, according to Janney, reconciliation "never was, nor has it ever been, the predominant memory of the war."[15]

Blight and Janney have been central to how historians understand veterans and Civil War memory, but their analysis does not ring true when the focus shifts from the East to examine collective Civil War memories in the West. For example, in 1901 Grand Army men in Sioux City, Iowa erected a monument to Sergeant Charles Floyd of the Lewis and Clark expedition. At the dedication ceremony, former member of the Iowa House of Representatives John A. Kasson emphasized the critical role western expansion played in tearing the nation asunder. Although many had declared the Louisiana Purchase "to be an excessive extension of territory which would lead to a disruption of the Union," Kasson instead claimed Union veterans "drew in a mighty inspiration from the sentiment of expanding human liberty" in the West and consequently "fought four long years." Describing western expansion as the "blood" of the white race, he proclaimed that these

[15] Caroline E. Janney, *Remembering the Civil War: Reunion and the Limits of Reconciliation* (Chapel Hill: University of North Caroline Press, 2013), 311. See also John Neff, *Honoring the Civil War Dead: Commemoration and the Problem of Reconciliation* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004). Neff was the first author to challenge Blight by arguing against the notion of consensus in reunion and reconciliation. Gary Gallagher, *The Union War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011) further disputes the notion that reunion was achieved by diminishing the memory of emancipation and urges historians to consider a variety of experiences when studying reconciliation.

men had not died in vain because "under Christian auspices it is the providential law which from age to age opens up new regions to the influences of a higher civilization, and uplifts the inferior races by contact with the superior." In other words, "The better has an inherent moral right to expand over the worse."[16] While Kasson and many Iowa Grand Army men rejected reconciliation as the predominant memory of the war, as Janney argues, they did so on grounds that did not resemble eastern commemorations. Despite this, most scholars have highlighted examples of eastern memorials and given them the power of defining a universal American experience.

In *Remembering the Civil War,* as well as her other works, Janney has also shown that women were vital to shaping public interpretations of the war.[17] While Union and Confederate veterans shared a mutual understanding of their wartime experiences (specifically combat), northern and southern women believed their experiences to be distinct from one another's. Southerners heralded Confederate women's wartime sacrifices, and they frequently noted that they had suffered far more than northern women on the home front. Northern women did not agree with this characterization of their wartime experiences, which further hindered reconciliation between northern and southern women. Northern GAR men further fanned these frustrations when they failed to recognize the sacrifices of northern women on the home front on the same level that southern men had celebrated Confederate women's wartime contributions.[18] As national

[16] John A. Kasson, "The Expansion of the Republic West of the Mississippi," *Annals of Iowa* 5, no. 3 (1901): 189–190; 195.

[17] See also Caroline E. Janney, "Hell Hath No Fury," *The Civil War Monitor,* 3, no. 3 (Fall 2013), 58–67, 76; Caroline E. Janney, *Burying the Dead but Not the Past: Ladies' Memorial Associations and the Lost Cause* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008).

[18] See also Frances M. Clarke, "Forgetting the Women: Debates over Female Patriotism in the Aftermath of American's Civil War," *Journal of Women's History* (2011): 64–86 for an additional explanation of northern men's reluctance to memorialize northern women on the home front. Clarke finds

Relief Corps leaders made relief aid the central component of their memorialization efforts, they further alienated the women's auxiliaries from veterans because northern men did not view women's relief efforts on the home front during the war as central to saving the Union or emancipating enslaved southerners.

As this dissertation argues, an examination of the western women's auxiliary departments reveals that western Grand Army men often supported and celebrated women's relief and commemoration efforts because they served to reinforce white westerners' settler colonial projects. For example, on Memorial Day in 1895, Major A. W. Edwards addressed a gathering of locals at Tower City, North Dakota. While "fists and muscles … reigned in the long night of barbarism," Edwards asserted, "there is no stronger proof of the advancement of our nation than the elevated position women occupy today in the land … for a woman [is] amiable in demeanor, pleasant in appearance … how greater than all else are these qualities for the home and the fireside."[19]

White women's presence in the West, according to western Union veterans and their families, symbolized their civilization. They employed race and gender specific definitions of civilization to signify the success of both the Union war effort and settler colonialism, which they characterized as strongly interconnected. This trend is not seen in eastern scholarship, and the transferring of eastern conclusions onto the West by

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that northern women adhered to a standard of humility that worked against remembering their wartime contributions. Women also discovered the limits of their patriotism in comparison with soldiers' sufferings and were reluctant to discuss their wartime experiences. See also Francesca Morgan, *Women and Patriotism in Jim Crow America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009); Cecilia Elizabeth O'Leary, *To Die For: The Paradox of American Patriotism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

[19] A. W. Edwards, *N. Dakota Eagles: Decoration Day Address at Tower City, by Major Edwards of the Fargo Forum* (Fargo: n.p., 1895), 6.

historians has largely erased the understanding of the significant role that western Union women played at the time and how this was recognized by contemporary men.

Many scholars examining regionalism and frontiers suggest that place creates distinctive experiences. Recently, historians of the American Civil War have begun expanding their analysis of the war and Reconstruction to incorporate the trans-Mississippi West in thought provoking ways.[20] In his chapter, "Redemption Falls Short," William Deverell suggests that many veterans saw the West as the land of redemption and a place to recuperate from their wounds or financial loss during the war. Subsequently they moved west with their families to establish communities and seek out new opportunities.[21]

Utilizing data collected on nearly six thousand Union veterans in Dakota Territory, Kurt Hackemer's article, "Wartime Trauma and the Lure of the Frontier," argues many Union veterans saw settling in Dakota Territory as an opportunity to begin anew socially and economically. Hackemer finds many of these veterans had suffered

[20] See Brian Matthew Jordan, *Marching Home: Union Veterans and Their Unending Civil War* (New York: Liveright, 2015); Mark Wahlgren Summers, *The Ordeal of the Reunion: A New History of Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014); Michael L. Tate, *The Frontier Army in the Settlement of the West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999); Bradley R. Clampitt, *The Civil War and Reconstruction in Indian Territory* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2015). For exceptions see Stacey L. Smith, *Freedom's Frontier: California and the Struggle over Unfree Labor, Emancipation, and Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013); Matthew Christopher Hulbert, *The Ghosts of Guerrilla Memory: How Civil War Bushwhackers Became Gunslingers in the American West* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2016).

[21] William Deverell, "Redemption Falls Short: Soldier and Surgeon in the Post-Civil War Far West," in *Civil War Wests: Testing the Limits of the United States* edited by Adam Arenson and Andrew R. Graybill (Oakland: University of California, 2015), 139–157. See also James Marten, *Sing Not War: The Lives of Union & Confederate Veterans in Gilded Age America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011). Marten attributes the separation of veterans to the public's willingness to apply the problems of a minority of veterans (those with physical and mental disabilities and who were institutionalized in asylums or soldiers' homes) on their perceptions of all veterans. As the nation experienced an economic boom, debates over veterans' welfare, including soldiers' pensions and soldiers' homes, convinced the public that people who could not make something of themselves deserved to fail.

some degree of wartime trauma, and that leaving their established communities in the East offered them "a space where social and cultural norms were not yet set and could therefore be defined on veterans' terms." Veterans were more likely to settle in newly opened counties—with those experiencing the most trauma often clustering with their comrades, which provided these men with new opportunities, an attempt at recuperation, and in conjunction with pensions, a form of social and economic security to help offset the risks of homesteading on the frontier. Ultimately, Hackemer argues most Union veterans in Dakota Territory used homesteading as an "opportunity simply to rebuild their lives, and, in the course of doing so, built a state."[22] Union veterans' tendency to cluster in remote areas, often drawn together by their shared experience of war trauma, is significantly different from the behavior of and societal expectations placed on eastern Union veterans.

Tony Klein's article "Memorializing Soldiers or Celebrating Westward Expansion" argues that GAR posts in western Iowa commemorated the war differently than those posts located along the eastern border of the state. Western Iowa had little or no recognizable impact on the war, so western Grand Army men used Civil War commemorations as an opportunity to celebrate their growth and incorporation into the United States.[23] Examining the memory of the 1864 Sand Creek Massacre, Ari Kelman

[22] Kurt Hackemer, "Wartime Trauma and the Lure of the Frontier: Civil War Veterans in Dakota Territory," *Journal of Military History* 81 (January 2017): 86 and 94. See also Kurt Hackemer, "Union Veteran Migration Patterns to the Frontier: The Case of Dakota Territory," *Journal of the Civil War Era,* 9, no. 1 (March 2019): 84–108.

[23] Tony Klein, "Memorializing Soldiers or Celebrating Westward Expansion: Civil War Commemoration in Sioux City and Keokuk, 1868–1938," *Annals of Iowa* 71 (2012). However, Klein does not include the role of Iowa women in his analysis. Other Iowa organizations, including the Daughters of the American Revolution, also emphasized westward expansion in order to appeal to Iowans. See Francesca Morgan, "Regions Remote from Revolutionary Scenes: Regionalism, Nationalism, and the Iowa Daughters of the American Revolution, 1890–1930," *Annals of Iowa* 56, nos. 1 and 2 (1997): 48–49.

argues "that for Native people gazing east from the banks of Sand Creek, the Civil War, looked like a war of empire, a contest to control expansion into the West, rather than a war of liberation." Kelman argues white Americans also understood and often defended Sand Creek within the context of the Civil War. White commemorations of slavery and the Sand Creek Massacre transfigured "a history of violence into one of virtue, of tragedies into triumphs" in order to bolster nationalist ends.[24]

Echoing Klein and Kelman's arguments, William Deverell's chapter "After Antietam" examines how Union veterans employed symbolism in artifacts to craft a uniquely western interpretation of the Civil War. For example, Deverell uses a set of steer horns from 1891 featuring carvings of the battle of Antietam on the left horn and an American Indian attacking a stagecoach on the right horn to illustrate the links western Union veterans drew between the war and westward expansion. He argues Union veterans were influenced by nature, pioneer and cowboy mythology, and colonization. According to Deverell, they drew connections between defeating the slaveholding Confederacy in the East (thus preventing Confederate expansion westward) and defeating slaveholding Indigenous population in the West, both of which cleared the West for free-soil Anglo-settlement and development.[25]

Matthew E. Stanley, "'Between Two Fires': War and Reunion in Middle America, 1860–1899," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Cincinnati, 2013, argues residents of the Old Northwest Territory also constructed their own regional memory of the war, which embraced reconciliation due to their political and economic ties to the South.

[24] Ari Kelman, *A Misplaced Massacre: Struggling over the Memory of Sand Creek* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013), xi., 16–17, 23–25, 31–37, and 278.

[25] William Deverell, "After Antietam: Memory and Memorabilia in the Far West," in *Empire and Liberty: The Civil War and the West* edited by Virginia Scharff (Oakland: University of California Press, 2015), 175–189.

Matthew Hulbert's *The Ghosts of Guerrilla Memory*, an examination of the memory of guerrilla warfare in the borderlands of Missouri and Kansas, similarly contends "irregular recollections" of the war are lost in large-scale studies of Civil War memory. "Confederate bushwhackers," according to Hulbert, "were transformed into the vanguards of American imperialism in the West." Violence over abolition in Missouri and Kansas was rebranded as a suitable war for empire "to make the West safe for free white settlement, white commerce, and white industry."[26]

Commemorations often reflect a struggle for supremacy, and while these contentions generally play out in national terms, they can also reveal local or regional interests in some form.[27] As veterans and their families moved west, they became integral to the settler colonial project of the United States, displacing Indigenous populations in the West with a population of Anglo-American settlers.[28] In his examination of how white Americans interpreted and commemorated Anglo-westward expansion, Paul

[26] Hulbert, *The Ghosts of Guerrilla Memory*, 8 and 12.

[27] John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 13–17 and 113–137. While his analysis focuses on the Midwest, Bodnar's interpretation of pioneer mythology is relevant here. Ordinary people in the Midwest linked pioneers to patriotism, emphasizing their hardscrabble upbringing and progress. The pioneers' "appeal to ordinary people resided in its vernacular meaning of sturdy ancestors who founded ethnic communities and families, preserved traditions in the face of social change, and overcame hardship" (17). By emphasizing the pioneer, they promoted expressions of regional pride and local consciousness.

[28] See C. Joseph Genetin-Pilawa, *Crooked Paths to Allotment: The Fight Over Federal Indian Policy After the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014); Jeffrey Ostler, *The Plains Sioux and U.S. Colonialism from Lewis and Clark to Wounded Knee* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Ned Blackhawk, *Violence Over the Land: Indians and Empires in the Early American West* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008); David A. Chang, *The Color of the Land: Race, Nation, and the Politics of Landownership in Oklahoma, 1832–1929* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010); Alyosha Goldstein, ed., *Formation of United States Colonialism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014); Walter L. Hixson, *American Settler Colonialism: A History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Kelman, *A Misplaced Massacre*; Patricia Nelson Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1987); Henry Nash Smith, *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950); Richard Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth-Century America* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992).

Michael Scolari argues that easterners emphasized the pioneer as a nation-builder—fulfilling capitalism's destiny—while westerners understood the pioneer to represent a moment of personal, individual transformation during the violent colonization of the frontier.[29] Failing to distinguish between Union veteran and other non-veteran settlers, however, Scolari neglects the distinctive ways Union veterans and their families intertwined the Civil War and emancipation in their collective remembrances to defend western colonization.

Cathleen D. Cahill's *Federal Fathers and Mothers* argues that historians need to connect the American Civil War, emancipation, and Reconstruction to their analysis of US assimilation policies in the 1870s and 1880s.[30] She finds that US policy makers drew upon free-labor ideology and Anglo ideas about labor and gender to design Indian policy in the far West. In doing so, they touted white women as the most suitable for the work of assimilation because only they possessed the moral strength necessary to found great civilizations. Thus, white women became strong gendered and racial symbols of the struggle for supremacy in the trans-Mississippi West.[31]

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[29] Paul Michael Scolari, "Indian Warriors and Pioneer Mothers: American Identity and the Closing of the Frontier in Public Monuments, 1890–1930," (PhD diss., University of Pittsburg, 2005).

[30] Cathleen D. Cahill, *Federal Fathers and Mothers: A Social History of the United States Indian Service, 1869–1933* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011).

[31] Others have also argued that white women's presence on the frontier has been understood and commemorated as domestic and civilizing. See Sandra L. Myres, *Westering Women and the Frontier Experience, 1800–1915* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982); Glenda Riley, *The Female Frontier: A Comparative View of Women on the Prairie and the Plains* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1988); Lucy Eldersveld Murphy and Wendy Hamand Venet, eds., *Midwestern Women: Work, Community, and Leadership at the Crossroads* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997); John R. Gillis, ed. *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 3; Albert L. Hurtado, *Intimate Frontiers: Sex, Gender, and Culture in Old California* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999); Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008); Matthew Basso, Laura McCall, and Dee Garceau, eds., *Across the Great Divide: Cultures and Manhood in the American West* (New York: Routledge, 2001).

The Expansionist Cause examines how western Union veterans and their families used their commemorations the Civil War to shape contemporary politics. They wielded these collective remembrances to defend their role in settler colonialism, which is the replacement of an indigenous population by a group of invasive outsiders who permanently inhabit the region. The homes, communities, and governments settlers build, therefore, become part of an ongoing process to claim and occupy indigenous lands.[32] While there is no perfect definition of a western veteran settler, it included Union veterans who fought against Native Americans in the trans-Mississippi West between 1861–1865 and Union veterans who fought against Confederates in the East and moved to the West after 1865.

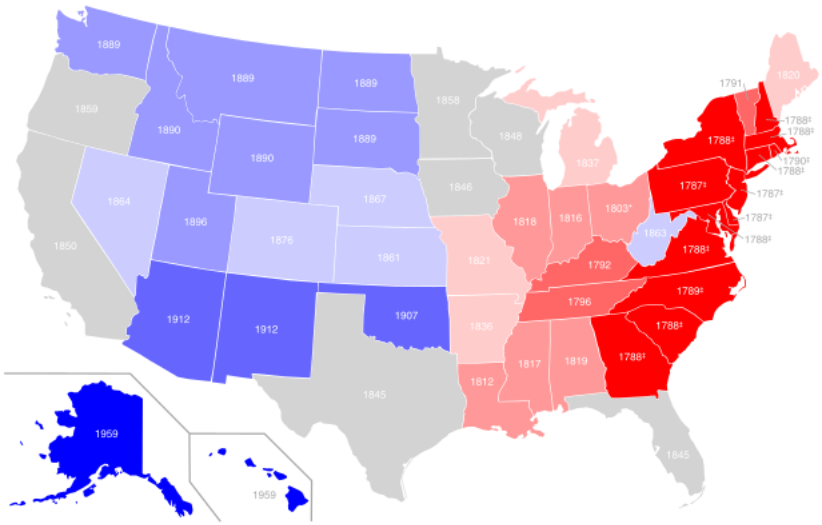

Figure 2. Map of United States statehood by year[33]

[32] See Patrick Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology: The Politics and Poetics of an Ethnographic Events* (New York: Cassell, 1999).

[33] "US States by Date of Statehood RWB Dates," *Wikimedia Commons*, August 5, 2007, accessed September 24, 2022, https://perma.cc/ZF7Y-9P5H.

During the Civil War, much of the West was organized into territories, which had not yet become states. Of those that had achieved statehood, some like Minnesota and Kansas were relatively young—all established within fifteen years before the outbreak of the Civil War, while others like Louisiana and Missouri had been states for much longer. As a result, Union veterans and their families were integral to colonizing great stretches of the region and establishing many of the local Anglo-communities and state governments in the trans-Mississippi West. It is this process of Native American land dispossession through home and state building that westerners celebrated in their commemorations of the American Civil War. Their efforts to construct homes and communities displaced Native populations and their Civil War commemorations worked to justify and obscure the violence of this process while elevating their status to argue Union veterans were the most deserving of western lands and entitlements.

Historians analyzing Civil War veterans and memory construction have relied almost exclusively on the records of Civil War commemorative associations located east of the Mississippi River. Those with a western focus have yet to conduct a region-wide study and have overlooked the rich materials Union women produced. The Mississippi River provides the boundary for this study, which relies on primary source materials produced in twenty-three states west of the river, including Alaska. Union veterans' associations in Louisiana were not large enough to warrant an independent official state body, so they partnered with the state of Mississippi to create a joint department. Therefore, although it is east of the Mississippi River, this study reviewed records from the state of Mississippi as well.

Not all western Union veteran settlers actively engaged in constructing collective remembrances after the war, therefore *The Expansionist Cause* focuses on those Union veterans and their families who invested in shaping the Civil War's legacy in the West. Therefore, this dissertation utilizes the published and unpublished materials created by western Union veterans and their families as members of Union post-war associations in twenty-five states, but it is not an organizational history of these institutions.

Many men and women joined the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), the Woman's Relief Corps (WRC), the Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic (LGAR), the Sons of Union Veterans (SUV), and the Daughters of Union Veterans (DUV). As members of these organizations, they recorded their membership, minutes of their local meetings, and finances, as well as the proceedings of their regional, statewide, and national encampments and conventions. These materials—in conjunction with each associations' guiding principles, manuals, constitutions, and histories—outline the vision members held for their local clubs and state departments. They also detail the basic functions the associations and their members performed. In addition, many of the more popular associations, such as the Department of Colorado and Wyoming GAR, published newsletters, magazines, and other periodicals in which veterans and their families authored everything from fiction and poetry to personal histories and firsthand accounts of the late war.

Like their eastern counterparts, western Union veteran and auxiliary associations celebrated Memorial Day (sometimes also called Decoration Day) to honor the sacrifices of deceased Union soldiers and veterans. They also erected monuments to symbolize a greater meaning of the war. Union Memorial Day addresses and monument dedication

speeches, as well as monument souvenir booklets, are foundational to this dissertation. The rhetoric veterans and their families employed during these events reveal their unique western interpretation of the causes and consequences of the war. Furthermore, newspaper accounts of these ceremonies supplement this research by detailing veterans' and community members' responses to Memorial Day services and monument dedications. While western veterans likewise decorated soldiers' and veterans' graves with flowers and erected monuments of citizen-soldiers and officers, their language reveals the larger meaning these men and women applied to the war. They recounted major battles in the East—such as Antietam, Gettysburg, and Vicksburg—and lauded Union leadership, but in their addresses, they also celebrated the connections between the war and settler-colonialism in the West by glorifying violence against Native populations, celebrating the establishment of settler institutions, and touting the importance of white gender norms to "civilizing" the West.

The personal papers of western settlers and Union veterans and their families—including those who did not become members of Union associations—reveal how widespread this western interpretation of the war's larger meaning was. Not all veterans chose to join associations, and while some rejected the Grand Army and its auxiliary associations' narrative, many embraced the same western-centric message of the significance of the war. As with the case of the Sergeant Floyd monument erected in Sioux City, Iowa, veterans frequently partnered with private citizens, pioneer societies, local governments, militias, and other organizations to raise funds and garner support for erecting monuments and memorials.

This dissertation begins with an examination of the efforts of Union veterans and their families to commemorate the exploration, acquisition, and early settlement of western territories during the antebellum era. With memorials such as the Sergeant Floyd monument in Sioux City, Iowa, they commemorated westward expansion as central to national disunity and the Civil War narrative. Iowans, for example, celebrated the role Floyd played in exploring the Louisiana Purchase and its future place in debates over whether western territory would be free or slave. Chapter Two argues veterans and their families commemorated the part western territorial acquisition and exploration played in creating national sectionalism, eventually resulting in the Civil War. Western Unionists stressed the role of territories in creating national disunity because it gave them a direct link to the causes of the war and justified colonization by connecting it to the United States' republican experiment. Commemorations that focused on antebellum territorial acquisition reveals western veterans and their families understood the Civil War as part of a much longer struggle for white American supremacy and exceptionalism.

Over 200,000 Union soldiers fought in the trans-Mississippi Theater during the Civil War and thousands more went west after the Confederacy's surrender in 1865. Western Union veterans and their families characterized the Civil War in the West as a conflict against uncivilized slaveholding populations—Anglo and Indigenous. For example, at the unveiling of a statue honoring western explorer and Union veteran Kit Carson near Trinidad, Colorado, on Memorial Day in 1912, state senator Samuel W. DeBusk reviewed the early history of Las Animas County. He recounted efforts by Civil War veterans and "heroic" pioneers who "wrought cheerfully, and often bravely" becoming the "victorious competitors" over "the wilder North American Indians,—

uncivilized, roving, the Ishmaelite's of the plains."[34] At other times, Union veterans appropriated the military service of Indian War regulars at military sites like Wounded Knee. In these instances, they similarly compared Indigenous nations to Confederates and argued US violence against Native Americans in the Indian Wars was justifiable within the larger context of the Civil War. Chapter Three argues western Union veterans' collective memories rationalized and celebrated colonization—particularly the racial violence of this process—arguing the dual military defeat of Confederates and Native Americans eliminated slavery and secured a nationwide free-labor empire ready for white settlement.

As Chapter Three demonstrates, western Unionists asserted their military service in the American Civil War preserved the West as a free-labor empire now open for white settlement. Often looking for fresh starts many Union veterans moved west, sometimes with their families, to establish new homes and communities as colonial settlers. Chapter Four argues western veterans and their families' commemorations celebrated their role moving west as settlers to bolster the idea that loyalty to the Union entitled Anglo-Americans to western lands. Henry Roberts Pease offered an example of this when he gave the annual Memorial Day address in Volga, South Dakota in 1887. Pease portrayed Union veterans who, "inspired with faith in this new life of the Nation, and the supremacy of its power over the Republic's undivided and imperial domain" left their homes "with the magic rod of development" on a "western march of empire."[35] Western

[34] S. W. DeBusk, *Address of S. W. DeBusk at Unveiling of Kit Carson Statue* (Denver: Civil Works Administration, 1934), 1–2 (hereafter cited as *Unveiling of Kit Carson Statue Address*).

[35] H. R. Pease, "Memorial Day Address," May 30, 1887, Henry Robert Pease Papers, South Dakota State Historical Society, Pierre, South Dakota, 4–5.

Union veterans argued that when they moved west, settled the region, and built republican institutions, they were capitalizing on what their military service had won. They employed this collective memory to glorify and justify settler colonialism.

Western settlers connected Anglo gender ideology to white westward expansion to construct a western significance for the Civil War. Pease, for example, praised settlers who after securing lands from Indigenous populations "established all the safeguards of social order…[and] consecrated the freedom of our manhood, and the purity of our womanhood, to the most sacred relations of life."[36] Chapter Five argues western Unionists used gendered and racialized language to craft a uniquely western significance for the Civil War. Their collective remembrances asserted that the establishment of permanent, single-family homes were integral to the success of western development, and Union veterans and their wives dwelling within these homes represented the highest forms of manhood and womanhood. Arguing white women embodied refinement and civilization, western Unionists like Pease maintained that the establishment of separate-spheres gender roles in the West exhibited "civilization" for Native Americans to emulate and provided a tool for measuring the progress of the US civilizing programs.[37]

Surpassing their symbolic role, western white women worked alongside Union veterans to aid western colonization efforts. Grand Army posts and Relief Corps wielded commemorative and memorial practices as a tool of assimilation by exploiting Indigenous children in Civil War commemoration and memorial ceremonies. Native American members of Civil War commemorative associations, however, used their

[36] Pease, "Memorial Day Address," 4–5.
[37] Pease, "Memorial Day Address," 4–5.

membership to resist colonization. Commemorating the emergence of permanent, single-family households throughout the West as a legacy of Union Civil War service worked to erase the violence of colonization.[38]

South Dakota governor Frank M. Byrne celebrated the "soldiers of the Civil War" who dedicated their lives "to the building up of this country," including states like South Dakota. For their role as veteran settlers, he believed the nation "owes … them a duty."[39] Chapter Six argues western Union veterans leveraged the uniquely western collective memory of the Civil War they constructed to defend their role in colonizing Native Americans and to secure entitlements, such as homesteads, careers, pensions, and soldiers' homes for western veterans. Union veterans' wives likewise employed the crucial relief work and symbolic role they performed in western Civil War commemorations to forge a stronger relationship with Grand Army departments and obtain greater political rights for women than their eastern counterparts. The entitlements and institutions Union veterans and their families created, discussed in Chapter Six, further reinscribed their claim to Indigenous lands.

Eastern commemorative narratives have dominated discussions of the causes and consequences of the war because westerners were far removed from major Civil War battlefields and historic sites.[40] Consequently, most historians' arguments about the memory of the war have largely been applied to account for all veterans' experiences,

[38] Arizona GAR, *Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Encampment of the Department of Arizona Grand Army of the Republic* (Phoenix: Herald Electric, 1897), 10.

[39] South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the Twenty-Third Annual Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic* (Rapid City, SD: Rapid City Daily Journal, 1916), 31.

[40] See Klein, "Memorializing Soldiers of Celebrating Westward Expansion," 291–322.

even though the evidence is grounded predominantly in source materials from east of the Mississippi River.

In a joint effort, however, many Union veterans, their families, and other community members crafted a uniquely western significance of the Civil War at sites across the West. Distinct from eastern collective memories, their commemorations often celebrated the region's development and free-soil expansion by white settlers as the ultimate significance of the American Civil War for western settlers, and in doing so reinforced and encouraged a western expansionist movement that privileged Union veterans and their families.

Idaho Union veteran Alfred Anderson proudly proclaimed, "We are … in a country far remote from the scenes of the mighty conflict in which we were engaged from '61 to '65." With great "nerve and manhood" western Union veterans, "braved the perils of the wild and unsettled country," to upbuild the West, and should therefore be "doubly honored." Unlike their eastern counterparts and civilian settlers, Union veterans fought to ensure that "all men should be free" from not only the "overseer's whip" but also the "scalping knife." Characterizing these artefacts as "the twin relics of barbarism and savagery," Anderson's commemoration celebrated the dual role western Union veterans had played in defeating the Confederacy and Indigenous people to secure a free-soil American empire.[41] The *Expansionist Cause* uncovers this process by examining the intersection of place, gender, and race in westerners' war commemorations to reveal how

[41] Idaho GAR, *Proceedings of the Twentieth Annual Encampment of the Department of Idaho, G. A. R.* (Boise: Syms-York, 1907), 11.

western Unionists remembered and celebrated the Civil War and wielded war commemorations as weapons of colonization.

CHAPTER II – "PRELIMINARY BATTLE-FIELDS": REMEMBERING SLAVERY, EXPANSION, & THE CIVIL WAR'S CAUSES

On Memorial Day 1894, citizens gathered at Mount Olivet cemetery in Salt Lake City, Utah to dedicate a monument to deceased Union soldiers and perform their annual Decoration Day rituals. Funded by the James B. McKean Woman's Relief Corps (WRC) in honor of the local Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) post, the slate-gray granite monument stood sixteen-feet tall and was engraved to the memory of the Union dead who "secured the unity of the republic and the freedom of an oppressed race."[42]

Delivering the main dedication address, local reverend and Union veteran Thomas C. Iliff declared, "Higher still rises the idea for which this monument stands." He observed that slavery and its extension westward from colonial times caused the American Civil War because slave labor was incompatible with the expansion of free-soil republicanism. Iliff proclaimed the American republic grew out of "two antagonistic types of civilization [which] vied with each other for supremacy." Stemming from Jamestown, he argued slavery "spread along the Southern shore of the Atlantic over the sunlit fields of the south." The South's peculiar institution, he claimed, hindered republicanism and corrupted southerners' morals. "Under its influence the whole south went wrong," he critiqued, and "the pioneer spirit for the development of new territory" was "crushed to death."[43] In his rendition, slavery and western expansion and development were irreconcilable.

[42] "The Monument Unveiled," *Salt Lake Herald*, May 31, 1894.
[43] "The Monument Unveiled," *Salt Lake Herald*, May 31, 1894.

In regions without slavery, Iliff argued Americans advanced free-soil development and initiated free institutions across the nation, which exhibited an American "pioneer spirit." Juxtaposing Jamestown and Plymouth, he continued, "the other type of civilization leaped from the Mayflower to Plymouth Rock, [and] unfurled its banner of freedom." An American drive to expand civilization westward, he maintained, stemmed from Plymouth and not Jamestown because it was not crippled by slavery. "Under the… strong engine of free labor," Iliff announced that freedom's domination "rolled onward through New England and the middle states, swept … across the broad prairies of Illinois and Iowa, hurrying and laughing over desert and plain … and reveling at last in exultant joy … on the golden fields of the Pacific slope." Standing for "free thought, free speech, free press, free labor, free school and free ballot," he asserted, "this triumphant host carried … the people's inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" from Plymouth to the shores of the Pacific Ocean.[44]

Fellow Union veteran Willard White's Decoration Day address at Boise City, Idaho, plainly subtitled "Slavery Caused Civil War," echoed Iliff's assertions. White noted the South's desire to extend slavery threatened "our broad and rich domains already extended from ocean to ocean from the lakes to the gulf." Slavery, he insisted, was incompatible with the "toilers and home-seekers from every portion of the civilized globe" who sought free-soil development.[45] For many western Union veterans like Iliff and White, their collective remembrances situated the American Civil War within part of

[44] "The Monument Unveiled," *Salt Lake Herald*, May 31, 1894.
[45] "Memorial Address," *Idaho Statesman* (Boise), May 31, 1901.

a longer process of American expansion and exceptionalism, to which free-soil republicanism was critical.

While some historians assert that northerners rejected remembering emancipation in favor of reconciliation with ex-Confederates, other scholars recognize that reconciliation was never the dominant memory of the war and many Union veterans insisted the nation remember their role in freeing four million enslaved people.[46] Still, this scholarship on Civil War memory focuses predominantly on eastern commemorations of the war, and western interpretations are less understood. Matthew Christopher Hulbert, however, argues that guerrilla warfare on the Kansas-Missouri border was rebranded as part of a narrative of western expansion in collective memory. "The larger American project," according to Hulbert, "had always been to make the West safe for free white settlement, white commerce, and white industry while maintaining a scrupulous distance from the violence."[47]

Placing the Civil War within the context of western expansion was indicative of a larger western narrative of its causes and consequences. Western Unionists beyond Missouri and Kansas, like Iliff and White, elevated the importance of emancipation in their commemorations because they believed the end of slavery ensured the continuation of a long-term tradition of expanding free-soil republicanism. Western Unionists defended their settler colonial project, worked to erase its violence, and resisted

[46] Blight, *Race and Reunion*, argues northerners abandoned remembering emancipation in favor of reconciliation with white southerners, while Janney, *Remembering the Civil War*, encourages historians to distinguish between reunion and reconciliation.

[47] Hulbert, *The Ghosts of Guerrilla Memory*, 12. See also Deverell, "After Antietam," 175–89. Deverell's study of a set of carved steer horns and Hulbert's analysis of guerrilla commemorations show westerners used the elimination of slavery to justify violence against Indigenous Americans and white settlers in the West.

reconciliation in place-specific ways by blaming southern slaveholders for stifling American western expansion during the antebellum era, an error—they argued—Union soldiers corrected with their military service.

Western Unionists condemned the Confederacy and Native peoples as twin threats to the American "pioneer spirit." Historian Megan Kate Nelson's examination of the Civil War in the Southwest demonstrates that western Union soldiers "simultaneously embraced slave emancipation and Native extermination in order to secure an American empire of liberty."[48] Western Union veterans and their families continued to fight for and justify Native extermination and removal in their postwar commemorations. Monuments and Memorial Day addresses emphasized that slavery—practiced by both Confederates and Indigenous tribes—had threatened their own dreams of an American empire.[49] Their remembrances, therefore, described both slave-labor and Indigenous cultures as barbaric, and by linking colonization to the Civil War, they wielded commemorations to justify white westerners' settler colonial project. In the process Unionists created a uniquely western emancipationist legacy of the war that masked, and in some cases erased, the violence of irregular warfare on the border and violence against Indigenous Americans in the West.

Western Unionists, therefore, situated the Civil War as the pinnacle event in a long chronicle of republican development and westward expansion. Western Union veterans and their families created a protracted narrative of the Civil War that began with the creation of white settlements at Plymouth, Massachusetts and Jamestown, Virginia,

[48] Megan Kate Nelson, *Three-Cornered War: The Union, the Confederacy, and Native Peoples in the Fight for the West* (New York: Scribner, 2020), 252.

[49] "The Monument Unveiled," *Salt Lake Herald*, May 31, 1894.

extended westward with the Louisiana Purchase, and erupted in the Kansas-Missouri borderlands. By emphasizing the cancerous relationship between slavery and territorial growth, they argued that the incompatibility of slavery with long-term territorial acquisition, exploration, and settlement was central to national disunity and eventually war.

In their collective remembrances, they asserted southerners seceded from the Union and threatened the American republican experiment to protect the extension of slavery into western territories. Western Unionists, in part, stressed the role of US territories in creating national disunity because it gave westerners a direct link to the causes of the war. Their Civil War remembrances, therefore, elevated the importance of pre-war events such as such as the Louisiana Purchase, the Lewis and Clark Expedition, the Missouri Compromise, and Bleeding Kansas by arguing slavery was incongruous with western expansion. In doing so, they celebrated the death knell of slavery as not only the first step toward preserving the Union, but also in creating an American empire.

During their Memorial Day and monument dedication addresses, western orators like Iliff and White situated the Civil War as the central event in a long-term narrative about republican development beginning with the first white American settlements along the eastern seaboard.[50] They argued that southerners' desire to spread slavery into western territories since colonial times was the chief cause of disunity. As a result, western Unionists were more likely than their eastern counterparts to emphasize the leading role of slavery, in conjunction with territorial expansion, in provoking the Civil War. By focusing on the spread of slavery and its eventual destruction, western Unionists

[50] See also Hulbert, *The Ghosts of Guerrilla Memory*, 12.

created an expansionist legacy of the war that, while celebrating emancipation, masked the violence of the settler colonialism.

Union veteran Henry A. Castle's 1901 Memorial Day address at St. Paul, Minnesota reflects these themes. He asserted that while the Pilgrims were not imperialists, they were expansionists. "The most earnest colonizers who ever walked down the boulevards of immortality," they ensured "the good work of enlargement, trespass and expansion went assiduously on." Castle argued their expansionist legacy "gave us about all that we possess to-day of prosperity and enlightenment, of country and liberty." Successive wars brought "unpremeditated expansion," and "by the Mexican war the national area was extended on to the Gulf and to the Pacific—a natural and necessary step in the realization of our manifest destiny."[51]

While this "zone of freedom was stretched across the continent," he lamented that it was tainted by slavery. It was not until the Civil War that the "inevitable controversy between antagonistic forces was forever settled and silenced" with the suppression of the Confederacy and the abolition of slavery. Union veterans, standing "for the highest civilization and a universal recognition of human rights," corrected this wrong and fought for emancipation. "Illuminated by the new light of freedom kindled at Appomattox … people had been stirred with new impulses of liberty as the direct result of our triumph."[52] Western Union veterans and their families argued the Civil War eliminated slavery, the first barrier to continent-wide white civilization. No longer needing to compete with slave

[51] Henry A. Castle, *Heroes All: The Vanished and the Vanishing*, (St. Paul: Minnesota G.A.R., 1901), 20.

[52] Castle, *Heroes All*, 16–17.

labor, Castle celebrated emancipation as Union soldiers' defeat of a key barrier to creating a free-labor empire.

The Louisiana Purchase and the Lewis and Clark Expedition

Shifting their attention away from Plymouth and Jamestown, western Iowans made similar connections between the Louisiana Purchase and the Lewis and Clark Expedition to the American Civil War and westward expansion. Historian Tony Klein's article "Memorializing Soldiers of Celebrating Westward Expansion" compared the erection and dedication of two Civil War memorials constructed on the eastern and western shores of the Iowa-Nebraska border in Sioux City. While Klein skillfully argues a monument to Sergeant Charles Floyd was an opportunity for western Iowans to celebrate their "growth and incorporation into the nation," he characterizes the community's Civil War experience as "an extension of the Indian Wars."[53] By delineating Sioux City's wartime experiences as distinct from the Civil War, Klein fails to recognize the complex ways western Union veterans understood and commemorated their military service against Native Americans and Confederates as a united effort to secure an American empire. Union veterans' commemoration of Floyd situated the Lewis and Clark Expedition and the American Civil War as integral points along a protracted pursuit of American expansion and exceptionalism.

Sergeant Charles Floyd's tenure in the United States Army was brief. At the age of nineteen, he volunteered with the Corps of Discovery, the group that undertook the famed Lewis and Clark expedition to map and explore the region encompassed in the 1803 Louisiana Purchase. On August 20, 1804, only three months into the journey,

[53] Klein, "Memorializing Soldiers of Celebrating Westward Expansion," 291 and 303.

Floyd's appendix fatally ruptured, and his company buried him on a bluff overlooking the Missouri River near present-day Sioux City, Iowa. Today, his gravesite remains on Floyd's Bluff, which was later named for him, and an imposing obelisk marks his final resting place.

Locals formed the Floyd Memorial Association in 1895 to construct a monument at Floyd's gravesite, and in April 1900, the Iowa State Legislature and US Congress appropriated $10,000 for that purpose.[54] While the Memorial Association led funding and construction efforts, Union veterans of the state and local Grand Army of the Republic members dominated the dedication proceedings. The Iowa GAR conducted ceremonies at Floyd's reburial, laid the foundation, cornerstone, and capstone of the monument, and was central to the unveiling and dedication of the obelisk.[55] Grand Army men did not feel their role memorializing a man who died over fifty years before the Civil War began was unusual.[56] Rather, the creators of the Floyd Monument connected his legacy as a member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition to the American Civil War and the long-term mission of Anglo-American western expansion. By honoring Floyd, they believed they were also commemorating themselves.

The erection of the Floyd Monument reveals that Siouxlanders understood the Civil War as part of a much longer pursuit of American exceptionalism. On August 20, 1895, Sioux City's General Hancock Grand Army Post and the Floyd Memorial

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[54] "Floyd Monument," *Sioux City (IA) Journal*, April 13, 1900. The final cost was closer to $20,000, and the city of Sioux City, County of Woodbury, and private donations made up the remaining balance. See *In Memoriam Sergeant Charles Floyd: Second Report of the Floyd Memorial Association* (Sioux City, IA: Perkins Bro., 1901), 61 (hereafter cited as *Second Report of the Floyd Memorial Association*).

[55] Iowa GAR, *Journal of the Twenty-Seventh Annual Encampment Department of Iowa Grand Army of the Republic* (Des Moines: Talbott-Kock, 1901), 19–20.

[56] Iowa GAR, *Journal of the Twenty-Seventh Annual Encampment*, 19–20.

Association met to rebury Floyd's remains "with the military honors [he was] due." Floyd and Union veterans, they asserted, shared a legacy as citizen soldiers. Grand Army men linked their own military service to the Lewis and Clark Expedition. GAR Commander Eugene Rice reminded the audience, "in the conflict of the 60s, when we, too, were soldiers of the republic, [we] gave our service for the maintenance of the Union." Floyd, he went on to say, also "gave his life to his country in this then newly discovered wilderness, almost a century ago." While he "is a stranger to us, belonging to another age," Floyd and other members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, and Union veterans were "the pioneers of civilization, of freedom and of faith, for all of which God had destined this vast continent."[57] Grand Army Reverend H. D. Jenkins continued, "We redeposit today the ashes of that humble soldier who carried the flag of Washington into new and unexplored regions, and whose sacrifice and toil helped to make possible the victories of Grant."[58]

Over the next several years, Sioux City Union veterans reaffirmed their connection to the Floyd Monument. They gathered twice more in 1900 to lay its foundation and cornerstone. "It is entirely fitting," they remarked, "that the ceremonies … should be in the hands of the volunteer soldiers of the United States" because Floyd "was the first citizen soldier … to die in the service of his country in the great territory west of the Mississippi River."[59] By focusing on Floyd's roles as the "first citizen soldier" to die in service in the trans-Mississippi West, the Iowa GAR engaged in what

[57] *In Memoriam Sergeant Charles Floyd: Report of the Floyd Memorial Association* (Sioux City, IA, 1897), 35 and 40–41 (hereafter cited as *First Report of the Floyd Memorial Association*).

[58] *First Report of the Floyd Memorial Association,* 41.

[59] *Second Report of the Floyd Memorial Association*, 4. See also "At the Tomb of Floyd," *Annals of Iowa* 4, no. 7 (1900), 562; "Shaft is Dedicated," *Sioux City (IA) Journal*, May 31, 1901.

historian Jean O'Brien has labelled "firsting."[60] Supplanting the history of Indigenous people, they positioned Floyd's death as noteworthy to stake their claim over the region.

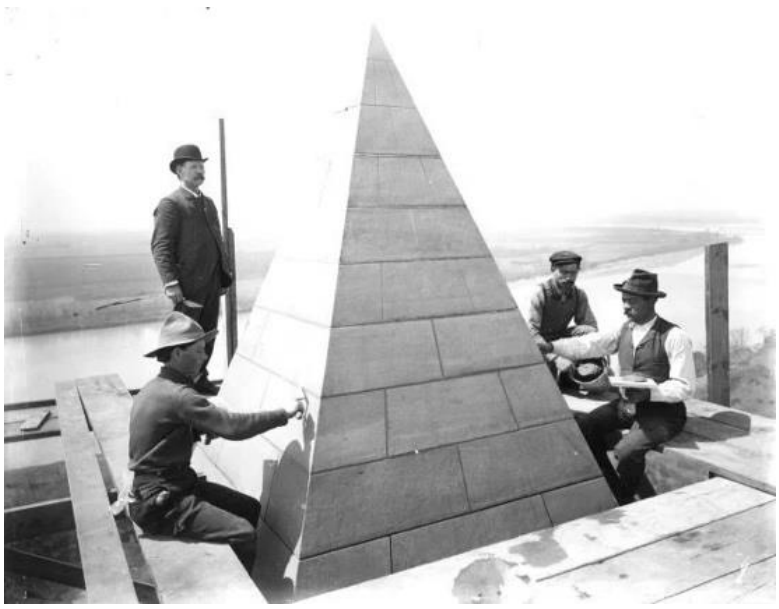

Figure 3. Photograph of Sergeant Floyd Monument's capstone installation in Sioux City, Iowa[61]

Completed in 1901 and resembling the Washington Monument, the Hansen Brothers of Sioux City constructed a solid masonry obelisk over 100 feet tall out of Minnesotan Kettle River sandstone. The monument features two bronze tablets. The east facing tablet inscription celebrates the Louisiana Purchase and "its successful exploration by the heroic members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, the valor of the American soldier, and the enterprise, courage, and fortitude of the American pioneer, to whom these great states west of the Mississippi River owe their secure foundation."[62] The caption

[60] Jean M. O'Brien, *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians Out of Existence in New England* (St. Paul: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 1–54.

[61] *Untitled*, ca. 1901, Sioux City Public Museum, Sioux City, Iowa, accessed June 21, 2022, https://perma.cc/G4TD-6NLS.

[62] *Second Report of the Floyd Memorial Association*, 62 and 67.

drew important connections between westward expansion, settler colonialism, and citizen soldiers, but one newspaper author remarked, "its aim goes way beyond that."[63] Speeches delivered at the dedication services reveal the larger meaning of the monument to western Unionists.

Iowans met again on May 30, 1901 for the long-anticipated monument unveiling. Selecting Memorial Day—and not the anniversary of Floyd's death—for the dedication date highlighted that Floyd and Union veterans shared an important connection as citizen soldiers. Delivering the principle oration entitled "The Expansion of the Republic" and reinforcing these themes, former Iowa delegate to the US House of Representatives John Kasson remarked, "This lofty monument is not erected solely to commemorate [Floyd]." Rather, "The story of our great Civil War will be brought to mind as men gaze upon this monument of other days."[64] Similarly, the *Nebraska City Conservative* observed the monument had less to do with Floyd and more to do with "an idea, pure and simple, that is marked here."[65]

The Floyd Monument served to remind Americans that the Louisiana Purchase, the American Civil War, and colonization were fundamentally efforts to secure the Union's continued prosperity—which rested on the higher principles of republicanism and free labor. As they inscribed them, these historical events were critical to eliminating slavery and expanding white civilization. Kasson deplored, "With all our prosperity we had fostered a relic of barbarism … until it had become a part of … our social and civil system," but many Christians recognized "slavery as a great social and moral evil …

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[63] "The Floyd Monument," *Nebraska City Conservative*, June 13, 1901.
[64] *Second Report of the Floyd Memorial Association*, 79 and 88.
[65] "The Floyd Monument," *Nebraska City Conservative*, June 13, 1901.

[was a] stain [on] our civilization."[66] American statesmen sought compromise, but animosity intensified until "we were standing on a volcano whose muttering thunder gave warning of an eruption." According to Kasson, northern men "clothed themselves in the panoply of the Union, drew in a mighty inspiration from the sentiment of expanding human liberty, and fought four long years to regain the untrammeled freedom of the great river from all its sources to the sea." Union victory in the Civil War, Kasson asserted, opened the United States to "a career of prosperity and progress unparalleled in [history]."[67]

Their commitment to vanquishing barbarism went beyond southern slavery, however, and extended to white settlement of the trans-Mississippi West. Imitating the Civil War generation, Kasson argued western settlers reasserted "the inherent impulse of the race," which he characterized as the expansion of democracy and white American social and cultural institutions. "Organized liberty," first achieved by securing the Union and eliminating slavery, now "demand[ed] a broadening sphere of action" in the West. Made possible by the Louisiana Purchase and subsequent Civil War, Kasson reasoned colonization exposed western Indigenous peoples to "the influences of higher civilization" and "uplift[ed] the inferior races by contact with the superior." He asserted that emancipation and westward expansion proved that "the right to enforce civilized usages among mankind is higher and holier than the right to maintain barbaric practices

[66] *Second Report of the Floyd Memorial Association*, 88–9. See also Arkansas GAR, *Journal of the Twenty-First Encampment Grand Army of the Republic Department of Arkansas*, (n.p.: n.p., 1903), 43. Members of the Arkansas Grand Army similarly argued that slavery threatened prosperity in the territories gained by the Louisiana Purchase.

[67] *Second Report of the Floyd Memorial Association*, 88–9.

and inhuman laws." Put another way, "The better has an inherent moral right to expand over the worse." He continued,

> Peace and order, liberty and prosperity, education and morality, have hitherto followed the advancing flag of the American republic. Wild beasts have given place to peaceful herds and flocks. The wandering wigwam has been replaced by the settled home. The ground of the war dance is occupied by the school house, and the pole hung with scalp locks by the steeple of the church. The vast desert spaces are now laughing with harvests, and the various tribes of the white men are dwelling there in unity.

The Civil War ended slavery and secured the Republic. Eliminating the "barbarism" of slavery in the East, Kasson concluded, opened the United States to vanquishing Native "barbarism" in the West. Signs of white civilization, including the American flag, agriculture, homes, schoolhouses, and churches, marked the success of the Louisiana Purchase, the American Civil War, and settler colonialism. Therefore, he asserted the Floyd Monument stood "as a beacon light, a landmark upon the highway of human progress, of development and civilization."[68]

It is significant to note that while Sioux City locals were constructing the Floyd Monument, they also envisioned nearby memorials to two Native American men: Chief Washinga Sahba and Waŋbdí Okíčhize. The *Nebraska City Conservative* reported the Floyd Monument Commission, which included several Union veteran members, "dream[s] of a companion shaft" built on the western, Nebraska side of the Missouri River to seventeenth-century Omaha leader, Chief Washinga Sahba (also known as Chief

[68] *Second Report of the Floyd Memorial Association*, 79–80 and 88–90.

Blackbird). Denying the United States' exterminationist and removal policies, they contended the memorial would "typify the passing away of the old order of things, the end of savage occupancy, the abandonment of half a continent by the native race." White westerners juxtaposed the Floyd and Washinga Sahba gravesites as "two similar memorials, yet of opposite symbolism." Within sight of one another, a monument to Washinga Sahba would stand "for the outgoing of the Indian," and the Floyd Monument would represent "the incoming of the white man."[69]

Constructing antagonistic monuments to these men was intended to serve as a demarcation for civilization: "How emblematic were these graves! Barbarism was decaying in the grave of Blackbird; in the last resting place of Floyd lay the germ of civilization."[70] Built on the "vanishing Indian stereotype," their desire to commemorate Washinga Sahba reflects what scholar Jean O'Brien has labelled "lasting." By describing Washinga Sahba's death as "the passing away of the old order of things," they consigned members of the Omaha tribe to be an ahistorical people frozen in time. "Lasting" narratives "performed the cultural and political work of purifying the landscape of Indians, using a degeneracy narrative that foreclosed Indian futures."[71]

While a memorial to Washinga Sahba was never realized, Sioux City residents likewise wanted to erect a marker at the nearby gravesite of Waŋbdí Okíčhize, a nineteenth-century Yankton Sioux riverboat guide, known locally as "War Eagle." The *Sioux City Journal* reported a memorial to Waŋbdí Okíčhize, "the last eminent red man to

[69] "The Floyd Monument, *Nebraska City Conservative*, June 13, 1901." See also "The Grave of Blackbird," *Louisville (NE) Courier*, April 27, 1901.

[70] "Sergeant Charles Floyd," *Sioux City (IA) Journal*, May 30, 1901.

[71] O'Brien, *Firsting and Lasting*, 105–144.

be buried here," would symbolize the success of white Americans' settler colonial project if constructed opposite the Floyd Memorial. They reported, "on the Missouri river bluffs, which face each other on the same side of the stream, one looking to the west and the other looking to the east, lie these two representatives of the races which for a time contended for the mastery of this immense section, in which the white man long ago triumphed."[72] Similar to their desire to commemorate Washinga Sahba, efforts to mark Okicize's gravesite not only ignored Yankton Sioux methods of memorialization but they also employed them to assert white settlers' modernity as Kansas Union veteran George Peck succinctly summarized, "memory is the motor of civilization."[73]

In the summer following the 1901 Floyd Monument dedication, the *Sioux City Journal* announced the possibility that a monument to Waŋbdí Okíčhize "may be erected … by his own red skinned people." Charles Dodson, a local white man, and Big Tree, leader of the Winnebagoes, intended to ask the leaders of the Santee Sioux, Brule, and Omaha tribes to contribute funds to a monument featuring "an Indian on horseback, shading his eyes with his hand, and peering toward the western sunset." However, the following month D. A. Magee, a member of the Floyd Memorial Association, alleged that Dodson and Big Tree's idea would not appeal to the Dakota, Santee, or Yankton tribes. Whether the Floyd Monument Association attempted to contact tribal leaders about the idea is unclear but unlikely.

[72] "Earliest Local History," *Sioux City (IA) Journal*, December 19, 1899.

[73] O'Brien, *Firsting and Lasting*, 105–144 and George R. Peck, "Address by George R. Peck: Delivered at the Semicentennial Anniversary of the Founding of Lawrence, Kan., October 6, 1904," in *Transactions of the Kansas State Historical Society, 1905–1906, Vol. IX* edited by George W. Martin (Topeka: State Printing Office, 1906), 144 (hereafter cited as "Lawrence Semicentennial Address").

Their continued interest in the project endured, however. "Marking the grave of War Eagle," they asserted, would contribute to "the poetry and romance of history if, over the tomb of the last distinguished representative of the red man in this vicinity, there should be placed a memorial comporting somewhat with the token erected to the first white man who lost his life in the conquest of this great northwest to civilization." They continued, "Probably nowhere else on this continent is there such a conspicuous instance of the twilight of the old, as represented by the Indian, confronting the dawn of the new, as represented by the Caucasian."[74] Others agreed that a memorial to Waŋbdí Okíčhize would "link in memory the first invasion of the white man and the last stand of the Indian" marking the space the "hail of the paleface and the farewell of the redskin—the dawn of civilization and sunset of barbarism." Inspired by this vision, over the next two decades local white clubs raised funds for a monument, while Red Gun, Waŋbdí Okíčhize's son, collected donations from local Native Americans "to honor the memory of their tribesman."[75]

[74] "War Eagle is Forgotten," *Sioux City (IA) Journal*, August 11, 1901.
[75] "Monument for War Eagle," *Des Moines Leader*, October 13, 1901.

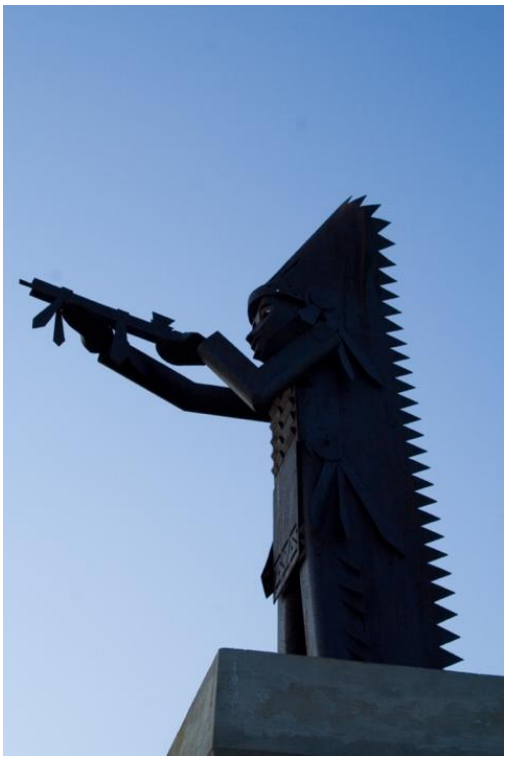

Figure 4. Photograph of War Eagle (Waŋbdí Okíčhize) Monument in Sioux City, Iowa[76]

Not installed until October 21, 1922, the War Eagle memorial principally celebrated Waŋbdí Okíčhize as "friendly to the white man, making possible the peaceful settlement of the Missouri Valley."[77] While the Grand Army of the Republic and the Woman's Relief Corps do not appear to have officially contributed to this later memorial to Waŋbdí Okíčhize, their earlier desire to commemorate him and Chief Washinga Sahba in juxtaposition to the Floyd Memorial reflects an important link white Americans drew between commemoration and civilization.

[76] *Photograph of War Eagle Monument in Sioux City, IA overlooking the Missouri River*, ca. 2007, accessed June 21, 2022, https://perma.cc/Y5NP-VAHM.

[77] "Dedicate War Eagle Memorial Today," *Sioux City (IA) Journal*, October 21, 1922.

Historian Ari Kelman compellingly argues that "when memorials in the United States discuss Native Americans at all, they typically use them as benchmarks for national progress, as objects rather than subjects … regularly cast[ing] Native people as uncivilized by suggesting that they have no history of their own, that they are exclusively a people of memory."[78] Union veterans and the Floyd Memorial Association's desire to construct memorials to Indigenous Americans in Sioux City likewise served to symbolize the connection they drew between commemoration and civilization. White-constructed memorials to Waŋbdí Okíčhize and Chief Washinga Sahba would have signified to other white Americans that Indigenous peoples do not venerate their dead—at least according to white customs—and therefore, fail to demonstrate the markers of civilization. This fact, they reasoned, further justified the colonization of Native peoples.

In his account of the Floyd Monument, Alex Miller noted monuments reflect prosperous civilizations because "new countries and poor countries do not spend money on monuments, … [b]ut as the country [grows] older and richer, it [has] more time and inclination for things of a historical and sentimental nature."[79] Put another way, "The veneration of the dead distinguishes mankind from the brute creation."[80]

Bleeding Kansas

While venerating the dead was utilized as a benchmark for civilization, western Union veterans and their families frequently linked slavery and its elimination in their efforts to identify "the brute creation." The role of slavery in creating national disunity

[78] Kelman, *A Misplaced Massacre*, 5.

[79] Alex Miller, "Between Two Rivers: In Memory of a Noble Hero of the Early Days," April 10, 1902, Floyd Monument Collection, Sioux City Public Museum, Sioux City, IA.

[80] Pease, "Memorial Day Address."

and the subsequent need to eliminate slavery was employed as justification for colonization and the expansion of white republican American traditions in westerners' Civil War commemorations.[81] At a 1901 Memorial Day address in Idaho, for example, veteran Willard White laid plain, "the sole issue [of the Civil War], when clearly defined, was slavery versus liberty, slavery against liberty, slavery attempting to throttle and strangle and crush out liberty."[82]

Judge H. F. Bartine agreed. Delivering the Decoration Day speech in Salt Lake City, Utah in 1895, he asserted, "there was no warrant in the Constitution for the abolition of slavery… [b]ut it was deemed entirely competent to exclude it from the Territories, [and] prevent its further extension…." Abraham Lincoln's election, he argued, "did not mean 'Abolitionism' [but] meant that slavery should be confined to the State in which it then had a lodgment, and that the strong arm of the General Government should no longer be used to aid in its extension." Lincoln's presidency "meant that henceforth every additional star placed in the blue field of our National ensign should blaze as an emblem of freedom in the purest and truest sense, its brightness undimmed by the tears of a slave."[83]

Southerners feared Lincoln's election however, because prohibiting the extension of slavery in the West threatened the security of slavery in the East. "With freedom spreading its broad wings from ocean to ocean, and from the shores of Lake Superior to

[81] See also Charles A. Sumner, *Memorial Day Oration* (San Francisco, 1888), 15; John B. Sanborn, "Address," May 30, 1885, Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States, Miscellaneous Papers 1884–1890, Minnesota State Historical Society, St. Paul, MN, 9–10; Arkansas GAR, *Journal of the Twenty-First Encampment*, 43–44.

[82] "Memorial Address," *Idaho Statesman* (Boise), May 31, 1901.

[83] "Memorial Day," *Salt Lake Tribune*, May 31, 1895.

the head waters of the Rio Grande," Bartine explained, "it was apparent to the statesmen of the South that the days of slavery were numbered. With no means of creating another slave state they were not certain of being able to permanently maintain it where it then had a foothold."[84] In their commemorations, western Unionists frequently rehashed the connections between slavery, westward expansion, and national disunity.

Nothing represented more clearly the relationship between the expansion of slavery in the West and the causes and consequences of the war than post-war Union commemorations in Kansas. These events, known popularly as Bleeding Kansas, were central to westerners' collective memory of the Civil War. In May 1854, the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act opened these territories for settlement and decreed that popular sovereignty would decide whether Kansas would become a slave or free state. Between 1855 and 1859, pro-slavery Missourians and anti-slavery settlers clashed in a violent guerrilla war in Kansas to settle that question. While Kansas became a free state in 1861, these events, which became known as Bleeding Kansas, foreshadowed the American Civil War.[85] As Kansan Union veteran Patrick Henry Coney put it, the state "was born in the throes of human freedom."[86]

Union veterans and their families emphasized the question over whether Kansans would enjoy free labor or be forced to compete with slave labor in their post-war commemorations. Grand Army member and editor-in-chief of the *Topeka Capital Daily*, Joseph Kennedy Hudson, delivered a speech in Topeka in 1893 emphasizing the

[84] "Memorial Day," *Salt Lake Tribune*, May 31, 1895.

[85] See Nicole Etcheson, *Bleeding Kansas: Contested Liberty in the Civil War Era* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004).

[86] Patrick Henry Coney Papers, Box 1, Kansas Historical Society, Topeka, KS.

centrality of Kansas to Civil War narratives. Following the 1820 Missouri Compromise, he noted, "the South easily recognized in the rapid and extraordinary growth of the north-west and the increase of the new states a menace to her supremacy. New states had been created by the South as rapidly as was possible, in order to maintain her power." Northerners' desire to expand free-soil institutions over slavery—and southerners' need to do the opposite—fueled western expansion.

In 1854, however, "regardless of the compact of 1820 that slavery should be forever prohibited in the territory north of 36 degrees and 30 minutes," the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill and the doctrine of Popular Sovereignty threatened northerners and southerners' visions for westward expansion. This inspired northern men and women to move to Kansas to help make it a free state, and southerners sent men to try and "force slavery upon an unwilling people." Kennedy recalled, "I shall never forget the appearance of the lawless mob that poured into Kansas City, inflamed with drink, glutted with the indulgence of the vilest passions, displaying with loud boasts" their violent efforts "to fasten slavery on Kansas."[87]

Kansas and Missouri ex-guerrillas, historian Matthew Christopher Hulbert argues, created "irregular recollections" that "helped explain away the violence in the war for abolition and rebranded it as suitable in a war for empire." By recasting Civil War guerrilla fighters as western gunslingers, they manipulated guerrilla memory to excuse and ultimately erase the violence of irregular warfare on the border. In other words,

[87] Joseph Kennedy Hudson Papers, 1861–1909, Box 1, Misc. Materials Folder, 61–62.

"[guerrilla] violence could then be justified as a tool for forcibly installing civility on the western frontier."[88]

In their commemorations, Kansas Unionists celebrated their Civil War legacy by arguing that they were in the vanguard of halting the spread of slavery and bringing about emancipation. Like the Floyd Monument and other western Civil War commemorations, Kansans placed slavery within the context of westward expansion and understood their connection to the Civil War as part of a much longer narrative of American exceptionalism.

Addressing an audience at the semicentennial anniversary celebration in Lawrence on October 6, 1904, Union veteran George R. Peck situated the struggle to admit Kansas as a free state within a longer American narrative of free-soil expansion westward. While migrating to Kansas "to make free homes for ALL," he argued they worked "to establish … town meetings, district schools, the untrammeled vote of every citizen, and all the sanctions of an institutional government."[89] Not a novel idea, he asserted, "their zeal, tranquil and self-poised, was the zeal which had been in generations before them—generations that had crossed the ocean, and subdued the sternest soil upon this continent."[90] Peck likewise connected his narrative to colonial settlements in the East.

The Kansas Grand Army of the Republic emphasized at their 1909 annual encampment: "out here in the West was a territory out of which was to be carved the next

[88] Hulbert, *The Ghosts of Guerrilla Memory*, 12.
[89] Emphasize in the original. Peck, "Lawrence Semicentennial Address," 147.
[90] Peck, "Lawrence Semicentennial Address," 147.

state … [which] was of tremendous importance."[91] Slavery appeared so threatening to their settler ambitions that Kansans' opposition to the extension of slavery into their territory was justifiable at any cost. Peck demanded, "Keep [slavery] within your own limits … Keep [it] off the prairies." Slave labor threatened their republican free-soil experiment, he argued, because "they knew they could hardly live themselves, and that the children could never thrive, if their toil was to be measured by the toil of slaves." Put simply, "Slave labor will drive out free labor."[92]

Many Kansans not only commemorated slavery as a moral evil, but they also understood it threatened their livelihoods and settler-colonial pursuits in the West. Peck noted, "Slavery was not only wrong, but it was destructive of their homes; the gardens and the flowers, the clambering wild rose, the little cluster of buildings … which they had cherished and brought with them to their rude Western habitations."[93] Slavery, he insisted, was detrimental to western settlement, and therefore should not be extended into new territories.

In the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, Kansans constructed many monuments and memorials to commemorate the events comprising Bleeding Kansas. The Woman's Relief Corps, for example, erected a large red granite monument "in memory of the first conflict at arms that led to the Civil War" at the location of the 1856 Battle of

[91] Kansas GAR, *Journal of the Twenty-Eighth Annual Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic* (Hutchinson, KS: News, 1909), 12.

[92] Peck, "Lawrence Semicentennial Address," 147–148.

[93] Peck, "Lawrence Semicentennial Address," 147–148. See also Joseph Kennedy Hudson Papers, 1861–1909, Box 1, Misc. Materials Folder, Kansas Historical Society, Topeka, KS, 61–62; Benjamin Franklin Simpson, "Miami County, Kansas," Box 2, Folder 20, Benjamin Franklin Simpson Papers, Kansas Historical Society, Topeka, KS, 56.

Black Jack.[94] They also hung plaques at other important sites, such as Osawatomie, Topeka, and Shawnee County, to name a few. One of the most significant markers, however, was a bronze statue of abolitionist John Brown erected in Miami County, Kansas.

On August 30, 1877, hundreds of the "most distinguished men" and women in Kansas gathered to dedicate "by formal ceremony this monument, as a definite assurance to all the generations of Kansas freemen … that upon this day they recalled with fervent gratitude the costly sacrifices of freedom's pioneers." They asserted that the monument signified a renewal of their "allegiance and loyalty to those ideas of truth and justice, on which the State was builded, and for which these martyrs lived, and fought, and died."[95]

Deafening verses of the song *John Brown's Body* welcomed attendees, and Senator J. J. Ingalls, delivered the eulogy. Ingalls argued that free-soil labor defined white civilization. "Attracted by the inducements of a civilization," he asserted free-labor "elevates every citizen into absolute freedom, … stimulates industry by dignifying labor and generously rewarding toil, [and] opens the prizes of ambition to all." Consequently, "multitudes of the discontented and aspiring have thronged hither" to Kansas. Like Brown, many Kansans believed that the West must be preserved for free labor for all American citizens. He claimed, "Apostles of the Puritan idea and missionaries of freedom," Brown and his sons "had no sympathy with those who wanted to make Kansas a free white state." Rather, they "asserted the manhood of the negro with a vehemence

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[94] "Unveil Black Jack Marker: Ottawa Veterans Attended Reunion of Old Settlers," *Evening Herald* (Ottawa, KS), October 1, 1913; "Battle of Black Jack: First Battle between Free and Slave States, Fought on These Grounds, June 2, 1856," *Woodson County (KS) Journal*, October 9, 1913.

[95] "Goes Marching On: The Monument to John Brown's Body Dedicated Yesterday," *Leavenworth Weekly*, September 6, 1877.

that agitated the political eunuchs of the period who were more anxious for place than for principle."[96]

The Miami County statue symbolized their belief that white southerners' desire to protect and extend slavery perverted the extension of a free, democratic republic into the West. Ingalls celebrated Brown and his followers as men who not only fought for abolition but also the ability of African Americans to move west, colonize the region, and reap the benefits of their own labor alongside white citizens.[97]

While some westerners like Ingalls took a less self-interested approach and argued Black Americans had a right to colonize the West, they were the exception, not the norm. Numerous western Unionists lauded the emancipation of four million enslaved people, but their commemorations were ultimately focused on the incompatibility of slavery with free-soil western development for white Americans. For these men, the end of slavery was the future of free soil, not racial equality.

As Kansans collectively remembered it, Bleeding Kansas was the true beginning of the Civil War. Kansas Governor Arthur Capper boasted that "the war started in Kansas almost six years before any other State had enlisted a single regiment."[98] George Peck similarly recalled, "looking backward, everybody now knows that the civil war—big with the fate of free institutions—was but a continuance of the fight on the border."[99] Benjamin Simpson agreed. In his "That Kansas Spirit" speech, he declared, "Kansas is a

[96] "Goes Marching On," *Leavenworth Weekly*, September 6, 1877.
[97] "Goes Marching On," *Leavenworth Weekly*, September 6, 1877.
[98] National GAR, *Journal of the Fiftieth National Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1916), 201.
[99] Peck, "Lawrence Semicentennial Address," 150.

child of the prairie. Its baptismal blood was shed in defense of its firesides. The old-homesteads were the preliminary battle-grounds of freedom." He continued,

> They were the preliminary battle-fields of the great Civil War that decorated the country from ocean to ocean with the graves of heroic soldiers…. The love of the survivors for the land that had drank the blood of the father and had sipped the sorrowful tears of the mother had grown so intense that it had become an aggressive religion that carried every effort of mind and all strength of body to be devoted to its cultivation and adornment…. These old homesteads were the nurseries in which grow the stalwart manhood of the Kansas of today inheriting the heroic virtues of the pioneers and treading in familiar paths the onward march to the twin blessings of good government and prosperous peace.[100]

For men like Capper, Peck, and Simpson, frontier Kansans' fight to extend free labor westward was the first chapter of the American Civil War. Or as the *Salt Lake City Tribune* keenly observed, Kansans employed the memory of Bleeding Kansas as "a sort of religion" to evoke memories of "the days when [John Brown] started the war against slavery on the Kansas prairies."[101]

Like the architects of the Floyd Monument, Kansans argued emancipation opened the West for free-soil development. Union victory forever preserved their right to develop free-labor households and uphold American republicanism. At the dedication of the John Brown statue in Osawatomie, Ingalls declared, "we are proud today as Kansans to boast that our state stands high in the galaxy of states." He reasoned that agricultural

[100] Benjamin Simpson, "That Kansas Spirit," Box 2, Folder 18, Benjamin Franklin Simpson Papers, 16 and 25–26.

[101] "Humorous Features of Grand Army Pageant," *Salt Lake City Tribune*, August 12, 1909.

production, resource development, fertile soil, and patriotic and intelligent people found within Kansas, were due "to the one hundred and twenty-five thousand or more veterans of the civil war." Union Civil War soldiers and veterans, he asserted, "took our villages and made them into cities. They took the plains and the prairies and made them into wheat fields and corn fields. They developed undreamed of natural resources. They made our newspapers, they wrote our laws."[102]

Simpson agreed. No longer "scattered here and there over the prairies," free-soil settlers were "saved from the blighting influences of human slavery by the heroism of its people." The Union was "cemented … by the blood of its gallant soldiers … and it now redeems the promise of its parentage, birth and baptism, by the most marvelous material development the world ever saw." Simply put, "brave soldiers make good citizens."[103]

Kansans echoed these arguments in their Civil War remembrances for decades to follow. On Memorial Day 1895, Union veterans unveiled a monument at Oak Hill Cemetery in Lawrence, Kansas. Attendees of the dedication services received a copy of the *Lawrence Memorial Album*, which served to remind Kansans that the Civil War made their prosperity and development possible. Writing, "the pioneers of Douglas county are the pioneers of Kansas," the creator of the album linked the statehood of Kansas to its struggle for free-soil settlement. Characterizing Lawrence as "the citadel of freedom," the booklet was a testament to the progress, growth, and accomplishment of Kansas.[104]

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[102] "Goes Marching On," *Leavenworth Weekly*, September 6, 1877.

[103] Benjamin Simpson, "Memorial Address," Box 2, Folder 19, Benjamin Franklin Simpson Papers, 34–35, 37, and 39. See also M.O.L.L.U.S. Kansas Commandery History Collection, Box 6, Speeches Folder, Kansas Historical Society, Topeka, KS.

[104] E. S. Tucker, *The Lawrence Memorial Album* (Lawrence, KS: n.p., 1895), 5–6.

The author included a section listing local Indigenous tribes, noting that the "first settlers in Lawrence doubtless remember the Indians who occupied the country at the time."[105] A tribute to the Haskell Institute, an Indian Boarding School, served to remind readers that the Union victories won in the Civil War secured the West for white settlement and Native American removal and institutionalization. Free of slavery, they argued white settlers were able to colonize and civilize the region and its Indigenous inhabitants. The album showcased Lawrence's schools, courthouse, churches, industry, library, opera house, banks, and newspapers, among other economic, social, and cultural institutions. They stressed that men like Brown and Union soldiers' efforts to bring about emancipation made these establishments possible. Lawrence's prosperity, signified by these cornerstones of civilization, were only made conceivable by Union veterans' sacrifice and their victory.

Grand Army veterans held a joint celebration with local pioneer societies to celebrate Memorial Day and the semicentennial anniversary of the territorial organization of Kansas on May 30, 1904 at Topeka. Judge Theodore Garver noted, "fifty years ago to-day Kansas emerged from the chaos of almost boundless plains and assumed the place of an organized territory among the states of this nation. On this Memorial Day "it is fitting that we celebrate that first step taken by Kansas, half a century ago, towards the statehood which she to-day honors; and that we, at the same time, commemorate the heroic deeds

[105] Tucker, *The Lawrence Memorial Album*, 19.

of that grand army of men in blue whose sacrifices made possible such a statehood in such a nation."[106]

Delivering the principal oration, Secretary of War William Taft characterized the Kansas Nebraska Bill as "a tremendous obstacle to free government," and praised Kansans for the courage, persistence, and intelligence they employed to overcome slavery and push towards civilization. "We celebrate it," he declared, "as the first step in the birth and development of this great state." He continued, "reaching from the Missouri river to the Rocky Mountain states, [Kansas] compels admiration of all who look upon it." The state transformed itself "from a few Indian tribes to a highly intelligent and patriotic population of a million and a half souls in fifty years" and this development does not find a parallel, "save in other states of our own country similarly situated."[107] The end of slavery and development of Kansas jointly worked to justify the violence of Bleeding Kansas and colonization.

* * *

Western commemorations often focused on territorial acquisition and exploration, which reveals that western veterans and their families understood the Civil War as part of a much longer and dynamic struggle for white American exceptionalism. As one *Grand Army Magazine* contributor reasoned, "it is natural and proper that this magazine of the Grand Army of the Republic should devote its columns and draw upon the memory of the brave boys in blue who saved our republic in the war from 1861 to 1865." But he also

[106] Theodore F. Garver, "Kansas Nebraska Bill and Decoration Day: An Address by Hon. William H. Taft, secretary of war, at Topeka, May 30, 1904," in *Transactions of the Kansas State Historical Society, 1905–1906, Vol. IX*, 116.

[107] William Taft, "Kansas Nebraska Bill and Decoration Day," 123.

articulated that "it is well that we should now and then sometimes pause in these days; and turn over the pages past American history, and look backward beyond the rebellion, to see what dangers befell our beloved land." Union veterans, he asserted, would be interested "in what manner the principles of liberty have been vindicated and upheld, long before the first gun at Sumpter was fired and the first soldier was enrolled for the war against the rebellion."[108]

Union victory, as western Unionists collectively remembered it, preserved a long tradition of white expansion. While eastern Union commemorations concentrated on the events and people east of the Mississippi River, they also celebrated the war as a singular moment where the threatened Union was saved by northern soldiers. Western Unionists, on the other hand, preferenced a long-term narrative that interpreted the Civil War through the lens of American territorial expansion. They crafted a uniquely western emancipationist and expansionist legacy of the war, which resisted reconciliation and ultimately masked the violence of settler colonialism by connecting it to the end of slavery and expansion of civilization. These remembrances placed westerners in the forefront of discussions of the causes and consequences of the war.

[108] "The Vigilantes of California," *Grand Army Magazine*, July 1883, 460.

CHAPTER III – "BATTLES FOR FREE OR SLAVE SUPREMACY": COMMEMORATING THE CIVIL WAR & INDIAN WARS

Around thirty-five South Dakotan Union veterans lined up in a "very soldiery appearance" alongside their former comrades to march through Pittsburg, Pennsylvania at the 1894 national encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR). As their platoons advanced down the street, onlookers shouted at the men who had travelled "all the way from South Dakota," crying out that "they must be brave" and inquiring whether "they have their scalps yet." Jovially, flag bearers Pierce and Rogers lifted their caps exposing their intact scalps to spectators' loud cheers.

When South Dakota Grand Army Commander William Lucas relayed this alleged tale to fellow South Dakota veterans, he revealed the connections western Union veterans made between violence against Native peoples in the trans-Mississippi West and the American Civil War. Union veterans like Lucas and their families frequently commemorated western military conflict in the American Civil War and Indian Wars as a dual effort to secure an American empire. Significantly, Lucas argued slaveholding Confederates and Native Americans in the West were twin threats to the Union, and with their defeat, Union veterans had "tendered to you the free and undisputed possession of everything in sight."[109] For men like Lucas, this did not merely mean the South. More importantly, it included the West.

[109] South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the Twelfth Annual Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic* (Watertown, SD: n.p., 1895), 17 and 15.

In recent years, Civil War historians have been grappling with the trans-Mississippi's significance to the war and "Greater Reconstruction."[110] Bradley Clampitt describes the western Indian Wars between 1861 and 1865 as "a series of 'wars within a war.'" He explains, "the American Indian population waged its own wars for independence, and indeed survival, within what began as someone else's fight. That quest for sovereignty most accurately frames the story of the Civil War in Indian Territory."[111] In her analysis of the Civil War in the Southwest, Megan Kate Nelson argues western Union veterans were not only fighting to defeat the Confederacy but also to eliminate and remove Navajos and Apaches to establish an American empire.[112]

While Elliot West argues the West should be incorporated into studies of Reconstruction, he also warns against viewing the Civil War as a "gravity field, drawing to itself everything around it and bending all meanings to fit its own shape."[113] Khal Schneider similarly asserts that the Civil War did not "bring imperialism to the West," rather colonization had begun years prior in the 1850s.[114] However, those engaged in constructing memories of the past are typically far more concerned with what those memories can contribute to the present than the accuracy of their collective remembrances. Union veterans and their families subsumed wartime and postbellum Indian Wars into their collective memories of the American Civil War to bolster their contemporary colonization efforts. In memory making, it mattered little whether their

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[110] Elliott West, "Reconstructing Race," *Western Historical Quarterly* 34, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 6–26; Elliot West, *The Last Indian War: The Nez Perce Story* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); Elliot West, "The Future of Reconstruction Studies," *Journal of the Civil War Era* 7, no. 1 (2017): 14.

[111] Clampitt, *The Civil War and Reconstruction in Indian Territory*, 2.

[112] Megan Kate Nelson, *Three-Cornered War.*

[113] Elliott West, "Reconstructing Race," 25.

[114] Khal Schneider, "Distinctions That Must Be Preserved: On the Civil War, American Indians, and the West," *Civil War History* 62, no. 1 (March 2016): 39.

claims were historically accurate. Rather, it was more important to western Union veterans that their historical narrative celebrated the role western Union veterans performed in settler colonialism and supported the removal and civilization programs of the United States.[115]

In their post-war commemorations, western Unionists incorporated military conflicts with Native peoples fought between 1861 and 1890 into their celebrations of the American Civil War. Characterizing these western military conflicts as a continuous effort to establish a nationwide free-labor empire, they appropriated the military service of Indian War veterans. The defeat of the Confederacy and Indigenous nations, according to their collective remembrances, were both essential to the establishment of a free-labor empire. By equating Native peoples with slaveholding Confederates, they rebranded massacre as warfare, violence as peace, and colonizing as civilizing.

Examining the historical memory of the 1864 Sand Creek Massacre in Colorado, Ari Kelman argues Union military leaders, especially John Chivington, asserted the extermination of Cheyennes and Arapahos at Sand Creek was an extension of the war against the Confederacy. The destruction of both Native peoples and the Confederacy would ensure federal control from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans. Americans' tendency to remember the Civil War as a redemptive "good war," consequently, "transfigure[ed] a history of violence into one of virtue, of tragedies into triumphs."[116] Drawing on Kelman's work, Matthew Christopher Hulbert argues that rebranding Civil War-era guerrilla fighters in the Kansas-Missouri borderlands as western gunslingers

[115] Christopher B. Bean, "Who Defines a Nation?: Reconstruction in Indian Territory," in *The Civil War and Reconstruction in Indian Territory* edited by Clampitt, 110–131.

[116] Kelman, *A Misplaced Massacre*, 280.

"helped explain away the violence in the war for abolition and rebranded it as suitable in a war for empire."[117] In these instances, white Americans connected their efforts to exterminate and dispossess Native peoples to the American Civil War.

Union veterans and their families even connected violence towards Indigenous tribes between 1861–1890 in folk art memorabilia. For example, an 1891 lamp boasting a set of steer horns featuring a carving of the battle of Antietam on the left horn and an American Indian attacking a stagecoach on the right horn validated "some kind of link between the West and the war." William Deverell argues the lamp represents how Union veterans were influenced by nature, pioneer and cowboy mythology, and colonization, and drew connections between defeating the slaveholding Confederacy in the East and preventing their expansion westward and defeating slaveholding Indigenous population in the West, both of which would clear the West for free-soil Anglo-settlement and development.[118] Western Union veterans and their families frequently linked wars against the Confederacy and American Indians to bolster their colonial ambitions.

Even though the Battle of Beecher Island occurred over three years after the surrender of Confederate forces at Appomattox Courthouse, Union veterans dominated the effort to construct and dedicate a monument at the battle site near Wray, Colorado in the northeastern corner of the state.[119] In September 1868, US cavalry troops commanded by Colonel George Forsyth repelled somewhere between 200 and 1,000 Cheyenne, Arapahoe, and Lakota combatants led by Roman Nose. In the fall of 1899, Civil War

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[117] Hulbert, *The Ghosts of Guerrilla Memory*, 12.
[118] Deverell, "After Antietam," 175–189.
[119] *Jewel County (K.S.) Republican*, October 27, 1899; *Windsor Beacon* (C.O.), September 23, 1905.

veterans belonging to the Vernon and Wray Grand Army posts began efforts to erect a monument to US soldiers at the Beecher Island battle site, and in 1904 the Colorado and Kansas State Legislatures appropriated $5,000 for that purpose.[120] On September 18, 1905, spectators gathered to unveil the GAR-sponsored monument.

Local coverage connected the battle of Beecher Island to Union veterans and gender in ways that rationalized colonization. The *Leavenworth Times* reported, "many of the settlers of the region were ex-soldiers of Northern armies," and these Union veterans "hastily form[ed] a mounted company [and] started in pursuit of the savages" to rescue two white women captured by "Indian renegades."[121] Similarly erasing the military service of frontier regulars, the *Topeka Daily Capital* reported, "these men had all seen active service in the Civil War or had endured equal or greater hardships in defending their homes against a merciless and inhuman foe on our exposed frontier."[122] In their remembrances, Union veterans appropriated the military service of frontier regulars by celebrating the Battle of Beecher Island as a spontaneous effort by Union veterans to rescue white womanhood and reestablish civil order.

Remembrances of the Sand Creek Massacre, Missouri-Kansas guerrilla conflict, and Beecher Island were not isolated instances. Rather, Unionists across the West regularly incorporated violent conflict with Native peoples into their commemorations of

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[120] "Beecher Island," *A Souvenir of Wray and Vernon* (1907), accessed November 27, 2019, https://perma.cc/M5K7-X2K8.

[121] *Leavenworth Times*, February 16, 1906.

[122] *Topeka Daily Capital*, April 23, 1905. This narrative was not atypical. The Montana GAR noted veterans often "organized temporarily to repel raids by the Indian tribes," such as the Montana Militia in the summer months of 1867 near Shields River. See Montana GAR, *Journal of the Twenty-First Annual Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic* (Helena: Thurber, 1905), 15.

the American Civil War.[123] In their collective remembrances, these crises could not be separated because they were part of a concurrent effort to create a nationwide American empire built on free labor. They commemorated events—including the Dakota Wars in Minnesota, Christopher "Kit" Carson's military service in the Southwest, and the Wounded Knee Massacre in South Dakota, among others—as an extension of the war against the Confederacy. Consequently, they deemed the extermination and removal of Native Americans acceptable as part of the larger struggle for the federal Union's preservation and the supremacy of free labor.

The 1862 Dakota War

Believing her reminiscences of the 1862 Dakota War would be of particular interest to fellow members, Flora Wilson addressed a gathering of the Minnesota Woman's Relief Corps in 1901. On her way to an Old Settlers' Picnic, she recalled being struck by the "beautiful landscape" as she road "swiftly up hill and down dale" over the prairie. Peering across the countryside, she observed that the prairies were host to several "historic scenes" during the 1860s, namely the Dakota War and the American Civil War. She noted monuments were justly "erected to the memory of those who fell victims to the pitiless fury of the treacherous savages" during the 1862 Dakota War. Recalling the "terrible yell and war-whoop of the savage foe" and the "shrieks and groans of his victims," Wilson asserted that in 1862 the Dakota Sioux threatened the once "peaceful hills and valleys" of Minnesota.

[123] See also Militia Territorial Volunteer Historical Folder, Box 19, Gov. Albert Mead Papers, Washington State Archives, Olympia, WA. White Washingtonians connected the execution of Yakima Chief Qualchan to the Civil War in analogous ways.

Grateful to Minnesotan Union veterans like her husband, she celebrated "the brave men who answered the call to duty," and "brought back again the blessings of peace and civilization." Through their military service, Minnesota became a "smiling and lovely" state, "resounding only with the hum of industry, amid the safety and plenty of these beautiful days of peace."[124] Minnesotan towns and cities, therefore, stood as monuments of sorts to white settlers' empire building. For men and women like Wilson, the 1862 Dakota War became central to their Civil War remembrances.

In August 1862, Chief Taoyateduta (also known as Little Crow) led Dakota warriors in a series of raids against white settlers throughout the state. The US government had violated treaty agreements with the Dakota, which resulted in land loss and widespread starvation. Attempting to drive Anglo-American settlers out of the region, Taoyateduta's forces attacked towns throughout southern Minnesota and defeated US troops at the Battle of Birch Coulee on September 2, 1862. In response, Minnesota Governor Alexander Ramsey telegrammed President Abraham Lincoln. Calling for aid, he argued, "This is not [Minnesota's] war … it is a national war."[125] Ramsey appealed to Lincoln and others' fears that Confederate agents had spurred the Dakota. Even more pressing, he also drew on their concern that Minnesota's military support against the Confederacy was contingent on Lincoln's willingness to protect white settlers from the Dakota.[126]

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[124] Minnesota WRC, *Journal of the Seventeenth Annual Convention of the Woman's Relief Corps*, (Red Wing, MN: Sultzer, Shedd & Livingston, 1901), 43.

[125] *Mankato Semi-Weekly Record*, January 24, 1863.

[126] Paul N. Beck, *Columns of Vengeance: Soldiers, Sioux, and the Punitive Expeditions*, 1863–1864 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2013), 30–31.

Echoing others' calls for extermination, Major General John Pope instructed, "it is my purpose utterly to exterminate the Sioux if I have the power to do so…. They are to be treated as maniacs or wild beasts, and by no means as people with whom treaties or compromises can be made."[127] Reinforced, Colonel Henry Sibley's forces pursued and defeated the Dakota at the Battle of Wood Lake on September 23. A desire for revenge helped fuel US policy against the Dakota, and in November 1862, the Union military forcibly relocated over two thousand Dakota to concentration camps at Fort Snelling and Mankato.[128]

In addition to punitive campaigns waged from 1863 to 1864, the federal government bolstered their colonial policies by targeting Dakota culture. Encouraging the establishment of white gender roles was key to this process. They distributed food and supplies to Dakota men who farmed permanent settlements and issued annuities to heads of households rather than chiefs. They ostracized those who failed to emulate white gender roles and argued it was evidence of Native American racial inferiority.[129] Ultimately, the federal government sentenced 303 Dakota men to death and executed thirty-eight of those sentenced in the largest mass execution in United States history. They also voided treaties with the Dakota, and abolished the eastern Dakota and Ho Chunk reservation, and forcibly removed large numbers of Dakota and Ho Chunk out of the state.

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[127] John Pope to H. H. Sibley, September 28, 1862 in *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1885), Ser. I, Vol. 13, p. 686.

[128] Beck, *Columns of Vengeance*, 25–49.

[129] Angela Wilson Waziyatawin, *In the Footsteps of Our Ancestors: The Dakota Commemorative Marches of the 21st Century* (St. Paul: Living Justice Press, 2006), 43.

In the decades following the end of the Civil War, many white Minnesotans crafted a collective memory where they subsumed the Dakota War into the Civil War to justify and bolster these colonial practices. Despite their notable war record in the East, members of the Grand Army of the Republic and Woman's Relief Corps—like Flora Wilson—also drew attention to the Dakota War because they believed it revealed evidence of their exalted patriotism, which could be leveraged for political and cultural capital. Furthermore, by connecting these events they crafted a uniquely western remembrance of the Civil War aimed at supporting the colonization of the Dakota, and by extension all Native people. As they celebrated it, the Civil War ensured the supremacy of free labor in the West. Their military service not only restored the Union and ended slavery, but also defeated Native Americans, whom they equated with the Confederacy. Therefore, their collective remembrances rebranded white Minnesotans' participation in American Indian extermination and removal during the Dakota War as civilized warfare.

Many western Unionists felt that the nation's focus on Civil War battle sites east of the Mississippi River overshadowed trans-Mississippians' contributions to preserving the Union. In his Grand Army history, Alonzo P. Connolly queried, "we read of the 'bloody angle' at Gettysburg and the 'hornets' nest' at Shiloh, but what of that at Birch Coulee?"[130] Connolly lamented that Birch Coulee, the site of a Dakota siege of US troops in September 1862, had "never taken its proper place in history" despite his belief that "it

[130] A. P. Connolly, *Minneapolis and the G.A.R.: With a Vivid Account of the Battle of Birch Coulee, Sept. 2 and 3, The Battle of Wood Lake, Sept. 23, The Release of Women and Children Captives at Camp Release, Sept. 26, 1862* (Minneapolis: George N. Morgan Post, G. A. R., 1906), 30. See also "Old Julesburg and Fort Sedgwick," *Colorado Magazine* VII, no. 4 (1930): 142–143. The author notes, "In the early '60s, with the great Civil War in progress, the nation was so anxious and torn with heart-breaking difficulties in the more settled portions of the Union, that the growing Indian troubles in the West did not attract as much attention as they would have done at another time" (142–143). See also "Entertained By A Hero!," Box 87, Benecke Family Papers, State Historical Society of Missouri, Columbia, MO.

was the hottest and most desperate battle fought during the War of the Rebellion or any of our Indian wars."[131]

Minnesotans had already contributed significant time and money to commemorating their military service east of the Mississippi River, including the First Minnesota Volunteer Infantry Regiment's performance at Gettysburg, but they also dedicated considerable resources to commemorating the Dakota War. In 1899 the GAR adopted a resolution to petition the US Congress to establish a national park and cemetery at Fort Ridgely, the site of two Dakota-led assaults.[132] The GAR also continually worked to erect monuments at the gravesites of men like John Jones, an US Army captain who died in the 1862 Dakota War.[133] Connolly and other Minnesotans' insistence that the Dakota War be remembered as part of the Civil War was in part an attempt to elevate the relevance of Minnesota to the Civil War as well as to leverage social and political capital within the state and nation.

While many states aggrandized their contributions to the Union cause, westerners' claims were region-specific. They boasted that they had contributed to the eastern Union war effort while simultaneously defending and developing frontier states. Like Minnesotans' claims about the Dakota War, Iowa women in wartime local ladies aid societies argued they were exceptional because they concurrently aided the Union war effort while developing their frontier state.[134] They did not view these efforts as unrelated

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[131] Connolly, *Minneapolis and the G.A.R.*, 27.

[132] Minnesota GAR, *Journal Thirty-Third Annual Encampment, Department of Minnesota, Grand Army of the Republic* (Minneapolis: n.p., 1899), 69–70.

[133] Minnesota GAR, *Journal of Proceedings of the Forty-Second Annual Encampment of the Department of Minnesota, Grand Army of the Republic* (Minneapolis: Syndicate, 1908), 99.

[134] See Lindsey R. Peterson, "'Iowa Excelled Them All': Iowa Local Ladies' Aid Societies on the Civil War Frontier, 1861–1865," *Middle West Review* 3, no. 1 (Fall 2016), 49–70. Their claims often appropriated the wartime experiences of rural Iowa women, especially lower- and working-class women.

tasks, however. Rather they characterized them as one endeavor upholding free labor and expanding white civilization. Westerners on the fringes alleged they were therefore exceptionally devoted to securing the American Republic.

Arguing the Dakota took advantage of the distraction the Civil War was causing in the East, Minnesotan Unionists described the Dakota War as a part of a larger American contest over civilization and the fate of the American Republic.[135] "So many of the Minnesota boys had left their homes to help in the war of freedom," one Relief Corps woman recalled. Monopolizing on their absence, she asserted, "the wild sons of the prairie thought their time had come to redeem their beautiful country from the dominion of the whites."[136]

See Ginette Aley, "Inescapable Realities: Rural Midwestern Women and Families during the Civil War" *Union Heartland: The Midwestern Homefront During the Civil War* edited by J. L. Anderson and Ginette Aley (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2013), 125–148.

[135] This was not uncommon in western commemorations. At the dedication of the Floyd Monument in Sioux City Iowa, one man claimed, "the Indians, thinking the nation had all it could do to meet its southern foe and could not take care of the frontier settlements, took advantage of this seeming weakness" and massacred white settlers throughout the northwest. See H. W. Allen, "History of the Local G.A.R.," Iowa, Floyd Monument Collection, Box 2, Grand Army of the Republic Records, Sioux City Public Museum, Sioux City, IA.

[136] Minnesota WRC, *Journal of the Fourteenth Annual Convention of the Woman's Relief Corps* (Litchfield, MN: n.p., 1898), 35–36.

Figure 5. Photograph of attendees at the New Ulm Minnesota Defenders Monument dedication[137]

At the 1891 monument dedication to the "defenders" of New Ulm, Minnesota, Major E. C. Sanders, explained, "all that was needed for these devils of their minds to incite them to fiendish deeds was a favorable opportunity" and when in the summer of 1862 Abraham Lincoln called for an additional 600,000 volunteers, "they believed their time had come."[138] While Minnesotans were raising regiments to fight the Confederacy in the East, Minnesota Union veteran Alonzo P. Connolly bemoaned that "another cloud of calamity had burst upon us." Rather than understanding the Dakota's action as part of an effort to protect their homelands, Minnesota Union veterans and their families cast the 1862 Dakota War as a savage assault on peaceful white settlers.[139]

[137] *Dedication of the Defender's Monument in 1901,* 1901, Brown County Historical Society, New Ulm, Minnesota, accessed June 21, 2022, https://perma.cc/ZR4B-CR4B.

[138] "New Ulm's Defenders," *New Ulm (MN) Review*, August 26, 1891.

[139] See O'Brien, *Firsting and Lasting*, 27. O'Brien argues this was commonplace in New England commemorations of Native Americans. She asserts, "instead of acknowledging them as defensive actions to protect their homelands against English invasion, wars are typically scripted as savage and heathen, initiated by furious assaults by Indians on innocent settlers.'"

Minnesotan Unionists highlighted their dual efforts to preserve the Union in the East and extend their empire to the West. This narrative distinguished their war service from eastern Americans' wartime contributions. As one Minnesotan boasted, "Wherever placed and to whatever duties assigned, the men of Minnesota acted well their part, reflecting glory upon themselves, their state and the nation [because] they served in the East, the West and the far South."[140]

At the erection of the Minnesota Memorial at Vicksburg National Military Park, orators reminded the audience that at the outbreak of the Civil War, Minnesota was an "infant" commonwealth, "sparsely populated … upon the then northwestern frontier of the country."[141] Like many states, they erroneously claimed Minnesota sent more men per capita than any other state and "at the same time she was confronted by and bore the brunt upon her own frontier, [one] of the most desolating Indian wars in the history of the country."[142] At the dedication of the Minnesota Monument at Memphis, Tennessee, Grand Army officer Levi Longfellow similarly noted that Minnesota not only contributed over 25,000 men for federal service but also furnished around 1,500 "citizen state troops to aid in suppressing the Indian uprising in 1862 in which more than one thousand of her people, including many women and children, were horribly massacred."[143]

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[140] General L. F. Hubbard, "An Address Delivered Before the Minnesota Historical Society," *Minnesota in the Campaigns of Vicksburg, November, 1862–July, 1863: Report of the Minnesota Vicksburg Monument Commission* (St. Paul, MN: Minnesota State Historical Society, n.d.), 52.

[141] Hubbard, "An Address Delivered Before the Minnesota Historical Society," 48–49. See also "Duluth to Pay Tribute to Love to Heroes of War of Rebellion," *Duluth (MN) News-Tribune*, May 31, 1909; Allen, "History of the Local G.A.R."

[142] There is no evidence to support their claim that Minnesota sent more men per capita than other states. Hubbard, "An Address Delivered Before the Minnesota Historical Society," 48–49.

[143] *Report of the Minnesota Commission: Appointed to Erect Monuments to Soldiers in the National Military Cemeteries at Little Rock, Arkansas, Memphis, Tennessee, and Andersonville, Georgia*, Minnesota Monument Commission Folder, Civil War Memorial Commissions Collection, Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, MN, 33.

Furthermore, Unionists connected the Dakota War and Civil War to the long-term republican development of the state. They argued their defeat of the Dakota and the Confederacy secured white free-soil settlement and development of Minnesota and the West. Characterizing the Dakota War as "part of the frontier story of the Civil War," they argued it "had a profound effect upon the state in its infancy."[144] Major E. C. Sanders described Native men as unevolved, or men "upon whom the ages have come and gone and made no change." While "pale face[d] and enlightened people … advanced from the Atlantic toward the Pacific in quest of homes," Sanders lamented that Native people had obstructed them every step of the way. However, thanks to the "intelligence, industry and noble daring" of American pioneers, they "laid the foundation of all the states from Maine to California, and made their development and greatness possible."[145]

Echoing these themes, Union veteran Alonzo P. Connolly described the Dakota War and American Civil War as essential steps to establishing a nationwide free-labor empire and realizing American exceptionalism. He likewise asserted American Indians hindered development. Minneapolis, for example, "was not allowed to grow" because it was "within Native dominion." Characterizing Dakota people as "not in sympathy with civilization," he celebrated the defeat of the Dakota and the Confederacy as necessary steps to advancing civilization.[146]

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[144] *Minnesota Civil War and Sioux Uprising: Centennial Commission's Report to the Minnesota Legislature* (December 1960), Minnesota Monument Commission Folder, Civil War Memorial Commissions Collection, Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, MN. This uniquely western interpretation of the connection between the Dakota War and American Civil War was long lasting, and it was central to the state's centennial celebration of these events in 1962.

[145] "New Ulm's Defenders," *New Ulm (MN) Review*, August 26, 1891.

[146] Connolly, *Minneapolis and the G.A.R.*, 3–4.

Neighboring South Dakota veterans also contributed to this narrative. The South Dakota GAR honored Brigadier General Henry Sibley and Lieutenant Colonel William Marshal for driving "more than 2,000 Sioux warriors across this river, never, never to return, after their horrid massacre of 1,182 persons, mostly women and helpless children."[147] As they told it, the defeat of the Confederacy and the Dakota ended barbarism and led to an era of American development, civilization, and prosperity. Union victory ensured Minnesota would become "a land of beautiful farms and pretty little towns."[148] Their dual victory meant, "no more will we hear the thunder of the guns of Vicksburg. No more will the savage Sioux disturb our peaceful homes."[149] Western Unionists celebrated the Dakota War and Civil War as integral events in a larger narrative of American expansion, empire, and exceptionalism.

While men like Connolly and the South Dakota GAR connected their defeat of the Dakota and Confederates, they also drew important distinctions between their enemies. Concerning Confederates and Native Americans, "there is no comparison," Connolly noted. He observed, "in the South we fought foeman worthy of our steel, soldiers who were manly enough to acknowledge defeat, and magnanimous enough to respect the defeat of their opponents. Not so with the Redskins. Their tactics were of the skulking kind; their object scalps, and not glory. They never acknowledged defeat, had no respect for a fallen foe, and gratified their natural propensity for blood."[150] Already

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[147] South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic* (Aberdeen, SD: n.p., 1893), 40.

[148] Connolly, *Minneapolis and the G.A.R.*, 26.

[149] South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Encampment*, 40.

[150] A. P. Connolly, *A Thrilling Narrative of the Minnesota Massacre and the Sioux War of 1862–63* (Chicago: n.p., 1896), 12.

deemed "civilized" based on race, Confederates were welcomed back into the Union. In contrast, Union troops massacred and forcibly relocated the Dakota.

By connecting the violent colonization of Dakota people to the Civil War—or the "good war" as Ari Kelman quips—western Unionists excused their wartime violence toward the Dakota and justified contemporary colonization efforts.[151] Wishing to memorialize "the Union soldiers who did so much to open the country to civilization," the North Dakota Grand Army of the Republic and state Congressman Thomas Marshall erected a Civil War battlefield monument at Whitestone Hill, North Dakota in 1901. At this site, General Alfred Sully's forces massacred between 150 and 300 Native people in September 1863 as part of the punitive campaigns against the Dakota. Dedicating the monument to the Union soldiers who "shed their blood" in the "arduous task of supplanting the Red Man," the monument rebranded the massacre site as a battle site. Historian Aaron Barth argues monument building at Whitehill "rationalized the Union's total war against native America as necessary and inevitable for the advancement of 'white' civilization."[152]

The 1894 Camp Release State Monument dedication in Montevideo, Minnesota provided a similar opportunity. "After beholding the atrocities of 1862," E. J. Hogson remarked, "I have never ceased to believe that the best solution of the Indian question is to drive the entire gang of them into the Pacific ocean." He warned, "If they ever start another massacre, I am one of the men who will enlist for three years, or until every mother's son of them is turned into a good Indian, assuming of course that the only good

[151] See Kelman, *A Misplaced Massacre*, 75 and 280.

[152] Aaron L. Barth, "Imagining a Battlefield at a Civil War Mistake," *Public Historian* 35, no. 3 (2013): 81 and 75.

Indians are dead Indians."[153] By situating the Dakota War within the Civil War in their commemorations, western Unionists sought to validate the violence inherent to colonizing Indigenous Americans on the frontier, a process that was still ongoing throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century.[154]

Arguing the Dakota were a threat to white women, Union veterans from Minnesota also relied on gender constructions to further defend violence against American Indians. In his history of the Grand Army of the Republic in Minneapolis, Connolly recalled, "Redskins … were playing such havoc among settlers" and engaging in "uncivilized" warfare, targeting women and children. "On the war-path," he recounted how Dakota warriors "slaughter[ed] the unsuspecting people" and took over three hundred women and children prisoner. Connolly conveyed one tale where in their pursuit of the Dakota, US soldiers found a white woman "in a nude condition," shot fourteen times in the back alongside the road. [155]

The Camp Release monument dedicated to "the number of prisoners held here by the Indians … 107 of whom were white women and children" similarly underscored these themes.[156] The 1891 monument to the "defenders" of New Ulm was comparably dedicated to the men who "saved our state and its lovely women."[157] Minnesotans, like many Unionists, relied on white gender roles to define and police the boundaries of civilization. They reasoned Dakota men were dangerous to white women and therefore, a

[153] "Where Heroes Sleep," *Star Tribune* (Minneapolis), July 5, 1894.
[154] See also Kelman, *A Misplaced Massacre*.
[155] Connolly, *Minneapolis and the G.A.R.*, 20–21 and 43–44.
[156] "A Fine Monument," *Star Tribune* (Minneapolis), July 4, 1894.
[157] "New Ulm's Defenders," *New Ulm (MN) Review*, August 26, 1891.

threat to the development of civilization. These historically-based claims helped bolster white assimilationists policies and racial hegemony in the late nineteenth century.

In their commemorations, Unionists argued that Minnesotans faced Confederates in the South and the Dakota in the West, dual threats to creating a free American empire. Consequently, their commemorations cried, "'On to Richmond' on the one hand, and 'On to Little Crow' on the other."[158] Farther west, Union veterans and their families employed similar language to justify US military action against Indigenous peoples in the late-nineteenth century. Like Minnesotans, they connected wars against Native Americans to the American Civil War, and by commemorating both as interrelated wars for empire, they justified and glorified violence against Native peoples to support contemporary colonization policies.

Kit Carson and the Southwest

Southwestern Union veterans and their families similarly described exterminating and relocating Native tribes as an extension of the mission of the Civil War to create a free American empire. In the Southwest, however, slavery and emancipation were essential to their arguments. In their commemorations, southwestern Unionists equated Indigenous Americans with Confederate slaveholders, and their triumphant narratives of Union victory against Confederates and American Indians bolstered assimilationist polices.[159] Civil War commemorations connected the Confederacy and the Five Tribes of Oklahoma's enslavement of African Americans to bolster the federal government's efforts to colonize Indigenous people through allotment and other assimilationist

[158] Connolly, *Minneapolis and the G.A.R.*, 48–49.
[159] Bean, "Who Defines a Nation," 110–131.

programs in the late-nineteenth century. As Barbara Krauthamer demonstrates, "Federal policy makers linked the issues of Black American's freedom and rights in the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations to the very dissolution of the Indian nations' territorial and political autonomy."[160] The creation of a western expansionist memory of the Civil War helped reinforce these aims.

The Choctaw, Chickasaw, Cherokee, Creek, and Seminole practiced slavery in the West during the antebellum era and allied with the Confederacy in 1861. While the Cherokee, Creek, and Seminole abolished slavery at the end of the war, the Choctaw and Chickasaw attempted to retain slavery following the defeat of the Confederacy. Native tribes allied with the Confederacy to preserve slavery in Indian Territory, but they also understood slavery and emancipation as part of a larger struggle to maintain their sovereignty.[161] The 1866 Choctaw/Chickasaw treaty, according to Krauthamer, demonstrates the federal government's "unrelenting drive to curb tribal sovereignty and claim the better part of Indian Territory for the United States."[162]

Dissimilar to the Five Tribes of Oklahoma in Indian Territory, southwestern Hispano and Anglo settlers enslaved Apaches and Navajos, and the American Civil War and federal emancipation policy posed a threat to slaveholding throughout the region. In response to raids by Navajos, US General James Carleton ordered the Union Army to

[160] Barbara Krauthamer, *Black Slaves, Indian Masters: Slavery, Emancipation, and Citizenship in the Native American South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 12.

[161] Indian nations were autonomous political entities; therefore, the Emancipation Proclamation and the Thirteenth Amendment did not apply to Indian Territory. See Krauthamer, *Black Slaves, Indian Masters*, 101–152; Fay Yarbrough, *Race and the Cherokee Nation: Sovereignty in the Nineteenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).

[162] Krauthamer, *Black Slaves, Indian Masters*, 101.

forcibly remove six thousand Navajos and four hundred Mescalero Apaches to Bosque Redondo, a newly created Indian reservation in central New Mexico.[163]

Carleton justified the creation of Bosque Redondo and its staggering death rate—between 10 and 20 percent—in terms of slavery and emancipation. He argued the reservation would prevent wealthy Hispanos and Anglos from further enslaving Navajos and Mescalero Apaches, and in doing so, he rebranded Native incarceration as emancipation. As Megan Kate Nelson demonstrates, "fighting simultaneously for black emancipation and indigenous incarceration" served the Union's ultimate goal "to take possession of the lands of the entire continent, and give them over to free laborers."[164] Similarly, southwestern Civil War commemorations worked to defend Native extermination and relocation by upholding Carleton's claim that these practices helped end slavery throughout the region. Remembering emancipation, therefore, was key in their collective memories to creating a nation-wide American empire.

Spending most of his life in the US military in the West, including service against the Confederacy in New Mexico, Kit Carson was central to many southwestern Union commemorations. Across the region, Grand Army and Relief Corps members celebrated Kit Carson Days and erected monuments and memorials in his name. Union commemorations celebrating Carson constructed slavery—practiced by both Confederates and Native Americans—as not only dual threats to free labor but also evidence of their barbarism. The Union, on the other hand, represented civilization through its commitment to free labor and western land development. Western Civil War

[163] Nelson, *The Three-Cornered War*, 177–213.
[164] Nelson, *The Three-Cornered War*," 210–213 and 229.

commemorations, therefore, reinforced federal allotment and other assimilationist policies.

During the Civil War, the Southwest received scarce national attention, and after the war ended, eastern commemorations of the war infrequently mentioned the battles fought there. Unionists from California, Nevada, New Mexico, and Colorado, however, felt Carson was worthy of commemoration. "In our boastful American enterprise," the *Las Vegas Gazette* reported that it was shameful that Carson's grave "lives chucked away in a coyote patch… without even a piece of picket railing to protect [it] … or even a pencil mark on a shingle for a headstone."[165] As an American soldier, who "blazed the pathway for American progress and civilization," they felt Carson's military service as an explorer and a military officer during the Civil War and the Indian Wars should be remembered.[166]

How people honored their dead was viewed as a reflection of their society's level of civilization. Carson's dilapidated, unmarked grave reflected poorly on white westerners, especially following western Unionists' assertion that "the veneration of the dead distinguishes mankind from the brute creation."[167] Not only were burial practices touted as a symbol of civilization and method for measuring racial difference, but grave sites were also critical to showcasing racial hegemony.[168] During the 1862 Dakota War, for example, US soldiers defiled Dakota graves in retribution. Denying and disrupting

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[165] *Las Vegas Gazette*, February 12, 1876.

[166] Kit Carson Monument & Grave Marker, Folder 85, Box 3, Grand Army of the Republic Department of New Mexico Records, Santa Fe, NM.

[167] Pease, "Memorial Day Address."

[168] See Daina Ramey Berry, *The Price for their Pound of Flesh: The Value of the Enslaved, from Womb to Grave, in the Building of a Nation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2017); Drew Gilpin Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008).

burial practices was one way that white westerners demonstrated their own racial power and their enemy's total defeat. Burial practices were not simply a way to safely dispose of one's dead but held important meanings for which groups of people were worthy of memorialization.

In April 1884, the New Mexico Grand Army Department issued a letter to the GAR posts west of the Missouri River asking for funds to rebury and mark Carson's grave at Taos.[169] Requesting funds only from Western states suggests that while western Unionists sought to elevate their relevance in national Civil War narratives, they also saw western Civil War experiences as distinct from those in the eastern United States. Initially they planned to erect a small, plain column over Carson's grave site, but they abandoned their modest ambitions as interest in the project grew. Instead, they placed a tablet at his gravesite in Taos and erected a nineteen-foot-tall caramel-colored obelisk in his honor in downtown Santa Fe.

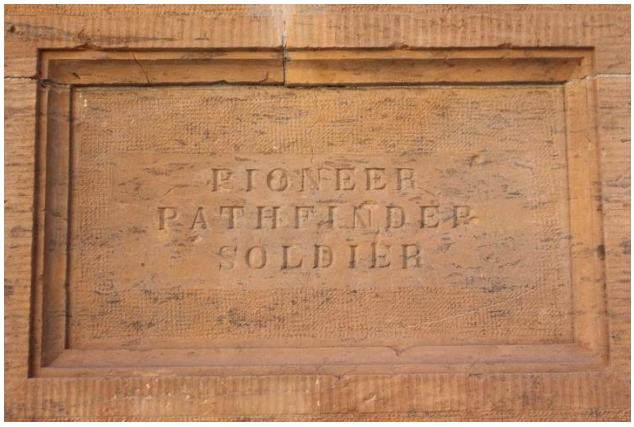

Figure 6. Photograph of the Santa Fe, New Mexico Kit Carson Monument inscription[170]

[169] New Mexico GAR Circular Letter No. 2, Folder 78, Box 3, Grand Army of the Republic Department of New Mexico Records and Kit Carson Monument & Grave Marker.

[170] *Kit Carson Monument (Santa Fe, New Mexico)*, ca. 2015, accessed June 21, 2022, https://perma.cc/NJ4H-P8C2.

Over five thousand spectators gathered in Santa Fe on Memorial Day 1885, to celebrate Carson as a "Pioneer, Pathfinder, Soldier." While the dedication ceremonies were lauded as "a splendid recognition of Kit Carson," they were also intended to honor "the perpetuation of the Grand Army." A parade featuring local military personal, including the Kit Carson Regiment veterans and the Grand Army of the Republic, marched through downtown Santa Fe to kick off the festivities. "Nothing could be more appropriate," they noted, "than that the ceremonies dedicating Kit Carson's monument should be conducted under the auspices of the Grand Army of the Republic" principally because Carson "was a soldier and took part on the side of the government in every war in which the country was engaged during his lifetime." Not only did he fight to preserve the Union, but they also proclaimed, "in this distant and isolated region, his heart … embraced the cause of the slave."[171]

Governor Lionel Sheldon, several Grand Army men, and Indian Agent Major Don Pedro Sanchez delivered the orations in English and Spanish, which was fitting as the First New Mexico Cavalry under Carson was an Anglo-Hispanic unit.[172] They celebrated Carson's role as a pathfinder in the western United States. From his work, they noted that "it had been learned, however, that colonization would be obstructed by arid plains, lofty mountains and savage tribes of aborigines."[173] Carson's Civil War military service, they asserted, was critical to eliminating obstructions to the extension of white civilization in the Southwest. In the "battles for free or slave supremacy" between 1861 and 1865,

[171] "Garlands of Glory," *Weekly New Mexican Review* (Santa Fe), June 4, 1885.
[172] Lance R. Blyth, "Kit Carson and the War for the Southwest: Separation and Survival along the Rio Grande, 1862–1868," in *Civil War Wests*, 58.
[173] "Garlands of Glory," *Weekly New Mexican Review* (Santa Fe), June 4, 1885.

Carson was appointed colonel of the First New Mexico Volunteer Infantry. He was best known for his performance at the battle of Valverde, New Mexico and leading campaigns against the Apache and Navajo.

A report issued by General James Carleton was frequently read at Kit Carson Day celebrations across the Southwest. The report noted, "the Indians, aware that the attention of our troops could not, for the time, be turned toward them, commenced robbing the inhabitants of their stock, and killed, in various places, a great number of people." Native American warfare in the trans-Mississippi West, therefore, could not be viewed or treated as separate from the American Civil War. Carleton instructed Carson that he had "no power to make peace"; rather, he was to reject Native offers of surrender because he was sent "to punish them for their treachery and their crimes."[174] Historian Megan Kate Nelson asserts, "preventing Confederate occupation of New Mexico Territory and clearing it of Navajos and Apaches were twin goals of the Union Army's Civil War campaign in New Mexico." Carson's operation "sought not only military victory but also the creation of an empire of liberty: a nation of free laborers extending from coast to coast."[175]

Southwestern Unionists' collective remembrances equated the forced removal of the Navajo with ending barbarism to justify colonization. California Union veterans celebrated wresting New Mexico from the Navajo, or as they described them the "true Bedouins" and "Ishmaelites" of the region.[176] At the unveiling of a statue to Carson in

[174] Edwin Legrand Sabin, *Kit Carson Days, 1809–1968* (Chicago: M. F. Hall, 1914), 410 and 413–414.

[175] Nelson, *The Three-Cornered War*, xvii.

[176] Sabin, *Kit Carson Days*, 418.

Trinidad, Colorado, Samuel DeBusk declared that the contested land "was held by the wilder North American Indians,—uncivilized, roving, the Ishmaelites of the plains."[177] A 1911 dedication to Carson in Denver, Colorado similarly celebrated western pioneers, including the Grand Army of the Republic, who "carried civilization into the Rockies … and aided in wresting what is now the great state of Colorado from the domain of savage beasts and still more savage men."[178]

Like the celebrations at Carson's gravesite, commemorations to Carson in Colorado and during Kit Carson Days equated southwestern Native people like the Comanches with slaveholding and the Confederacy and the removal of the Navajos with emancipation to justify the violence inherent to colonization. Rather than understanding these events as colonial violence, southwestern Union veterans and their families associated them with the Civil War and slavery, which rebranded them as acceptable in the fight to emancipate enslaved peoples across the continent.

However, the federal government was not as interested in emancipation as westerners proclaimed in their Civil War remembrances. Taking its lead from the emancipation of enslaved American Americans, Congress abolished peonage and Indian slavery in New Mexico in March 1867. But when "no real change in the labor systems of the Territory" occurred, the US government largely ignored it. Nelson argues Republicans distinguished between the enslavement of Native Americans and African Americans because emancipating Black Americans and incarcerating Native Americans

[177] DeBusk, *Unveiling of Kit Carson Statue Address*, 242.

[178] "Kit Carson Pioneer Monument," *Daily Ardmoreite* (OK), June 25, 1911, quoted in Cynthia Culver Prescott, *Pioneer Mothers: Constructing Cultural Memory* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2019), 32.

effectively allowed them to seize land and transfer it from indigenous hands to free laborers.[179] Rather, emancipation was a rhetorical tool to rationalize the violence the United States mitigated against Native Americans in their effort to create an American empire.

In their commemorations they argued Carson's service against Native and Confederate forces opened the Southwest for free-labor—or "civilized" development. Following his defeat of "wild beasts and savage men," railroads, permanent settlements, and industry flourished. Their commemorations celebrated permanent settlements as vital to civilizing Native peoples and eliminating their "proneness to engage in war" because permanent settlements invigorated agricultural production, manufacturing, and Anglo-gender roles.[180] Encouraging Native peoples to pursue private land ownership was critical to white Americans' allotment efforts, which decreased Native land holdings to open more territory for white settlement in the West.[181]

Like veterans from the Upper Midwest, Southwestern Unionists drew powerful links between commemoration and colonization. Monuments, they argued, signaled development, civilization, and virtue. At the Santa Fe Carson monument dedication, New Mexico Territorial Governor Lionel Sheldon reasoned, "in a new country, other things present themselves first. The unknown is to be discovered, the forests are to be removed, roads constructed, and houses erected" before people can construct monuments. They asserted the very fact that Unionists could gather and honor Carson with a monument

[179] Nelson, *The Three-Cornered War,* 229.
[180] "Garlands of Glory," *Weekly New Mexican Review* (Santa Fe), June 4, 1885.
[181] See Genetin-Pilawa, "The Allotment Controversy, 1882–1889," in *Crooked Paths to Allotment*, 134–155; Krauthamer, *Black Slaves, Indian Masters*, 141–144.

reflected that the colonization of the West—made possible by men like Carson and other Union veterans—had succeeded.

While western Unionists asserted these commemorations signified that colonization was a success, they also used them to make claims about Native inferiority that were central to their continued colonial project. Denying Native Americans possessed a collective memory, Sheldon insisted that commemorations "require a high intellectual power, and far more courage, fortitude and persistency" than Native peoples possessed. He argued the absence of Native American-constructed stone monuments was further evidence of Indigenous inferiority. Commemorations like the Carson monument excite "the admiration of nations in every stage of development, from the savage to the enlightened…. As people advance in the scale of being they come better able to understand and appreciate a principle—a motive—which governs the actions of men."[182] While the very act of commemoration signified civilization, Sheldon also asserted that commemorations could inspire civilization. Monument construction itself was therefore held as a benchmark of assimilation's progress.

Erecting a permanent monument to Carson symbolized the success of white Americans' efforts to colonize Native Americans and was used to measure civilization. Union victory, as they remembered it, was not only defeating the slaveholding Confederacy south of the Mason-Dixon Line but was also eliminating slaveholding Native Americans in the West and extending free-soil settlement from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans. Symbolizing that "the savage men and wild beasts are nearly gone [and] the country is more settled," Union Civil War veterans' efforts to erect a monument to

[182] "Garlands of Glory," *Weekly New Mexican Review* (Santa Fe), June 4, 1885.

Carson, celebrated that "to-day we know no north, no south, no east, no west, but one common country."[183]

The Wounded Knee Massacre

In numerous instances across the West, Civil War veterans appropriated frontier regulars' military service and reclaimed Indian War spaces as Civil War sites. They argued that Indian Wars in the West, even if they were waged after April 1865, were an extension of the wartime aim to exterminate and relocate Native Americans to secure a free-soil republican empire. "I am reminded," one South Dakota veteran observed, "the territory from which these two states were made, was settled by the soldiers of the Civil War."[184]

They argued Union veteran settlers in the West temporarily banded together to put down Indian insurrections as ad-hoc citizen soldiers, not regulars. Not only did they claim they were militarily responsible for colonization, but they also asserted that frontier regulars were educated by the Civil War. The Indian Wars, in other words, were "the consequence of our Civil War, and the men it educated."[185] Western Union veterans made these claims, in part, because it increased their political capital. By appropriating Indian War service as an extension of the Civil War, they could assert that western states "[owe] them a duty."[186] As Chapter 6 argues, they rivaled Indian War veterans for valor and glory, and most significantly, the state funds for veterans that accompanied the credit.

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[183] "Floral Patriotism," *Santa Fe Daily New Mexican*, May 31, 1889.

[184] South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the Twenty-Third Annual Encampment*, 31.

[185] Iowa GAR, *Journal of the Twenty Eighth Annual Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic* (Des Moines: Talbott-Koch, 1902), 162–163.

[186] South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the Twenty-Third Annual Encampment*, 31.

South Dakota Union veterans and their families took an avid interest in commemorating the Wounded Knee Massacre on Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. On December 29, 1890, the US Seventh Cavalry, led by Colonel James W. Forsyth, massacred more than two hundred Lakota. Even though Wounded Knee occurred thirty-five years after Appomattox, white Wounded Knee commemorations sometimes contextualized the massacre within the Civil War to defend it as a battle and to shield contemporary colonization policies against criticism.

Figure 7. Photograph of men posing with the Seventh Cavalry Monument at Fort Riley, Kansas[187]

In 1893, spectators gathered at Fort Riley for the unveiling of a monument to the Seventh Cavalry. Delivering the dedication address, Kansas state legislator Joseph R. Burton situated the Wounded Knee Massacre within the context of the American Civil War to recharacterize the massacre of three hundred Lakota people as a defensible battle.

[187] *The Wounded Knee Monument at Fort Riley, Kansas,* ca. 1893, accessed June 21, 2022, https://perma.cc/26MN-B4ZD.

Burton asserted the American Civil War and Indian Wars followed the same pattern. While northerners fought for "free schools, free homes and free labor" which led to the "development of a higher civilization," southerners advocated for "slave labor, ignorance, idleness and crime" with the "inevitable consequence of a worse civilization."

The Indian Wars between the US government and Indigenous Americans, according to Burton, mimicked this design. He asserted, "In the struggles of mankind, the better civilization has the better claim to dominion. Virtue and intelligence have the superior rights to ignorance and barbarism." This "moral truth," he insisted, connected the American Civil War and the Wounded Knee Massacre because both were conflicts against barbarism and savagery. Federal troops' triumph in both instances was a supposed victory for civilization. By defeating the Confederacy in 1865 and the Lakota in 1890, the Seventh Cavalry monument defended the Wounded Knee Massacre as a longstanding military effort to establish a nationwide American empire.

While he asserted that both Confederates and American Indians fought against civilization in favor of barbarism, Burton carefully distinguished white Confederates based on race. In the Civil War "soldiers of the Republic combated and destroyed savage ideas championed by civilized men," but at Wounded Knee, he argued US soldiers combated and destroyed "savage ideas" championed by a "savage race." He continued, "This country, was in possession of a savage race that had made no progress in a thousand years and would have made no progress had it possessed the land a thousand years more." Consequently, Burton felt "no sympathy with that sickly sentiment of nabbling idlers who[,] removed far from contact with the savage[,] mourn the fate of the poor Indian and lament his wrong." Rather, he insisted, "no land belongs to any people or

race, when the claims of a better civilization are asserted."[188] While carefully delineating between the two based on race, Burton compared Lakota people with Confederates to validate colonization and challenge critics of US Indian policy.

The act of commemoration itself also became a benchmark for measuring civilization as Unionists used it to gauge racial difference and inscribe racial hegemony. They asserted white-sponsored commemorations—and an absence of Native-sponsored commemorations—at Wounded Knee signified white American superiority and Native inferiority. During the late-nineteenth century, the US government banned various forms of Indigenous memorial and ritual practices, such as the Sun Dance and the Ghost-Keeping ritual. Despite their prohibition, Native Americans not only crafted their own collective remembrances at Pine Ridge—which white Unionists often failed to recognize or deemed unworthy of attention—but they also engaged in culturally white forms of commemoration like monument building.

When over 5,000 Lakota gathered to dedicate a monument to Lakota casualties at Wounded Knee in 1903, white South Dakotans drew important connections between commemoration and civilization. Non-Natives argued a Native-constructed monument was evidence of American Indian's increasing civilization. The Chicago *Inter Ocean* reported the Lakota-sponsored monument was "an indication of the civilizing process among the Indians, where they adopted the customs of the white man and erected a monument of granite to mark as sacred the ground where their dead are buried."[189]

[188] "Wounded Knee Heroes," *Abilene (KS) Weekly Reflector*, July 27, 1893.

[189] "Sioux Monument to Braves Who Fell at Wounded Knee," *Inter Ocean* (Chicago), June 7, 1903.

The *Omaha Daily Bee* sardonically announced, "civilization of the Indian seems pretty close when we read that marble dealers of Omaha have just closed a contract whereby they are to erect for the Cheyenne and Ogalalla [*sic*] Sioux Indians a monument to be placed on the battlefield of Wounded Knee, in South Dakota, which the Indians insist on regarding as a massacre." They continued, "those who doubt that they will ever fall into the customs and modes of thought of the whites ought to find something convincing in this project of the Sioux Indians. It is less than half a generation since they were in blankets and turkey feathers."[190]

While Native-sponsored monument construction was touted as evidence of the success of the civilization program, it was simultaneously employed to demonstrate the limits of assimilation. The *Nebraska State Journal* mocked monument-sponsor and massacre-survivor, Joseph Horn Cloud's supposed unpreparedness for monument construction by lambasting him for providing vague instructions for the inscription to be carved on the shaft.[191]

The *Inter Ocean* editor also discredited the Lakota by mocking their dress as gaudy and their ceremonies as dramatic and untruthful. Following the example of labeling the Battle of Little Big Horn the Custer Massacre, the *Inter Ocean* reported that "the Sioux have called the battle of Wounded Knee the 'Big Foot massacre.'" The editor quipped, "Where these children of the plains, the Dakotas, got their dramatic instinct can only be surmised, but it was a master dramatists who arranged the opening details of these exercises, and the effect produced on these half-wild people of savage instinct

[190] "Era of Indian Monument," *Omaha Daily Bee*, November 10, 1902.
[191] *Nebraska State Journal* (Lincoln), October 28, 1902.

cannot be described."[192] Non-Native westerners not only touted Native-sponsored remembrances that emulated white methods of commemoration as evidence of Native assimilation but they also employed commemoration as an elusive benchmark of civilization that American Indians had failed to fully meet.

However, Native-led countermemories represent Indigenous attempts to reclaim historic spaces, assert their own historicity, and challenge white narratives of the Wounded Knee Massacre. With sustained access to the killing field at Wounded Knee located within the Pine Ridge Reservation, the Lakota also memorialized their dead by marking the bodies with prayer sticks, or small temporary stakes. Grieving Lakota placed them "near burial places, with special markings that aided the dead on their journey to the spirit world."[193]

Joseph Horn Cloud's efforts to erect a more permanent monument to commemorate the "Chief Big Foot Massacre," according to David Grua, represent a strategy to use the "enemy's language"—specifically the use of the word massacre and a stone monument—to support their demands for compensation within the government's claims system. The use of a Lakota inscription, "Cankpi Opi Eltona Wicakte Picun He Cajepi Kin" or "These are the Names of those Killed at Wounded Knee" on the face of the monument, for example, resisted assimilation by confronting colonizers with the death toll they had wrought.[194] Furthermore, holding the dedication ceremonies on Memorial Day weekend "allowed the Lakotas to invoke patriotic symbols while covertly

[192] "Sioux Monument to Braves Who Fell at Wounded Knee," *Inter Ocean* (Chicago), June 7, 1903.

[193] David W. Grua, *Surviving Wounded Knee: The Lakotas and the Politics of Memory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 95.

[194] Grua, *Surviving Wounded Knee*, 101.

performing banned or disapproved rituals and protesting the Seventh Cavalry's actions on December 29, 1890."[195]

* * *

Civil War monuments celebrating "no north, no south, no east, no west" across the United States boasted that the nation was an undivided, united American empire. While this inscription appeared on numerous monuments and memorials around the country, it took on special meaning in the trans-Mississippi West. Western Union veterans and their families subsumed military violence against Indigenous nations in the latter-half of the nineteenth century into their commemorations of the American Civil War. In doing so they defended violence against Native Americans as acceptable in establishing a nationwide free-labor empire. As one Minnesotan addressing fellow Union veterans described it, "your battle line commenced at the Ohio river, it zig-zagged down through the Mason and Dixon line, on beyond the Indian Territory, Texas, New Mexico, doubling down the Gulf of Mexico, and then bordering the entire seacoast of the South."[196]

In western Union veterans and their families' commemorations of the 1862 Dakota War, Kit Carson's military service in the Southwest 1890, and the Wounded Knee Massacre, they compared Indigenous tribes with slaveholding Confederates to rebrand massacre and violence as a suitable war for emancipation and civilization. They further employed their collective remembrances and Native-sponsored (or an assumed lack of) commemorations as a tool to measure and inscribe racial hegemony. Waged as

[195] Grua, *Surviving Wounded Knee*, 100.

[196] Minnesota GAR, *Journal of Proceedings of the Fifty-Third Annual Encampment of the Department of Minnesota, Grand Army of the Republic* (Minneapolis: Syndicate, 1919), 128.

"battles for free or slave supremacy," western Union Civil War commemorations remembered violence against Native Americans within the context of the "good war."

CHAPTER IV – "SOLDIER PIONEERS": CELEBRATING WESTERN EXPANSION, SETTLER COLONIALISM, & REPUBLICAN INSTITUTIONS

Gathered in a small South Dakotan town founded fourteen years after the close of the American Civil War, Henry Roberts Pease delivered the 1887 Memorial Day address at Volga. He praised Union veterans who, "[i]nspired with faith in this new life of the Nation, and the supremacy of its power over the Republic's undivided and imperial domain" left their homes "with the magic rod of development" on a "western march of empire." Like those he celebrated, Pease fought for the Union during the American Civil War. After moving to Dakota Territory in 1881, he worked in the United States Land Office handling claims for white settlers whose land titles on Winnebago and Crow Reservations were revoked by federal order. Pease praised Union veteran settlers, who after preserving the Union, "brought with us the engines of civilization, churches, common schools, the Printing Press, and the plough" and "established all the safeguards of social order" in the West.[197] White western Union veterans like Pease celebrated the tide of western colonization and the emergence of invasive settler colonial communities as emblematic of Union victory.

In some instances, Union veterans appropriated the service of US regulars in western Indian Wars, as Chapter Three demonstrates, while in other instances they simply ignored the service of Indian War veterans. Instead, they argued that their Civil War military service was responsible for preserving the trans-Mississippi West for free labor and that it was their role as veteran-pioneers that fulfilled the promise of a free-labor American empire. Their collective memories drew a connection between protecting

[197] Pease, "Memorial Day Address," 4.

republicanism through their Civil War military service and later extending republicanism to the trans-Mississippi West by celebrating veteran-pioneers for building institutions—like churches, public schools, civil governments, agriculture, and industry—throughout the region. These connections are visible in three areas, which are explored in this chapter: veterans' roles in the establishment of settlements and post-war commemorative associations, constructing memorials and monuments, and founding republican institutions in the West.

Veterans' Associations and Auxiliaries

Unionists emphasized westward expansion and settler colonialism in their Civil War commemorations because they personally identified as the pioneers of the West.[198] As one Idaho Union veteran stressed, "the same enterprising and loyal spirit that made soldiers in the years from 1861 to 1865, made pioneers after the war was ended; and to-day we find them scattered all over the great Northwest."[199] Signing the 1862 Homestead Act into law, President Abraham Lincoln transferred 270 million acres from public to private domain, heavily incentivizing those loyal to the Union to engage in settler-colonialism in the West. In 1870, Congress amended this act with their passage of the "Soldiers' Homestead Bill," which allowed Union veterans to apply their war service to the five-year residency requirement. This new provision further fueled westward expansion by Union veterans, and numberless Civil War veterans took advantage of this

[198] "The Monument Unveiled," *Salt Lake Herald*, May 31, 1894. See also Harmon Bross, "Pioneers in Nebraska: Civil War Veterans Played Big Parts," Grand Army of the Republic Clippings, vol. 2, Nebraska History Archives, Lincoln, NE; Kansas GAR, *Journal of the Thirty-seventh Annual Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic Department of Kansas* (Topeka: Kansas State Printing, 1918), 17; National GAR, *Journal of the Fiftieth National Encampment*, 201–203.

[199] Idaho GAR, *Report of the Fourth Annual Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic* (Hailey, ID: n.p., 1891), 5.

opportunity and migrated West.[200] Inherent in these laws was the idea that loyalty to the Union entitled veterans to western lands.

Displacing Indigenous populations, Union veterans created homesteads and settlements across the West. In numerous cases, they preferred to settle together in veterans' colonies, such as Gettysburg, a Union colony in Dakota Territory. Many western veterans felt that "when they had returned home they found their places taken," which drove their impulse to migrate west.[201] In his research on western veteran migration, Kurt Hackemer argues that some of these men "headed west to reinvent themselves on the frontier."[202] Examining Union veteran settlement in Dakota Territory, he reveals these men tended to cluster together and were overrepresented in counties that were only recently opened for settlement.[203] War trauma, economic troubles, and difficulty reintegrating into civilian life, as well as a lifelong propensity toward western migration, led many Union veterans to settle in western territories like Dakota after the war. Other Union veterans created veterans' colonies in Kansas and Nebraska, which James Marten characterized as an effort to make money and distinguish themselves from non-veterans.[204]

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[200] Jordan, *Marching Home*, 181.

[201] Abram W. Smith, "Kansas Nebraska Bill and Decoration Day" in *Transactions of the Kansas State Historical Society, 1905–1906, Vol. IX*, 116.

[202] For his analysis of lifetime mobility, see Hackemer, "Union Veteran Migration Patterns to the Frontier," 84–108.

[203] Hackemer, "Wartime Trauma and the Lure of the Frontier," 75–103.

[204] Marten, *Sing Not War*, 270–272. See also Jordan, *Marching Home*, 181–82 and Paul A. Cimbala, *Veterans North and South: The Transition from Soldier to Civilian after the American Civil War* (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2015), 74–82 discuss soldier colonies in the West and South and assert many veterans migrated to newly opened territory. Hackemer,"Wartime Trauma and the Lure of the Frontier," argues historians, including Marten, Jordan, and Cimbala, "do not fully capture the magnitude of this westward impulse, a migration that becomes increasingly important to understand in light of the veterans' difficulties in their original homes." (79)

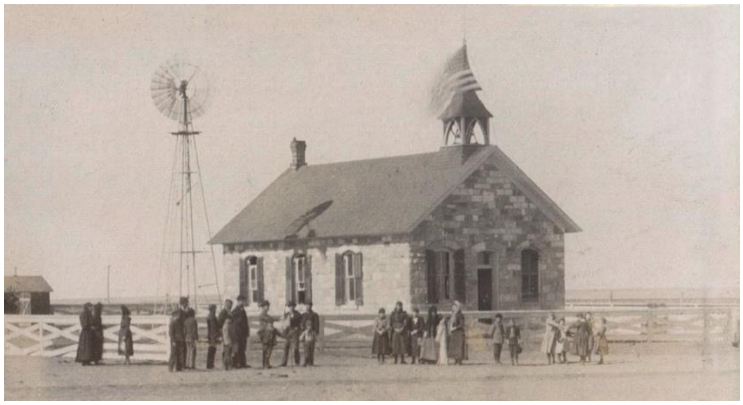

Figure 8. Photograph of residents in front of Colony House at the Chicago Soldiers and Sailors Colony in Trego County, Kansas[205]

As Union veterans in the West sought one another out by forming veteran colonies, they also founded fraternal veteran associations across the nation for similar reasons.[206] They likewise envisioned the creation of Union veterans' associations as integral to western colonization. As one South Dakota veteran explained:

> The Veteran Soldier of the Republic has to a large extent composed the 'warp and woof' of the pioneer element of our territory. Separating … from the old and pleasant associations of their early homes, they come to the far west to found new homes for their families and to accept the advantages of the liberal land laws of our Government. They come, not in the spirit of adventure, but with all their social ties, education and refinement; and in the absence of accustomed society, they naturally seek the companionship of their old comrades and warmly desire to unite under the tenets of our organization for cheer and counsel.[207]

[205] *Untitled*, accessed June 21, 2022, https://perma.cc/S3AS-7B4H.
[206] See "Farms for Those Who Fought," *Grand Army Magazine*, 1, no. 3, March 1883, 195.
[207] Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the First Annual Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic Department of Dakota* (Sioux Falls, SD: n.p., 1884), 9–10.

Together they bonded over their shared wartime experiences, and as Hackemer demonstrates, this often extended beyond the social to stimulate psychological healing.[208] But gathering in veteran associations also allowed Union veterans an opportunity to leverage their wartime service to reinforce and defend their role as western colonizers.

In 1866, the national formation of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) consolidated and systematized these disparate groups into a structured and uniform national association.[209] Operating on the local level, Union veteran clubs became Grand Army posts named for a person significant to the Civil War. These posts were then organized under a state department, and if there were not enough members within a single state or territory, neighboring states combined their membership to create joint units, such as the Colorado and Wyoming GAR Department. Local posts strove to hold frequent meetings, while state departments met at an annual assembly. Once a year, members selected a major city to host a nation-wide encampment reunion, and GAR members from across the country gathered there to create and drive Grand Army policy on a national scale.

While the Grand Army of the Republic was open only to Union veterans, Union women created auxiliary associations to aid the GAR. Recognized as its only official auxiliary, the Woman's Relief Corps (WRC) opened its membership to all loyal women. The wives, widows, and daughters of Union veterans created competing clubs with the formation of the Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic and the Daughters of Union Veterans, but these associations were limited to women who could demonstrate a

[208] Hackemer, "Wartime Trauma and the Lure of the Frontier," 75–103. See also Hackemer, "Union Veteran Migration Patterns to the Frontier," 84–108.

[209] Robert Burns Beath, *History of the Grand Army of the Republic* (New York: n.p., 1889), 68.

hereditary or marital connection to a Union soldier. Mirroring the structure of the GAR, women's auxiliaries organized themselves on local, state, and national levels across the country.

Union Civil War associations were most popular in northern states east of the Mississippi River, but veterans formed posts in every state and territory in the United States, including Alaska and Hawaii. The WRC similarly existed in every state except Hawaii. Posts and corps thrived in places like Illinois, New York, and Pennsylvania, which each boasted over five hundred posts and rosters of over twenty thousand members.[210] While smaller in numbers, men and women in the trans-Mississippi West also formed Grand Army posts and Relief Corps even though they encountered numberless barriers to their success in this region.

With a few exceptions, western territories and states had relatively low populations spread out over large distances. Many westerners found it difficult to create and maintain posts and corps because their membership was drawn from significantly larger territories and therefore, members had to travel long distances to attend meetings.[211] Idaho GAR commander Willard White noted, "[I]f statistics could be gathered it would be found, I doubt not, that many a Comrade would be found throughout

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[210] See National GAR, *Journal of the National Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic* (places of publication vary, 1883–1939); National WRC, *Journal of the National Convention of the Woman's Relief Corps* (places of publication vary, 1884–1939). The WRC in these states averaged over two hundred corps with memberships over ten thousand.

[211] See Arizona GAR, *Proceedings of the Thirteenth Annual Encampment of the Department of Arizona Grand Army of the Republic* (Phoenix: H. H. M'Neil, 1900), 4; Nebraska GAR, *Journal of the Twenty-Eight Annual Encampment of the Department of Nebraska Grand Army of the Republic* (Lincoln: Benton Bros., 1904), 60; Dakota GAR, *Journal of the Sixth Annual Session of the Territorial Encampment, Department of Dakota, Grand Army of the Republic* (Canton, SD: News Print, 1889), 24; Dakota WRC, *Proceedings of the Sixth Annual Convention of the Woman's Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the G. A. R. Department of Dakota* (Aberdeen, SD: Fred H. Shoals, 1889), 15; *New Mexico GAR, Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Encampment Grand Army of the Republic Department of New Mexico* (Raton, NM: n.p., 1892), 6.

the entire State in locations too far removed from any Post with which to affiliate."[212] For the same reasons, state Grand Army and Relief Corps officials struggled to inspect associations throughout their departments, which made it difficult to create organizational uniformity and grow their memberships.[213] As a result, western associations typically held fewer and more infrequent meetings, and often had difficulty reaching a quorum to conduct official business.[214] White thought this was shameful because these "brave, earnest Veterans" were contributing in "their declining years towards the building up of the mightiest empire that the civilized world has ever known," and the establishment of republican institutions like the GAR and WRC were vital to this process.[215]

[212] Idaho GAR, WRC, and LGAR, *Proceedings of the Twenty-Fourth Annual Encampment Department of Idaho G. A. R., Journal of the Sixteenth Annual Convention Department of Idaho W. R. C., and Journal of the Second Annual Convention Department of Idaho Ladies of the G. A. R.* (n.p.: n.p., 1911), 13. Other posts similarly noted long distances, sparse populations, and crude transportation networks made it difficult to create and maintain posts and corps. See New Mexico GAR, *Proceedings of the Eighth Annual Encampment, Department of New Mexico, Grand Army of the Republic* (Albuquerque: n.p., 1891), 37; Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the First Annual Encampment*, 10; Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the Second Annual Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic Department of Dakota* (Chamberlain, SD: n.p., 1885), 7.

[213] See Nebraska GAR, *Journal of the Sixteenth Annual Session of the Grand Army of the Republic, Department Encampment, Department of Nebraska* (Lincoln: John McIntosh, 1893), 60; Kansas WRC, *Proceedings of the Second Annual Convention of the Department of Kansas Woman's Relief Corps Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic* (Sabetha, KS: Nemaha County Republican, 1886), 8–9; Colorado and Wyoming WRC, *Journal of Proceedings of the Eighth Annual Convention of the Department of Colorado and Wyoming Woman's Relief Corps Auxiliary to the G. A. R.* (Greeley, CO: Greeley Tribune, 1892), 39.

[214] See New Mexico GAR, *Proceedings of the Eight Annual Encampment*, 37; Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the First Annual Encampment*, 8–10; Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the Second Annual Encampment*, 7; New Mexico GAR, *Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic* (Albuquerque: n.p., 1890), 11; Texas GAR, *Proceedings of the Sixth Annual Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic* (Houston: n.p., 1891), 27–28; Louisiana and Mississippi GAR, *Proceedings of the Twelfth Annual Encampment Journal of the Grand Army of the Republic* (New Orleans: n.p., 1895), 15; Colorado and Wyoming WRC, *Journal of the Eight Annual Convention*, 39; Colorado and Wyoming WRC, *Journal of the Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Convention of the Woman's Relief Corps* (Longmont, CO: n.p., 1893), 11; Kansas WRC, *Proceedings of the Second Annual Convention*, 8–9.

[215] Idaho GAR, WRC, and LGAR, *Proceedings of the Twenty-Fourth Annual Encampment*, 13.

Their impact on national organizations was diminished as well. Annual national GAR encampments and WRC conventions were typically held in cities east of the Mississippi River, and westerners found it difficult to attend these meetings. Between 1884 and 1939, the GAR and WRC held fifty-five joint national reunions, and only eighteen (32%) were located in the trans-Mississippi West.[216] Ten (18%) of those were in the midwestern states of Minnesota, Iowa, and Missouri, while the remaining eight (14%) were in the far western states of Colorado, California, Oregon, and Utah.[217] The South Dakota GAR, for example, was outraged when the national GAR moved the 36th National Encampment from Denver to Cleveland, which created "considerable ill feeling among the comrades of the west."[218]

Not only was the distance required for western veterans to reach eastern annual encampments impractical, but the financial burden they placed on westerners was also often too high to justify attendance. Railroad companies offered discounted rates for veterans attending national encampments, but in many cases western veterans received smaller discounts or no discount at all.[219] One South Dakota veteran lamented, "for many years, the comrades of the states west of Chicago, residing within what is designated the

[216] See National GAR, *Journal of the National Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic* (places of publication vary, 1883–1939); National WRC, *Journal of the National Convention of the Woman's Relief Corps* (places of publication vary, 1884–1939).

[217] In the far Midwest, they met four times each in Iowa and Minnesota, and twice in Missouri. In the West, they met three times each in Colorado and California, and once in Oregon and Utah respectively. No annual national meetings were held in former Confederate states.

[218] See South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the 19th Annual Encampment of the Department of South Dakota, Grand Army of the Republic* (Canton, SD: N. C. Nash & Son, 1902), 10.

[219] See Utah GAR, *Proceedings of the Twenty-First Annual Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic* (Ogden, UT: n.p., 1903), 13; Dakota GAR, *Journal of the Fourth Annual Session of the Territorial Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic* (Fargo, ND: n.p., 1887), 23; Nebraska GAR, *Journal of the Thirty-Eighth Annual Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic* (Lincoln: L. M. Scothorn, 1914), 43; Idaho GAR, *Journal of the Ninth Annual Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic* (Boise: n.p., 1896), 14; Kansas GAR, *Journal of the Twenty-Eighth Annual Encampment*, 30–31.

Western passenger Association Territory, have felt that they have been unjustly discriminated against in the matter of railroad rates to the National Encampments."[220]

Not only did distance and significantly lower populations present challenges to the development of Union Civil War associations in the West, but westerners were also preoccupied with colonization.[221] In less developed regions, many veterans were engrossed in colonizing Indigenous populations by fighting Indian Wars and creating settlements. They often prioritized this over the creation of commemorative organizations. For example, Union veterans in Wingate, New Mexico began forming a Grand Army post, but their efforts were stalled when local men "were called to aid in suppressing the Indian insurrection in the north."[222] The Washington and Alaska GAR noted in 1889 that their lack of posts was due to the fact that veterans were "engaged in establishing homes and supporting their families in a part of the country which their loyalty and valor helped preserve."[223] A circle of the Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic in Oklahoma lost members when they had moved to "Indian country" which had "been opened for settlement."[224]

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[220] South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the Eighteenth Annual Encampment*, 40.

[221] See Montana GAR, *Journal of the Twenty-First Annual Encampment*, 15; Idaho GAR, *Proceedings of the First Annual Encampment, Department of Idaho, Grand Army of the Republic* (Salt Lake City: Tribune, 1888); California GAR, *Proceedings of the Seventeenth Annual Encampment of the Department of California Grand Army of the Republic* (San Francisco: George Spaulding, 1884), 19; Utah GAR, *Proceedings Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p., 1905), 11.

[222] New Mexico GAR, *Proceedings of the Eight Annual Encampment*, 36.

[223] Washington and Alaska GAR, *Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Encampment Grand Army of the Republic Department of Washington and Alaska* (Tacoma, WA: n.p., 1889), 8. Formed in 1888, the Wadsworth Corps No. 1 of the Woman's Relief Corps of Montana "struggled through the hardships of pioneering" and other Montana veterans recalled the "suffag [*sic*] of the pioneer soldiers of those early days when food was so scarce." See "Brief History of the Department of Montana WRC," Box 1, Grand Army of the Republic Department of Montana Records, Montana Historical Society, Helena; "At the Cross," Box 1, Grand Army of the Republic Department of Montana Records, Montana Historical Society, Helena.

[224] "Oklahoma History of the Ladies G. A. R.," Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City.

Despite these barriers, veterans and their families successfully founded Grand Army posts and women's auxiliaries in the West. At the 1886 Utah Grand Army encampment, Department Commander H. C. Wardleigh recalled, "a little more than three years ago, this Department was organized with six Posts that were scattered over an area of country large enough to build an Empire, but thinly peopled and destitute of many of the facilities of communication so essential to the spread of civilization." He praised the past commanders who built up their department considering these barriers.[225]

Veteran settlers' rudimentary lifestyles made club formation difficult, but in many cases it also elevated the importance of the Grand Army and Relief Corps for western settlers. The GAR and WRC provided vital forms of welfare to veterans in regions where state-sponsored relief did not exist or was minimal. For example, after widespread crop failure, the South Dakota Grand Army commander requested aid from other departments. In his appeal, he noted that the veterans for whom he sought help came "to Dakota in hope to better their condition by getting free Government lands, and most of them were reasonably successful for the first few years. But few of them had any means to start, but with brave hearts and willing hands cast their lot on the frontier."[226] The GAR and WRC's efforts to create a socioeconomic safety-net for their members likely appealed to veterans and their families living in rudimentary communities. Consequently, men and women created successful posts and corps in every state west of the Mississippi River that suited their members' distinctive needs.

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[225] Utah GAR, *Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Encampment, Department of Utah, G. A. R.* (Ogden, UT: n.p., 1886).

[226] "Request for Charity---Please Read," Box 4, Grand Army of the Republic Department of Oregon Records, Oregon Historical Society, Portland. See also Nebraska GAR, *Journal of the Eighteenth Annual Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p., 1895), 63–64.

Western Territorial Expansion

When thousands of Union veterans like Robert Pease and their families moved west after the Civil War and created GAR and WRC associations, they became integral to the settler colonial project of the United States, displacing Indigenous populations in the West with a population of white-American settlers.[227] These veterans constructed a expansionist legacy of the Civil War that celebrated settler colonialism as the culmination of their military service. In this respect, Union veterans and their families creating and sustaining non-Native western communities served as an enduring monument to the Union war effort. Key to developing the region as veteran pioneers was colonizing Indigenous peoples, or as one Oregon Grand Army man put it, "subdue[ing] a race of still more savage and merciless people."[228] Therefore, situating their celebrations of the Civil War within the context of settler colonialism was a key component to elevating the importance of western veterans within the national legacy of the Civil War.

In their collective remembrances of the Civil War, western Union veterans asserted that their military service in the East secured the West for the possibility of free-soil white settlement. They celebrated the existence of western territories and states as the spoils of the Union's victory over the Confederacy, or as one veteran put it, "Kansas is a trophy of the war."[229]

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[227] See Goldstein, ed., *Formation of United States Colonialism*; Hixson, *American Settler Colonialism*; Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest*; Smith, *Virgin Land*; Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation*.

[228] Oregon GAR, *Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Encampment of the department of Oregon Grand Army of the Republic* (Baker City, OR: Oregon Blade Steam, 1888), 5. See also South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Encampment of the Department of South Dakota, Grand Army of the Republic* (Canton, SD: n.p., 1894), 49.

[229] Kansas GAR, *Proceedings of the Twenty-Third Annual Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic, Department of Kansas* (Topeka: Ed. G. Moore & Son, 1904), 18.

During his 1898 Memorial Day address, Montana veteran J. H. Durston similarly proclaimed, "the union of that states was made perfect" and "each shining star was left undimmed on the flag whose ample folds belt the united continent." He remarked that Montana had once been "like a woodland wilderness," but "hither we have come … to make for ourselves and for our children… homes that are peaceful and prosperous because war made peace and prosperity possible."[230]

In his 1912 address before fellow Union veterans, South Dakotan Thomas Brown echoed Durston's sentiments, declaring that since "the blighting sin of human traffic" had been righted, western states are "today gathering rich fruits from the seeds sown in suffering and in blood, half a century ago, by the Civil War veterans in our midst."[231] Or as Theodore Sears from Washington put it, Union veterans were "God-fearing men" who sought "the inhospitable shores of unexplored America, for free homes where free men might exist and free government be the ruling power."[232] Western Union commemorations asserted that with the demise of slavery and the defeat of the Confederacy, the West was secured for free-soil settlement.

Delivering the main address at the dedication of the GAR-sponsored monument at Beecher Island in 1905, Colonel George Forsythe asserted that the Battle of Beecher Island opened the West for civilized, white settlement because it purportedly eliminated Native peoples. The battle site "records the last struggles of a savage race of people which once held dominion over all the land, but at the close of the nineteenth century

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[230] J. H. Durston, *A Memorial Day Address* (n.p.: n.p., 1898), 3–4.

[231] South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the 29th Annual Encampment, Department of South Dakota Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p, 1912), 15.

[232] Washington Territory GAR, *Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Encampment, Grand Army of the Republic, Department of Washington Territory* (n.p.: n.p., 1887), 4.

vanished from the earth." He claimed, "We came here in time to witness the closing of one epoch in our country's history, ending with the extinction of the Indian."[233]

Development, according to Forsythe, was antithetical to Native culture. He juxtaposed Native forms of social organization with Anglo ones, "a busy town stands where Red Cloud pitched his tent, and the smoke seen far up the river, is not from the Indian's wigwam, but the breath of the iron steed as he rushes up the valley on his long race over the plains, across the continent." The once "wild" West has "become the most productive region known to man," boasting white schools, permanent homes, and communities.[234]

Forming institutions, including Civil War veterans' associations and auxiliaries, signified the success of the US settler colonial project. In July 1883, Grand Army departments from across the country met in Denver, Colorado for the first national GAR reunion hosted west of the Mississippi River.[235] In anticipation of the Denver national encampment, Colorado Union veterans maintained their state was the "most appropriate place now for the re-assembling of the Grand Army" because in "this fair Centennial State" the "sufferings of the one made the glory of the other possible."[236] While Colorado could not boast of any major Civil War battle sites, its veterans did not consider Denver an unusual meeting place for their reunion. Rather, they argued the state itself was a

[233] *Jewel County (K.S.) Republican*, October 27, 1899.

[234] *Jewel County (K.S.) Republican*, October 27, 1899.

[235] For histories of Civil War veterans' organizations see Janney, *Remembering the Civil War;* Nina Silber, *Daughters of the Union: Northern Women Fight the Civil War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005); Janney, *Burying the Dead but Not the Past*; Barbara A. Gannon, *The Won Cause: Black and White Comradeship in the Grand Army of the Republic* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014); Stuart McConnell, *Glorious Contentment: The Grand Army of the Republic, 1865–1900* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992).

[236] "The Coming Reunion," *Grand Army Magazine* 1, no. 7 (July 1883), 407.

testament to Union victory. The 1883 GAR national encampment provided western Union veterans with the perfect opportunity to showcase their importance to the legacy of the Civil War and share their western-centric vision of their military service and the war with eastern veterans.

Despite Denver's considerable distance from major Civil War battlefields, Colorado Grand Army veterans asserted their relevance to narratives about the Civil War.[237] In "The Coming Reunion" published in Colorado's *Grand Army Magazine*, their state department acknowledged that while "the flood-tides of rebellion barely touched [Colorado's] feet," their "unexampled prosperity" was due "to a great extent" to Union soldiers who saved the nation "in the battle's flame" because they were "the pioneer[s] who … extended its empire under the umbrageous wings of civilizations and progress." The article venerated the thousands of citizen-soldiers who "turned their faces and took up the line of march toward the setting sun."[238]

Following their migration to the Northern Great Plains, the "weary" landscape was "changed to be smiling fields of agriculture; the cañons became the pathway of the iron horse of commerce; the treasure vaults, filled in the morning of creation, were opened to promote the civilization which prophecy had foretold." Consequently, Colorado veterans maintained that when thousands of Grand Army men and their wives converged on Denver, "it will not be the revisitation of a victorious army to the battle-

[237] Battlefields were the centerpieces to many Civil War commemorations—Union and Confederate—east of the Mississippi River. For example, Reardon, *Pickett's Charge* examines the North and South's movement toward reconciliation by analyzing the fateful third day of Gettysburg in memory. Pickett's Charge, thus Gettysburg, gained a special place in the process of national reconciliation, which Blue and Gray reunions at Gettysburg came to symbolize.

[238] "The Coming Reunion," 407–408.

fields of its most brilliant triumphs," rather Union veterans would be "surrounded by the living presence of the brightest achievements of peace."[239]

Colorado veterans wanted their eastern counterparts to understand and share their vision of their state's connection to the Civil War. One *Grand Army Magazine* author predicted, "the old soldiers of the east who have never visited the grand state of Colorado … will not be able to anticipate … the pleasing sights which they are to behold." They believed this experience would be significant because the existence of Colorado within the United States, they argued, was "a development of our empire which their victories in war made possible."[240]

Another article in *The Grand Army Magazine* entitled "Denver Illustrated," featured depictions of Colorado that were intended as a "souvenir" for comrades who attended the 1883 reunion. Attendees were expected to "retain and carry with them to their homes, to show what has been, and is being done, in the 'Great American Desert.'"[241] As a souvenir, the article was intended to "convey an idea to those who have not been so fortunate as to visit the teeming West, the growth and glory and progress in the country which their valor and victory, in the dark days of war, made possible."[242] S. S. Burdett, a member of the Grand Army Department of the Potomac in Washington, D.C., shared Coloradan veterans' belief that gazing upon the Colorado landscape would be a source of "patriotic delight" because the "undiminished whole is our gift today and our legacy to the coming generations."[243]

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[239] "The Coming Reunion," 407–408.
[240] "Top and Bottom," *Grand Army Magazine* 1, no. 4 (April 1883), 222.
[241] "Top and Bottom," 222.
[242] "Denver Illustrated," *Grand Army Magazine* 1, no. 7 (July 1883), 431.
[243] "A Strong Paper," *Grand Army Magazine* 1, no. 3 (March 1883), 195.

Colorado Union veterans relied on imagery depicting Native peoples to drive this point home. *The Grand Army Magazine* featured images of uninhabited prairie teeming with wildlife and emphasized that while Denver "now stands the brightest young city on the continent," twenty-five years prior it was "a barren waste" and "home of the Indians."[244] The Colorado GAR juxtaposed images and language that depicted indigeneity with arrested development and white pioneer settlers with advancement. Then they argued that Union veterans were primarily responsible for western development: "the Grand Army of the Republic … made it possible for Colorado … to rise from vassalage" because "it furnished the pioneers, who opened the way for the great prosperity she now enjoys."[245] During the 1883 national encampment, the Colorado Grand Army Department praised Union veterans for preserving and upbuilding the West, which they defined as a legacy of Civil War military service. This constructed memory was not particular to the 1883 GAR reunion, however, and can be found in other western Civil War national encampments.[246]

[244] "Denver Illustrated," 431–432.

[245] "Grand Army Collegiate and Military Institute," *Grand Army Magazine* 1, no. 5 (May 1883), 280.

[246] The national GAR encampment in San Francisco provided similar opportunities for Californians in 1886 and 1903. Concerning the 1886 Encampment, the New Mexico GAR remarked, "At that time thousands of our comrades will journey from their homes in the states to the eastward of New Mexico to the sunset shore of our united country. To many of them it will be the first opportunity they have had to realize the vastness of the results of valor on the field of battle from 1861 to 1866 won for themselves and their posterity." See New Mexico GAR, *Minutes of the Department Encampments of the Department of New Mexico G. A. R. for the Years 1886 and 1887* (Albuquerque: n.p., 1887), 14–15. At the 1903 encampment, General Nelson A. Miles delivered an address celebrating Union veterans who "turned their faces toward the great West, and shoulder to shoulder they have touched elbows in developing this great and mighty western portion of our continent." See "General Miles Speaks," *San Francisco Call*, August 21, 1903.

Figure 9. Photograph of the Dept. of South Dakota Grand Army of the Republic convention badge featuring an Indigenous man in a headdress[247]

While western Union veterans argued their Civil War military service made free-soil settlement from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans possible, they praised themselves for successfully fulfilling that possibility.[248] For example, the South Dakota GAR's "Great Indian Medal" encampment badge features a Plains Indian on the front and the state seal, which incorporates a railroad line, steam ship, homestead, and farmer pushing a plow, on the back.[249]

[247] *Grand Army of the Republic, Department of South Dakota, GAR Badge, Great Indian Medal,* accessed June 21, 2022, https://perma.cc/J4VH-AP74.

[248] See Kansas GAR, *Journal of the Twenty-Eight Annual Encampment*, 10; See Idaho GAR, *Journal of the Fifth Annual Encampment, Department of Idaho, Grand Army of the Republic* (Boise: n.p., 1892), 7; Arkansas GAR, *Journal of the Twenty-First Annual Encampment*, 49; Jesse Dunn, "The Day, and Our Nation," Memorial Day Garden City Kansas 1892, file 18, Jesse Dunn Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City.

[249] *Grand Army of the Republic, Department of South Dakota, GAR Badge, Great Indian Medal*.

Inspired by their military service during the Civil War, one Kansas veteran similarly explained, “they had seen the vastness of the country and they were no longer content to remain on the old homesteads and in the old towns.” Rather, “they heard the call of the West calling them to the land of opportunity.” Like others, he argued the development of western lands was to the credit of the Union veterans who migrated there. He continued, "they took our villages and made them into cities. They took the plains and the prairies and made them into wheat fields and corn fields. They developed undreamed of natural resources.” [250] They asserted Union veterans were responsible for saving and subsequently “upbuilding” the West, and in their commemorations, the role of soldier, veteran, and settler were synergistic.

Western Unionists inscribed this legacy in stone at monument dedication ceremonies across the West, including a statue erected to Union general James McPherson for whom McPherson, Kansas, was named. McPherson County itself developed out of Ashtabula, a veterans’ colony comprised of Union veterans from Ohio.[251] Thousands of Kansans and westerners flocked to the small community to attend the unveiling of an equestrian monument to McPherson on July 4, 1917, and it provided an opportunity to celebrate and memorialize their understanding of the legacy of the war in stone. Here, too, we can see the connection between the war for the Union and the Union veterans' ongoing war to colonize the West.

[250] Kansas GAR, *Journal of the Twenty-Eight Annual Encampment*, 12–13.
[251] Marten, *Sing Not War*, 270.

Gen. McPherson was a natural choice for the monument because the city and county seat were named for him. He graduated from the US Military Academy in 1853 and was appointed to the Corps of Engineers with the rank of brevet second lieutenant. He worked on the defenses in New York harbor, Fort Delaware, and Alcatraz Island in San Francisco, California, which is where he was stationed when the Civil War began. After requesting a transfer back East, he initially secured a position on the staff of Major General Henry Halleck in the western theater of the war. By February 1862, he had been promoted to lieutenant colonel and chief engineer on General Ulysses S. Grant's staff. In March 1864, he was appointed commander of the Army of the Tennessee, and the following May he advanced with his troops into Georgia in the Atlanta Campaign. During the Battle of Atlanta on July 22, 1864, Confederate skirmishers shot and killed McPherson.[252] Depicting the moments before his death, the McPherson monument outwardly celebrates his military service in the Civil War.[253]

Local veterans' associations—the GAR McPherson Post No. 87, WRC McPherson Corps No. 110, and Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic U. S. Grant Circle No. 104—began raising funds in 1914 to erect a Civil War monument to commemorate the triumph of the Union war effort in McPherson's Central Park.[254] In

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[252] James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988; Elizabeth J. Whaley, *Forgotten Hero: General James B. McPherson* (Sandusky, OH: Sandusky County Historical Society, 1976).

[253] The statue also includes a rear plate with the veterans' badge on it to recognize the GAR and a memorial tablet with the names of the 752 Civil War veterans who moved to McPherson County after the war. See "The Monument," *Official Souvenir McPherson County, July 4, 1917, Statewide Patriotic Event, Unveiling Gen. James B. McPherson Monument First Bronze Equestrian in Kansas* (n.p.: n.p., 1917) (hereafter cited as *Official Souvenir*); *McPherson (KS) Weekly Republican,* July 6, 1917. By recognizing the veteran residents, the plaque further allowed McPherson to lay claim to a Civil War past.

[254] To facilitate funding, commission an artist, and plan an unveiling ceremony, they created the Gen. J. B. McPherson Monument Association with one representative from each veteran and auxiliary association, as well as the Federation of Women's Clubs, Board of Trade, and McPherson Travelers. See "The Reconnaissance," *Official Souvenir*. The board secured half of the funding for the monument from

anticipation of July 4, newspapers across the state advertised the upcoming events, the Kansas departments of the GAR, WRC, and LGAR invited members from their own and other departments to attend, and railroad companies created special routes and times to bring people into town.[255]

Figure 10. Postcard photograph of Gen. James B. McPherson Monument in McPherson, Kansas[256]

Their efforts paid off. More than 40,000 people attended the monument dedication in what they claimed was the "biggest patriotic demonstration in the history of the state."[257] Festivities began in the morning with a parade honoring the Civil War

county taxes and the other half came from private donations raised by the GAR, WRC, and LGAR. "How We Got the Monument," *Official Souvenir*; *McPherson (KS) Weekly Republican*, 6 July 1917; Kansas LGAR, *Proceedings of the Thirty-First Annual Convention of the Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic Department of Kansas* (n.p.: n.p., 1917), 89–90; *Topeka Daily State Journal*, July 27, 1916.

[255] Kansas WRC, *Journal of the Thirty-Third Annual Convention Department of Kansas Woman's Relief Corps Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p., 1917), 119; *McPherson (KS) Weekly Republican*, June 29, 1917; *Topeka Daily State Journal*, May 11, 1917; *Topeka Daily State Journal*, July 3, 1917.

[256] *Postcard of Major General James B. McPherson Monument*, Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, Kansas, accessed June 21, 2022, https://perma.cc/RFW7-DBEE.

[257] *McPherson (KS) Weekly Republican*, July 6, 1917. See also *Topeka State Journal*, July 4, 1917; "State-Wide Event," *Official Souvenir*.

veterans' organizations, which further symbolized their centrality to the erection of the monument. Following the parade, Lieutenant General Nelson A. Miles gave a mid-day oration to unveil the monument. Finally, McPherson County residents performed a pageant showcasing the history of Kansas that evening.[258] The rhetoric and symbolism employed by Miles and the performers imbued the McPherson monument with its legacy of celebrating westward expansion.

The greatest draw of the festivities was Miles' speech at the unveiling of the monument. Renowned as an officer during the Civil War, commander of the 5th US Infantry Regiment in the Indian Wars, and recipient of the Medal of Honor, General Miles' presence was greatly anticipated. Speaking to tens of thousands of attendees, he connected McPherson's service in the Civil War and in conflicts in the postwar West to what he characterized as the advance of white civilization westward. He described the trans-Mississippi West as a "vast territory … roamed over by hordes of merciless savages and myriads of wild beasts" until "heroic soldiers … came to rescue the captives and defend the defenseless in what was known as the 'War for Civilization.'" Miles honored McPherson and other Union soldiers by claiming that their sacrifice opened the West for "the home-builders who endured every privation and hardship and who planted their colonies along these fertile valleys and over these rich prairies [and] have built up communities and a great State where we now find the highest type of American civilization."[259]

[258] *McPherson (KS) Weekly Republican,* June 29, 1917; *McPherson (KS) Weekly Republican,* July 6, 1917; "Miles at McPherson," *Emporia (KS) Gazette,* July 1, 1917; *Emporia (KS) Gazette,* July 5, 1917.
[259] "Address of Gen. Miles," *McPherson (KS) Weekly Republican,* July 6, 1917.

Miles saw the McPherson monument as emblematic of the US Army's role as an advocate for the advance of white civilization across the American continent. He connected the military contributions of Civil War soldiers and generals, such as McPherson, to the success of the US Army's colonization policies in the Indian Wars in the trans-Mississippi West. By describing these wars as struggles "between enlightenment and barbarism [in] the theatre of conflict between bondage and freedom," Miles saw dual legacies between the Union's victory and the abolition of slavery to opening the West for white settlers to establish free governments.[260] He believed Union victory and abolition ensured white men and women could bring civilization westward by erecting homesteads, constructing towns, and most importantly, establishing free civil governments in the West that reflected the American founders' republican ideals. Furthermore, he romanticized hardscrabble pioneering as a patriotic testament to Union victory in the Civil War.[261] Kansas pioneers' success in developing the region, Miles argued, reflected the republican experiment Union veterans fought to preserve in the Civil War.

Other orators echoed these themes throughout the day, but the evening pageant most clearly connected the legacy of the Civil War to the development of McPherson County and Kansas. Over 1,200 McPherson County residents performed "The People Who are Building Kansas," a play about the history and development of the state, to

[260] "Address of Gen. Miles," *McPherson (KS) Weekly Republican,* July 6, 1917. See Eric Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party before the Civil War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

[261] See Bodnar, *Remaking America*. Bodnar argues that the midwestern collective memory likewise celebrates pioneer perseverance during difficult times.

10,000 spectators at the community building of the State Agricultural College.[262] Attendees were required to purchase tickets due to limited space and the cost of putting on the production, but in return they also received a souvenir booklet detailing the festivities, including a description of the pageant held that evening. The booklet showcased the central role that westward expansion played in the production.

Actors began by caricaturing Native Americans "going west as civilization drives them out." The following scenes then connected the forced removal of Indigenous populations to the Civil War and post-war white migration westward. The souvenir booklet summarized one skit as, "war reigns over the land. Peace excludes War, and opens the way for Progress to lead Prohibition, Education, Industry, Agriculture and Religion."

The scenes following the war further celebrated the development and progress of McPherson County. After interpreting pioneer life in its early stages, the actors praised the agricultural prowess, four railway lines, educational system, businesses, civil services, and most of all, the progressive citizens found with the county.[263] The pageant's narrative connected the colonization of Indigenous populations and the Civil War to McPherson's development and progress as a democratic city, and McPherson, "a mighty nice democratic little center," itself served as a tribute to the legacy of the war.[264]

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[262] *Topeka Daily State Journal,* April 25, 1917.

[263] "Kansas Historical Pageant, *Official Souvenir.* See also "The City of McPherson," *Official Souvenir*; "McPherson County as a 'Melting Pot'," *Official Souvenir*; *McPherson (KS) Weekly Republican,* July 6, 1917.

[264] *McPherson (KS) Weekly Republican,* July 6, 1917.

The following day, newspapers across Kansas praised the monument dedication festivities, and veterans' organizations commended the unveiling as "one of the greatest patriotic events in the history" of the Kansas GAR department.[265] The celebrations allowed Kansans from McPherson to add meaning to the unveiling of the monument that reached beyond celebrating his Civil War military service. Kansans saw the legacy of the war as one of westward expansion and the triumph of free-labor republican government in the West. Celebrating white migration and the development of democratic communities allowed McPherson to claim a connection to a war waged years before their community even existed. Theirs was a memorial that reflected little on emancipation or the memories of Antietam, Gettysburg, Vicksburg, or Atlanta. While commemorations in the East rested heavily on the past, the commemorations at McPherson captured how westerners used their Civil War past to rationalize the ongoing colonization of the West.

Like the McPherson monument, other Union veterans and their families imbued their monument dedication, Memorial Day, and association speeches with a western-centric vision of the war. Laura Bauer, a member of the Woman's Relief Corps unveiled a memorial tablet to the GAR in the Montana state capitol building at Helena in 1927. At the unveiling, State's Attorney Leroy A. Foot, delivered the dedication address, proclaiming that "during the tragic days of 1861 to '65 … the great empire that we now call Montana was little known," but after the war ended "the resources of the new

[265] Kansas GAR, *Journal of the Thirty-Sixth Annual Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic Department of Kansas* (Topeka: Kansas State Printing Plant, 1917), 87. See also Kansas GAR, *Journal of the Thirty-Seventh Annual Encampment*, 14; Kansas WRC, *Journal of the Thirty-Third Annual Convention*, 43; *McPherson (KS) Weekly Republican*, June 29, 1917; *McPherson (KS) Weekly Republican*, July 6, 1917; "Miles at McPherson," *Emporia (KS) Gazette*, July 1, 1917; *Emporia (KS) Gazette*, July 5, 1917.

commonwealth began to appeal to the adventurous spirits of the boys who had so lately been a part of the Great Union Army thru whose courage and sacrifice the nation had been saved." Foot asserted that their "experiences gained in war particularly fitted these young soldiers" for the work of colonization because their courage and determination was necessary to building homes and governments while defying "wild savages who so fiercely disputed their every step."

The credit for "civilizing" Montana was due, he argued, to the "men whom we today know and honor as The Grand Army of the Republic, and what they did in Montana they were also doing in the other western states." Union veterans were forever "part of Montana" according to Foot because they had "left their mark on every trail, in every community … leaving behind them a monument more enduring than bronze or marble." Union veterans "had so much to do with making Montana," that the state itself, according to Foot, served as a more powerful and lasting monument to Union veterans than any granite marker.[266]

Like Foot, many remarked that pioneering was a natural fit for Union veterans. Five years before they achieved statehood, Washington Grand Army men emphasized the role Union veterans made in colonizing the state. At the 1884 state encampment, Department Commander George Hill announced significant growth in the Department of Montana's Grand Army membership. He reasoned that this "shows that the soldiers of the union are falling into line, that their faces are toward this fair land of promise." The growing numbers of Union veterans to their "infant state … marks the increase in our

[266] Leroy A. Foot, "Address of Attorney General L. A. Foot accepting the Memorial Tablet of the Womens Relief Corps," 1927, Leroy A. Foot speech, undated Collection, Montana State Historical Society, Helena (hereafter "Memorial Tablet Acceptance Speech").

midst of an element which has always been the fearless champion of the government and equal rights, an element composed of men whose principles are so firm, and whose convictions so sincere, that they have not hesitated, and will never hesitate to maintain them with their lives, best years and best blood."[267]

Veterans in other western states agreed.[268] Amidst discussions about whether a memorial should be erected to honor Union Civil War soldiers in Nebraska, Grand Army state secretary I. D. Evans reasoned the "close of the war came at a time when Nebraska was ready and waiting to welcome new settlers on an extensive scale." He continued, "The recently discharged soldiers, full of patriotic ardor, looking for an opportunity to make homes were ready to embrace the opportunity so generously offered." These veterans, he claimed, were "young, full of hope and expectation, imbued with the belief that they were equal to any job, having done their share in saving to mankind the great experiment of liberty and equality in government." Therefore, "They constituted a body of citizens fit to build a great state from the abundance of raw material spread out before them."

Consequently, Evans maintained that any "history of Nebraska would be notably incomplete that did not recognize the very large share performed by the soldiers of the Civil War in laying the foundations of the State on broad and patriotic lines."[269] His

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[267] Washington Territory GAR, *Proceedings of the Second Annual Encampment of the Department of Washington Territory, G. A. R.* (Seattle: n.p., 1884), 6.

[268] See also National GAR, *Journal of the Fifty-Fourth National Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1921), 209. GAR Commander-in-Chief Daniel M. Hall of Columbus Ohio—whose regiment served in Indian Territory in 1862—celebrated the Union veterans who "went West and kept going West." According to Hall, they "went West and set up the western empire, that turned those prairie states into gardens" that feed "half the world to-day" (209).

[269] "Shall the State Erect a Memorial to Soldiers of the Civil War?," Box 1, Nebraska. Grand Army of the Republic: General Correspondence, 1878–1949 Records, Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln.

characterization of the relationship between Union soldiers and the settlement of Nebraska held sway with other Nebraskans. The state's governor Robert Leroy Cochran likewise honored Union veterans by stating, "It took as much courage for the Civil war soldiers to conquer the raw state of Nebraska as it did to defend the union."[270]

In their western-centric narrative of the Civil War, western Union veterans argued that their military service not only preserved the trans-Mississippi West for free-soil settlement, but as pioneers they also reaped its rewards. Settler colonialism, many argued, was the inheritance of their Civil War military service. As Eugene Hay put it during his 1893 Memorial Day address in Minneapolis, Minnesota, "the men whose graves we decorate to-day fell fighting in the defense of their homes. Nay more, to their hands had been committed the flag of an advancing civilization, and under that banner they won their victories; for all humanity they laid down their lives. Their inheritance was a wilderness, and they and their fathers had builded upon that wilderness, a mighty empire."[271]

Republican Institutions and Industry

In their Civil War commemorations, western Union veterans argued that when they moved West and established communities, they brought with them the hallmarks of republicanism. As they transformed territories into states, they established civil governments, created churches and public schools, and harnessed the region's

[270] "Rawlins Post Disbands After 47 Years Pass: Beatrice Boys in Blue Decide to Surrender their Charter," Grand Army of the Republic Clippings Collection, Vol. 2, Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln.

[271] Eugene G. Hay, "Address Delivered by Eugene G. Hay at Exposition Hall, Minneapolis, Minn. Before the Grand Army of the Republic, Woman's Relief Corps, Sons of Veterans and Citizens of Minneapolis, on Memorial Day, 1893," (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1893), 1–2 (hereafter "1893 Memorial Day Address").

agricultural and industrial potential.[272] At the 1909 Kansas Grand Army encampment, F. W. Brinkerhoff claimed that Union veterans were not only "the saviors of a nation," but they also "made our newspapers; they wrote our laws … They built this magnificent state." In moving westward, he boasted that Union veterans were "the builders of a mighty commonwealth."[273]

Their military service had preserved the Union and republicanism, and according to Union veterans, these customs instituted and protected republicanism in the trans-Mississippi West. By emphasizing their role in extending republican institutions to the West, Union veterans further elevated their importance in the Civil War narrative and a much longer tradition of American expansion and exceptionalism. They also bolstered their settler colonial project against western Native Americans, because as Union veteran Alanson W. Edwards contended during his 1895 Memorial Day address, republican institutions like schools and churches protected western white settlements from "the heathen [who] may rage."[274]

In their commemorations, western Union veterans argued their Civil War military service protected the West for free-soil settlement and as veteran pioneers they had extended the promise of free soil to the region. By establishing churches and schools

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[272] See Kansas WRC, *Journal of the Thirty-ninth Annual Convention Department of Kansas Woman's Relief Corps Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic* (Topeka: Kansas State Printing Office, 1923), 123; Kansas WRC, *Journal of the Thirty-Fourth Annual Convention Department of Kansas Woman's Relief Corps Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic* (Olathe, KS: Mirror, 1915), 18; Minnesota GAR, *Journal of the Proceedings of the Fifteenth Annual Encampment of the Department of Minnesota, Grand Army of the Republic* (Minneapolis: n.p., 1895), 231; Montana GAR, *Department of Montana Grand Army of the Republic Proceedings of the First, Second, Third and Fourth Encampments* (Helena: n.p., 1888), 4–5.

[273] Kansas GAR, *Journal of the Twenty-Eight Annual Encampment*, 13.

[274] Edwards, "N. Dakota Eagles," 6. Smith, *Freedom's Frontier*, demonstrates that the free-labor ideal Frederick Jackson Turner's celebrated in his "Frontier Thesis" was challenged by the presence of unfree labor in California. See Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Henry Holt, 1921).

throughout the region, they had advanced republicanism and once again protected it, but this time from Indigenous peoples rather than Confederates. At the 1924 Grand Army Day in St. James, the GAR Department in Missouri professed, "we stand for the school house, the church and the home." These institutions, they asserted, guarded against threats to the republic: "every little school house that dots the plain or nestles in the grove, … every academy of learning, college or university, … every church or cathedral, with its spire pointing heavenward … is a fort, a garrison and a citadel."[275] Delivering its Memorial Day ceremonies in Portland, Oregon in 1881, the George Wright Grand Army Post summarized, "Step by step we are conquering the world, through the means of free institutions, bequeathed by our fallen comrades" which "have placed us in the van of civilization."[276]

Henry Castle likewise observed, "the disbanded Union volunteers have contributed notably to the nation's educational advancement and its marvelous increment of intellectual activity" because "Army service was in itself an education." He continued, "wherever the Union veterans went, schools, colleges, universities, lyceums, newspapers, post offices sprang up as if by magic among them. Their newest communities rivaled from the start the culture of long-settled regions, for none so well as he who had fought

[275] "What the Grand Army of the Republic Stands For" in Alice Mae Armstrong, *History of the State Federal Soldiers' Home and the Work of the Department of Missouri Woman's Relief Corps* (Kansas City, MO: Alice Mae Armstrong, 1925), 147.

[276] "Decoration Ceremonies by Geo. Wright Post No. 1, Grand Army of the Republic, at Lone Fir Cemetery and New Market Theater, Portland, Oregon, Monday, May 30th, 1881" (Portland, OR: Schwab & Anderson, 1881), 10. See also Utah GAR, *Proceedings of the Thirteenth Annual Encampment, Department of Utah, G. A. R.* (Salt Lake City: n.p., 1895), 6.

for the flag, knew how absolutely the fate of the country depends on the intelligence of its citizens."[277] These institutions, for many veterans, reflected their civilization.

Grand Army men in the East likewise supported public education, but in the trans-Mississippi West veteran support for public education was explicitly linked to their ongoing investment in colonization. In his Memorial Day address at Tower City, North Dakota, A. W. Edwards declared Republicans have "stood by the soldier in whose memory we assemble here to-day. It inaugurated the free-school system, gave land to the homeless, and made this northern wilderness possible of civilized habitation." Drawing from a deep tradition of Republican Motherhood, he proclaimed, "thoughtful mothers who teach their children to do right and fear God, will inculcate precepts that will insure a permanency of moral and good government" in the West.[278] "In our young state," one *Grand Army Magazine* author emoted, "how beautiful is the lesson taught by the school-house constructed on the ground still imprinted with the foot-marks of the barbarian…."[279] Or as Union veteran H. S. Fargo put it, public schools are "the great bulwark of our civilization."[280]

In 1895, Joseph Kennedy Hudson, Major in the First Missouri Colored Infantry during the Civil War, delivered a Memorial Day address in Osborn, Kansas. In his remarks he emphasized the role Union veterans played in building and protecting

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[277] Castle, *Heroes All*, 11. See also Washington and Alaska GAR, *Journal of Proceedings of the Twenty-fifth Annual Encampment Department of Washington and Alaska Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p., 1907), 37.

[278] Edwards, "N. Dakota Eagles," 6. See Linda K. Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980).

[279] "Grand Army Collegiate and Military Institute," 280.

[280] Oregon GAR, *Journal of the Thirty-Fourth Annual Encampment of the Department of Oregon Grand Army of the Republic* (Salem, OR: State Printing Office, 1915), 24. See also South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Encampment*, 50.

republican institutions in the West. Exemplifying "the highest qualities of citizens of the republic," Union veterans moved west and "the wild prairie [gave] way to the cultivated fields, the old prairie schooner is no longer seen…. The railroad is your servant gas and steam and electricity offer you advantages not dreamed of 30 years ago in Kansas." He continued, "here in the broad beautiful prairies, in the center of the Union, we are building a great commonwealth. A hundred thousand old soldiers have helped to mold its laws and institutions." These institutions were a testament to Union soldiers. He claimed, "nowhere in the country can there be seen a prouder monument to the intelligence and patriotism of the people than we are erecting on the foundation of our state."[281]

Figure 11. Photograph of WRC convention souvenir pin featuring the Washington lumber industry[282]

[281] J. K. Hudson, "Decoration Day, May 30th, 1895: Address delivered at Osborne Kansas, by J. K. Hudson, Topeka, Kansas," Joseph Kennedy Hudson Papers, 1861–1909, 14–15.

[282] *WRC/GAR Delegate Pin for 1910 Encampment*, Washington State Historical Society, Tacoma, Washington, accessed June 21, 2022, https://perma.cc/CSU6-4T42.

Grand Army men and Relief Corps women also celebrated western Union veterans for their role in developing industries—like agriculture, mining, and railroads—throughout the West.[283] For example, the Washington and Alaska 1910 WRC convention pin featured the Washington lumber industry.[284] Henry Castle similarly asserted that Union veterans had "left their shining mark" upon the West as veterans "penetrated our vast Western plains and peopled them…, constructed transcontinental railways and managed them…, [and] built great cities and made them prosperous." He continued, noting that Union veterans laid "down the musket" and took up "the implements of productive industry" and moved westward "embroidering its prairies with … a matchless civilization."[285]

Castle celebrated the Union veterans who "moved in solid columns, tens of thousands strong, into and beyond the wild frontier" and plunged "into the golden heart of the continent." Union veterans' "patriotic enterprise has led the march of an industrial progress that has developed its latent resources, clothed it with prosperity…, and poured its million-acred harvests in affluent streams into the commercial channels of the world."[286] Following these men were schools, newspaper offices, and post offices that "sprang up as if by magic among them." Castle leapt from the American Civil War to

[283] See Colorado and Wyoming WRC, *Journal of the Thirty-Fourth Annual Convention Department of Colorado and Wyoming Woman's Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p., 1918), 14; "G. A. R. Adopt Resolutions," file 2315, Box 87, Benecke Family Papers; "Colorado," *Grand Army Magazine* 1, no. 1 (January 1883), 14–15; Addison E. Sheldon, "Transportation in Nebraska and Ft. Kearney," Box 1, Nebraska. Grand Army of the Republic: General Correspondence, 1878–1949 Records, Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln.

[284] *WRC/GAR Delegate Pin for 1910 Encampment.*

[285] Castle, *Heroes All*, 9–10.

[286] Castle, *Heroes All*, 9–10.

western settlement, rendering Indigenous Americans and the violence of settler colonialism invisible in his remembrances.

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Western Union veterans celebrated settler colonialism as the legacy of their military service. The Minnesota Grand Army boasted: "we are bounded by mighty oceans. Have mighty river systems, are girded with railroads and telegraph, and have a fusion and coalition of the best blood of the world." They declared, "we are the prominent Anglo-Saxon race, and we are bound together by kindred ties stronger than bands of steel. We have the best agriculture in the world, and above all we are a happy contended people, and every man is a sovereign."[287] In creating permanent communities that featured churches, schools, agriculture, industry, and republican governments, western Union veterans and their families argued they had fulfilled the promise of free labor preserved by their Civil War military service and extended it to the West through colonization. Or as Minnesota Union veteran Eugene Hay put it, Union veterans' "inheritance was a wilderness and they … had builded upon that wilderness, a mighty empire."[288]

[287] "Honor to the Nation's Gallant Dead," GAR 1894 Scrapbook, Box 5, Grand Army of the Republic Records, Minnesota State Archives, St. Paul.

[288] Hay, "1893 Memorial Day Address," 2.

CHAPTER V – "HOMEBUILDERS": THE HOME, GENDER, & ASSIMILATION IN WESTERN CIVIL WAR COMMEMORATIONS

In the "range of human institutions," Minnesota Memorial Day speaker L. G. Davis proclaimed, "there is not one so important, so sacred, so jealously guarded as the home" because "it is the bulwark of modern civilization." According to him, the home was "the very center around which cluster all the benefits of civilization worth having and from which proceed all attempts at permanent advancement."[289] While the previous chapter demonstrates how Union veterans and their families celebrated their role as western settlers—specifically their involvement extending US control through territorial expansion and republican institutions westward, this chapter will explore the gendered dimensions of western collective remembrances of the Union cause.

The late-nineteenth century was, as Cathleen Cahill notes, "the heyday of Americans' celebration of the home as the keystone of their political, economic, and social order." Western Unionists credited themselves with building republican foundations like governments, schools, industry, and agriculture in the West, but they considered permanent, single-family homes the most important of these bodies.[290] Significantly, they extolled the extension of separate spheres ideology—symbolized most concretely by the construction of permanent, single-family homes—westward in their Civil War remembrances.

[289] "Memorial Day: It Is Observed in due Form—A Large Gathering," GAR 1894 Scrapbook.
[290] Cahill, *Federal Fathers and Mothers*, 35.

Western Union veterans and their families employed imagery of the home not simply to argue westward expansion was a legacy of Union victory, but their commemorations of the home supported US assimilation programs. As they commemorated it, the home embodied and modeled Anglo-American gender ideals which were intrinsically "civilized."[291] While the concept of "civilization" was protean, for Union veterans it often incorporated ideas about free labor, private land ownership, and separate-spheres gender roles. Consequently, they further celebrated western Union veterans and their wives dwelling within these homes as exemplars of this civilized American manhood and womanhood.[292] Situating settler colonialism in the shadow of the Civil War and the establishment of Anglo-gender ideals worked to erase the violence of colonization.[293]

Beyond modeling Anglo-gender roles, western Union veterans and their families also employed Civil War commemorations in their attempts to assimilate American Indians. However, Native Americans belonging to the GAR and WRC used their membership to resist colonization. By imbuing their organizational practices and collective remembrances with racial and gendered concepts, western Union veterans and their families wielded commemoration and memory building as a tool of colonization.

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[291] See Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization*, 25.

[292] See Missouri WRC, *Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Convention of the Woman's Relief Corps, Department of Missouri* (Hannibal, MO: Standard, 1888), 16; Washington and Alaska GAR, *Journal of the Twenty-Ninth Encampment of the Department of Washington and Alaska Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p., 1911), 16; North Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Encampment Grand Army of the Republic Department of North Dakota* (Grand Forks, ND: George A. Wheeler, 1898), 23.

[293] Scolari, "Indian Warriors and Pioneer Mothers," demonstrates that turn-of-the-century monuments celebrated peace rather than warfare to symbolize the completion of western expansion.

In their case studies of western Union Civil War commemorations, historians Tony Klein and William Deverell convincingly argue that western Union veterans celebrated trans-Mississippi expansion as integral to the legacy of the Civil War, but a gendered analysis is absent in their work. Analyzing the use of gender in western Union Civil War commemorations is key, however, because these narratives relied on white gender ideals to bolster their settler colonial project. As historian Gale Bederman asserts, "gender, too, was an essential component of civilization."[294]

During the late-nineteenth century, white Americans defined and measured civilization as an overtly racial and gendered concept. The degree of sexual differentiation between men and women indicated a race's level of civilization. Separate spheres ideology, therefore, reinscribed white American's assertions they were exceptionally civilized because it acutely delineated white women as gentle, domestic, and in need of protection while white men were restrained, "firm of character," protectors of women and children.[295] The distinctive places white American men and women held in society were therefore touted as evidence of their exalted civilization.

White patriarchal gender roles influenced US Indian policy in the West. The federal government relied on significant numbers of white women to enforce assimilationist policies in the Indian Service, the federal agency responsible for implementing US Indian policy, because policy makers viewed white women's "innate moral authority" as a useful tool of assimilation. Thus, they employed women as

[294] Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization*, 25.
[295] Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization*, 25.

gendered and racial symbols of colonization in the trans-Mississippi West.[296] Similarly, Union veterans and their families used race and gender-specific definitions of civilization in their war commemorations to symbolize the legacy of the Union war effort and the success of settler colonialism, which they characterized as interconnected. Then they employed Indigenous participation in these commemorative rituals as a tool of assimilation.

Celebrating Manhood & Womanhood in Anglo-Homesteads

The US government strongly incentivized settler-colonialism in the West with the passage of the Homestead Act in 1862. The act opened 270 million acres of territory in the trans-Mississippi West to settlement by American citizens who were loyal to the US government. Heads of households were required to occupy and improve the land, living on it for a minimum of five years; after which, the federal government deeded it to them for no cost. In 1870, Congress revised the earlier law with the passage of the Soldiers' Homestead Bill. This provision allowed Union veterans to subtract the length of their military service from the five-year residency requirement.[297] Numberless Union veterans took advantage of this provision, moved west, and established homesteads on 160-acre plots, cementing the relationship between their Civil War military service and Union veterans' role as settler-colonizers.

[296] Cahill, *Federal Fathers and Mothers*, 67. For further analysis of white women's symbolism in the West see Myres, *Westering Women*; Riley, *The Female Frontier*; Murphy and Venet, eds., *Midwestern Women*; Gillis, *Commemorations*, 3; Hurtado, *Intimate Frontiers*; Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization*; Basso, McCall, and Garceau, eds., *Across the Great Divide*.

[297] Jordan, *Marching Home*, 181.

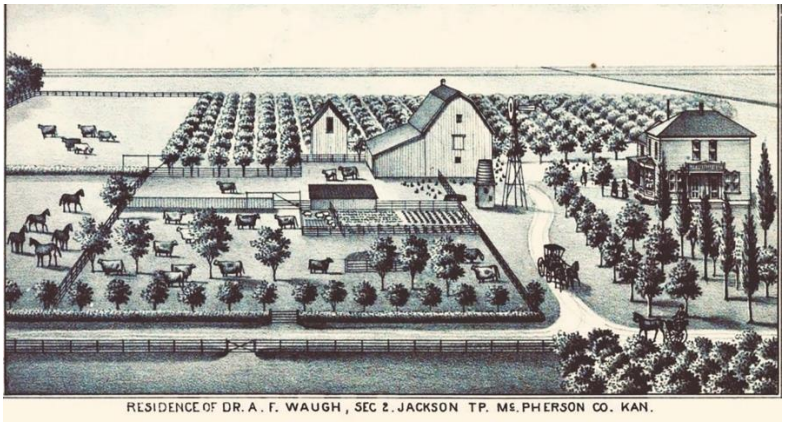

Figure 12. Sketch of Union veteran Albert Freeman Waugh's homestead in McPherson County, Kansas[298]

Western Union veterans celebrated their efforts to construct single-family, permanent homes and communities as emblematic of not only the Union victory they helped to bring about but also of their "grand and glorious manhood."[299] The establishment of permanent homes in the trans-Mississippi West supported their western-centric collective memory of the Civil War, therefore they frequently celebrated Union veterans as western "home-builders."[300] Delivering an address to the California Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), General Nelson A. Miles lauded Union veterans who "turned their faces toward the great West, and shoulder to shoulder … changed the mountains and plains into settled communities, happy homes."[301]

[298] *Residence of Dr. A. F. Waugh, Sec. 2. Jackson TP. McPherson Co. Kansas,* accessed June 21, 2022, https://perma.cc/48SN-6AWE.

[299] Oregon GAR, *Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Encampment*, 5. See also Colorado and Wyoming WRC, *Journal of the Twenty-First Annual Convention of the Department of Colorado and Wyoming Woman's Relief Corps Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic* (Denver: J. M. Rhoads, 1905), 52; Texas GAR, *Proceedings of the Nineteenth Annual Encampment of the Department of Texas Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p., 1904), 41.

[300] See South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Encampment*, 24.

[301] See "General Miles Speaks," *San Francisco Call*, August 21, 1903.

J. B. Adams similarly honored his Union veteran father, who "when the war was over … came immediately to Kansas" and "stood upon this beautiful town site here when it was a city of Indian wigwams." Building homes and a community, Adams's father like "the men of the Grand Army of the Republic, helped to build up and develop" the state of Kansas.[302] On a "thousand bloody fields amid death and carnage" Union soldiers had defended "the institutions which protect … his home," according to Jesse Dunn during his 1892 Memorial Day address at Garden City, Kansas. Their military service in Union armies, Dunn asserted, ensured every man would be "the lord of his own estate" within a dwelling "he calls his own" from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans.[303] Following their military service—according to their collective remembrances—Union veterans enthusiastically expanded free-labor households westward.

Women likewise honored Union veterans for "upbuilding" the West. Drawing her audience's attention to the surrounding landscape, Kansas WRC member Alice Huffman claimed, here "once stood a trading post, sod houses and Indian tepees" but now they could "point with pride to our fine residences, our farms, the pride of the West."[304] In her 1901 address to the Minnesota Relief Corps, Flora S. Wilson noted a "little dot, on the green … surface of the large map of Minnesota" that was "transformed in my mind's eye to a thriving town, with its busy, bustling streets and cozy homes." Within these homes you will "make the acquaintance of members of the household, often finding in the 'goodman' of the house a member of my husband's or my father's regiment." Contrasting

[302] Kansas GAR, *Journal of the Thirtieth Annual Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic Department of Kansas* (Topeka: Crane, 1911), 10.

[303] Jesse Dunn, "The Day, and Our Nation."

[304] Kansas WRC, *Woman's Relief Corps: The Department of Kansas---Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic, Journal of the Twenty-Eighth Annual Convention* (n.p.: n.p., 1912), 14–15.

these "blessings of peace and civilization" with imagery of "treacherous savages," Wilson asserted the development and present-day security of Minnesota stemmed from "the heroisms" of the soldiers "of those too-often forgotten years."[305]

Grand Army men frequently exhibited late-nineteenth-century concepts of middle-class manhood that celebrated self-employment and self-restraint. Their collective remembrances argued that as both Union veterans and settlers, they represented "the highest type of American manhood."[306] They frequently linked veterans' manliness not only to their military service but also to their role as pioneers. "Many of you came to this state in the prime of manhood," Nebraska GAR Commander C. E. Adams claimed. Therefore, "what could have been more natural than to see the veterans of the war flocking hither" because the "unbroken and unsubdued plain" offered them "an opportunity to secure a home."[307]

In 1895, Joseph Kennedy Hudson, Major in the First Missouri Colored Infantry Regiment during the Civil War, delivered a Memorial Day address in Osborn, Kansas, in which he argued Union veterans exemplified "the highest qualities of citizens of the republic," because they served the US military and then moved west where they replaced "the small temporary home … with a good house."[308] As Minnesota veteran Henry A. Castle put it, "the true soldier was … the humble, self-recognized instrument in the hands of a gracious Omnipotence for building up a Christian civilization" and therefore, "an

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[305] Minnesota WRC, *Journal of the Seventeenth Annual Convention*, 42–43.

[306] "Address of Gen. Miles," *McPherson (KS) Weekly Republican,* July 6, 1917. See Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation;* "McPherson County as a 'Melting Pot'," *Official Souvenir*; *McPherson (KS) Weekly Republican,* July 6, 1917.

[307] Nebraska GAR, *Journal of the Twentieth Annual Encampment of the Department of Nebraska, Grand Army of the Republic, held at Omaha, Nebraska, February 12th and 13th, 1896* (Lincoln: n.p., 1896), 76.

[308] J. K. Hudson, "Decoration Day, May 30th, 1895," 15.

exponent of manliness."[309] For these men, "the power of manhood … encompassed the power to wield civic authority, to control strife and unrest, and to shape the future of the nation."[310] In other words, they relied on ideas about manliness in their collective remembrances to reinforce their authority over western lands as self-employed, independent settlers. This process juxtaposed and justified their use of western lands over Indigenous peoples' claims.

Collective remembrances of the Civil War relied on ideas about gender to reinforce assimilation policies in the West. The construction of white homes supplanted Indigenous territorial control throughout the West; therefore, Union Civil War commemorations that glorified this process defended settler colonialism. But they also worked to reinforce US civilization programs. Between the 1870s and 1880s, the US government increased its emphasis on assimilating American Indians. In 1887 the federal government passed the Dawes Severalty Act (or General Allotment Act), which assigned Indian families onto 160-acre plots and issued land to men as heads of households. These policies, therefore, relied on gender to force Native Americans to adopt agriculture and practice individual land ownership. The federal government sold the remaining lands to settlers, which reduced tribal lands from 138 million acres to 52 million acres by 1934.[311]

This policy not only ensured large swaths of Native land would be made available to white settlers, but it also encouraged American Indians to adopt white patriarchal gender arrangements by allotting a single married Native couple to a small parcel of

[309] Castle, *Heroes All*, 11.
[310] Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization*, 13–14.
[311] Amy Lonetree, *Decolonizing Museums: Representing Native America in National and Tribal Museums* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2021), 11.

private property. US assimilation policy, consequently, "centered on severing affective bonds between Native children and their families, transmogrifying Indigenous marriage relations, and restructuring Native households according to white middle-class gender norms."[312]

Union veterans and their families frequently relied on imagery that evoked gender ideology when they juxtaposed Native and non-Native homes when discussing the legacy of the Civil War, which glorified and reinforced US Allotment policy.[313] During the dedication of the Sergeant Charles Floyd Monument in Sioux City, Iowa, for example, John Kasson asserted "the wandering wigwam [had] been replaced by the settled home."[314] "Wandering" for many white Americans signified a rejection of private property and white, patriarchal gender structures. Therefore, describing American Indians as "wandering" served to justify dispossessing them of their land to turn it over to white settlers (especially veteran-settlers) who would establish patriarchal homes on their newly purchased private property. As the federal government moved to incorporate assimilation into its Indian policy, reorganizing Native life around separate spheres ideology with the adoption of legal marriages and the construction of permanent, single-family homes became paramount. Assimilation necessitated an end to "wandering" existences.[315]

Deeply interested in "preserving the trail of its pioneers" who "blazed the pathway of Western Civilization," Ida Wilson Moore, a member of the Kansas WRC, explained their organization's involvement in erecting a monument at Pawnee Rock,

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[312] Cahill, *Federal Fathers and Mothers*, 41 and 6.

[313] See South Dakota WRC, *Journal of the Thirty-First Annual Convention of the Department of South Dakota Woman's Relief Corps Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p., 1914), 94.

[314] *Second Report of the Floyd Memorial Association*, 79–80.

[315] Cahill, *Federal Fathers and Mothers*, 38–42.

Kansas on Memorial Day weekend in 1912. She argued that this point along the Santa Fe Trail indicated "the many difficult steps which led to the upbuilding on this continent of a country so well worthy of the sacrifice, blood and treasure given for its preservation from 1861 to 1865."[316]

The monument would remind fellow citizens and future generations, Moore insisted, "of the beginnings of that wonderful transformation from the lonesomeness and immensity of these then unpeopled boundless plains" except for the "abode of the buffalo and wild Indian" into a transformed land "of cultivated fields and farm and comfortable homes, inhabited by energetic, cultured, law-abiding men, women and children."[317] Casting American Indians "as aimless wanderers over a wilderness landscape" depicted their land use as irrational and Native men as weak and women unvirtuous. Western Civil War monuments relied on what historian Jean O'Brien labels "replacement narratives" to celebrate "a process by which non-Indians replaced Indians in their homelands."[318] Therefore, the transformation from transitory Indigenous homes symbolized, as one Minnesota veteran described it, a "pilgrimage from savagery to civilization."[319]

Other veterans simply ignored the presence of Indigenous nations in the West. At the Washington and Alaska Grand Army's 1884 state encampment, Department Commander George D. Hill asserted that Union veterans' military service had made the trans-Mississippi West "a land freedom delights to dwell in." Consequently, they emigrated to a "virgin land … blessed with a lavish hand" to pursue "possibilities beyond

[316] Kansas WRC, *Journal of the Twenty-Eighth Annual Convention*, 181.
[317] Kansas WRC, *Journal of the Twenty-Eighth Annual Convention*, 181–182.
[318] O'Brien, *Firsting and Lasting*, 27 and xxii–xxiii.
[319] "Memorial Day," GAR 1894 Scrapbook.

our wildest dreams."[320] On Memorial Day 1895, Alanson W. Edwards addressed a gathering of locals at Tower City, North Dakota. He similarly celebrated the Union veterans who "flocked to [the] boundless plains and fertile valleys" of North Dakota to find a "virginal" and "rich domain."[321] These descriptions signified that white westerners had "opened" up the territory and developed it in spite of Native efforts to keep the land and its rich resources "virginial" or "closed."[322] Focusing on Union veterans' achievement "dominating wild lands rather than wild peoples" erased their responsibility for the American ethnocide and the colonization of Native peoples.[323]

Western Union collective remembrances asserted the forced removal of Native Americans to reservations and the establishment of Native, single-family homes on allotment parcels further symbolized that the trans-Mississippi West had been made civilized and therefore safe for white women to inhabit.[324] As one South Dakota veteran noted, "when I saw a mother this afternoon marching in the parade and carrying a baby … I said, 'When the mothers can do that, the country is safe.'"[325]

During her address to the state Woman's Relief Corps convention in 1893, Colorado and Wyoming WRC member Emma D. Adams proclaimed that behind Union veterans lies "a monument of achievement." The United States "will remain the ocean

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[320] Washington Territory GAR, *Proceedings of the Second Annual Encampment*, 8.
[321] Edwards, "N. Dakota Eagles," 8.
[322] Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest*, 46 and 60. See also Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation*, 33–34.
[323] Prescott, *Pioneer Mothers*, 42.
[324] See Brenda K. Jackson, *Domesticating the West: The Re-creation of the Nineteenth-Century America Middle Class* (Lincoln: University of North Carolina Press, 2005); Cynthia Culver Prescott, *Gender and Generation on the Far Western Frontier* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007); Riley, *The Female Frontier*; Julie Roy Jeffrey, *Frontier Women: 'Civilizing' the West, 1840–1880* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981); Myres, *Westering Women*.
[325] South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the Thirty-First Annual Encampment of the Department of South Dakota Grand Army of the Republic* (Sioux Falls, SD: Alice B. Muller, 1914), 39.

bound American Republic, the only true republic the world has ever known," and "within whose borders there is no peasant, no serf, no slave, only men and women, living in the consciousness of the true nobility of manhood, and womanhood."[326]

We "were all delighted when Lee surrendered," another Kansas Grand Army man joyously recalled. He reminisced about Union veterans who "came out here to Kansas" where they "found it … a wilderness of prairie grass." Setting to work they "subdue[d] it to civilization" and then "brought with us the finest type of American womanhood that can be found anywhere."[327] As their collective remembrances celebrated it, Union veterans secured a free-soil West that allowed men to colonize the territory and make it safe for white women's inhabitance. The very presence of supposedly refined white women, like Relief Corps members, therefore, symbolized the progress of American settler colonialism.

Union veterans and their families relied on ideas about racialized gender roles to draw key distinctions between barbarism and civilization in their Civil War remembrances. Focusing on a local white family, for example, Minnesota Union veteran Alonzo P. Connolly employed beliefs about separate-spheres gender roles and race to support his claim that Union veterans brought civilization to Minnesota. He celebrated Col. John H. Stevens and his wife, Frances Helen (Miller) Stevens for constructing a frame house on the west bank of the Mississippi River. Her status as the supposed "first white lady [to] became a permanent resident of Minneapolis" was of great significance to

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[326] Colorado and Wyoming WRC, *Journal of Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Convention of the Department of Colorado and Wyoming Woman's Relief Crops, Auxiliary to the G. A. R.* (n.p.: n.p., 1894), 55–56.

[327] Kansas GAR, *Journal of the Twenty-Eight Annual Encampment*, 15. See also "Pioneers in Nebraska: Civil War Veterans Played Big Parts."

his history of the GAR, he argued. Her whiteness, sex, and permanence were meant to reveal the advancement of civilization into western territories following their Civil War military service. Her sex and race not only symbolized civilization because she was a reproducer of the nation but also because her presence signified that the frontier was safe for genteel white women.[328]

Connolly celebrated the "hardy pioneers" like the Stevenses, "who blazed the way for the tide of home seekers who came west to grow up with the country."[329] Union veterans like Connolly often touted the presence of western permanent houses that were home to white women as symbolic of settler colonialism, which they celebrated as an extension of Union victory. By claiming the Stevenses were the first to establish "proper" households in Minnesota, Connolly "subtly declar[ed] the invalidity of Indian ways of life."[330] Other western Union veterans and their families mimicked this when they celebrated the first weddings in their states.[331]

Inscribed with moral influence, white women supposedly held moral sway over their households, which reinforced US assimilation policies by modeling white patriarchal relationships.[332] Consequently, Union veterans frequently elevated white women to the center of the home in their Civil War remembrances. Colorado Union

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[328] Connolly, *Minneapolis and the G.A.R.*, 4. See also Linda W. Slaughter, *Fortress to Farm: Or Twenty-Three Years on the Frontier* edited by Hazel Eastman (New York: Exposition Press, 1972), 62. Separate sphere gender roles idealized and naturalized gender difference. Male roles associated political significance to men's labor, while they erased women's labor and depoliticized women's contributions. Limited as an idea, these roles failed to account for women of color and working-class women's labor, and as Karen Anderson points out, western women's labor. See Karen Anderson, "Work, Gender, and Power in the American West," *Pacific Historical Review* 61, no. 4 (Nov. 1992): 481–499.

[329] Connolly, *Minneapolis and the G.A.R.*, 13.

[330] O'Brien, *Firsting and Lasting*, xxii.

[331] See DeBusk, *Unveiling of Kit Carson Statue Address*, 243.

[332] Cahill, *Federal Fathers and Mothers*, 44.

veteran H. S. Vaughn stressed, "without a home we are nothing and without a woman home is nothing." Key to western settlements and homesteads, white women's presence was central to extending republicanism to the West. White women dwelling within homesteads signified the victory Union veterans had fought for. Or as Vaugh stressed, "without a home, country means nothing to us, all is nothing without wife and mother."[333]

Modeling and Inscribing Separate Spheres Ideology

Alanson W. Edwards emphasized in his 1895 Memorial Day address, while "fists and muscles … reigned in the long night of barbarism, there is no stronger proof of the advancement of our nation than the elevated position women occupy today in the land … for a woman [is] amiable in demeanor, pleasant in appearance…how greater than all else are these qualities for the home and the fireside." Western collective memories of the American Civil War, therefore, worked to inscribe separate spheres ideology in white western gender relations. Celebrating white women as central to the home and in need of protection from Native Americans, simultaneously contained white women to domestic spaces and reinforced the need for civilization programs to assimilate Native American men and women into Anglo culture.[334]

Civil War commemorations of this nature also worked to erase the violence of colonization, just as the erection of Pioneer Mother monuments helped Americans embrace myths that erased the "inconvenient truths" of settler colonialism.[335] For

[333] Colorado and Wyoming WRC, *Journal of the Nineteenth Annual Convention of the Department of Colorado and Wyoming Woman's Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic* (Longmont, CO: Ledger, 1903), 60.

[334] See Prescott, *Pioneer Mothers*, 10.

[335] Prescott, *Pioneer Mothers*, 7.

example, A. C. Malloy, the son of a Union veteran, addressed Kansas GAR members during their 1919 state encampment. He celebrated the transformation of Hutchinson, Kansas into a "magnificent city," which he asserted seemed like "a fairy tale, or a chapter from the Arabian Knights." Rather, "it was not called into being at the magic touch of the fairy's wand" nor by "an appeal to Aladdin's wonderful lamp," but through the "persistent toil" of veteran pioneers like his father.[336]

Henry Roberts Pease similarly described Union veterans who migrated west with "a magic rod of development."[337] Describing colonization as magical, Hutchinson and Pease obscured the violence inherent to settler colonialism and land dispossession. By focusing on the metamorphosis from wilderness to "civilization" embodied by the construction of single-family permanent homes, western Union veterans and their families' Civil War remembrances "effectively erase[d] a much more problematic and contested history of indigenous depopulation and removal."[338]

Even the creation of Civil War commemorative associations like the Grand Army of the Republic and the Woman's Relief Corps modeled separate-spheres ideology.[339] As GAR comrade R. B. Brown described it, the "American women" of the WRC "promptly married the Grand Army of the Republic" when they became its official auxiliary at the Denver encampment in 1883.[340] WRC women agreed. "Our relation to them," according

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[336] Kansas GAR, *Journal of the Twenty-Eighth Annual Encampment*, 74.

[337] Pease, "Memorial Day Address," 4–5.

[338] Prescott, *Pioneer Mothers*, 14.

[339] See South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the 23rd Annual Encampment of the Department of South Dakota Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p., 1906), 29; South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the 24th Annual Encampment of the Department of South Dakota Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p., 1907), 39.

[340] *Roll of Members, Address of National President and Report of Officers of the Twenty-Ninth National Convention of the Woman's Relief Corps Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic* (Boston: Griffith-Stillings, 1911), 62.

to Kansas WRC president Lucy Simpson, "is very much that of a wife to a husband." She continued, "our object is to be a helpmeet and aid him in every way possible, use our influence, also, to the upbuilding of humanity in general."[341] Like many wives in marriage, Relief Corps even took the names of the Posts they partnered with.

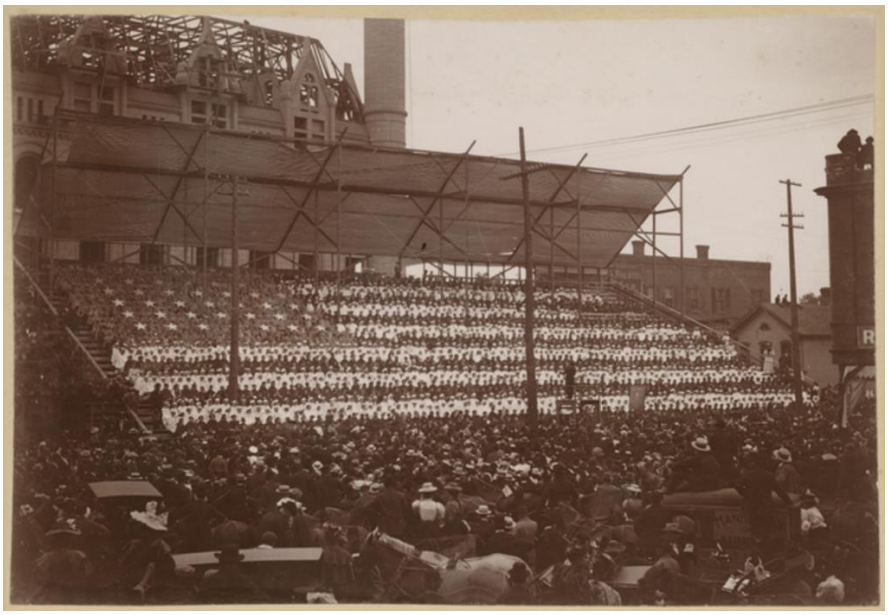

Figure 13. Photograph of GAR and WRC members creating a "living flag" in St. Paul, Minnesota[342]

As symbolic "husbands" and "wives," these organizations modeled patriarchal relationships with one another and therefore exemplified patriotism and civilization. "Wherever a Grand Army Post is found," GAR commander Thomas Rodgers asserted, "it will be found to be a nucleus of good citizenship."[343] Similarly, when Relief Corps members "weave garlands of flowers for our honored boys who wore the blue" on

[341] Kansas WRC, *Journal of the Nineteenth Annual Convention of the Woman's Relief Corps Department of Kansas, Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic* (Marysville, KS: Harry M. Broderick, 1903), 11.

[342] Living Flag, Grand Army of the Republic Reunion, St. Paul, 1896, Minnesota State Historical Society, St. Paul, Minnesota, accessed June 21, 2022, https://perma.cc/95VF-4YS2.

[343] Missouri GAR, *Proceedings of the Sixteenth Annual Encampment of the Department of Missouri, Grand Army of the Republic* (St. Louis: n.p., 1897), 22.

Memorial Day, they "instill patriotic precepts into eager children's minds" and "sow seeds of fine manhood and fine womanhood."[344]

These assertions were not exclusive to the West.[345] However, they took on greater significance in western communities as Union veterans and their families used these connections to claim their own "civilization." Furthermore, they employed the GAR and WRC's membership and rituals as a tool to aid US civilization programs throughout the region. Creating Grand Army posts and Woman's Relief Corps were "more than a sentiment," as Henry Castle claimed. Rather, their patriotism "is an inspiration—a living, animating spirit" that is nurtured "on broad prairies."[346]

Assimilating American Indians

Veterans celebrated white women for their civilizing influence.[347] Illinois GAR Commander John Logan declared, "in whatever tends to civilize and Christianize mankind, are always seen the hands of the women of the land…. Their hands are so connected with the hand of Divinity that man, without them, would be a barbarian [because] woman is gentle."[348]

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[344] Kansas LGAR, *Proceedings of the Twenty-Fourth Department Convention of the Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic Department of Kansas* (n.p.: n.p., 1910), 30.

[345] See Morgan, *Women and Patriotism in Jim Crow America*; O'Leary, *To Die For*.

[346] Castle, *Heroes All*, 12.

[347] See South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the 23rd Annual Encampment*, 29; South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the 29th Annual Encampment*, 58–59. Virginia Scharff, "Broadening the Battlefield: Conflict, Contingency, and the Mystery of Woman Suffrages in Wyoming, 1869" in *Civil War Wests*, 202–223 argues Wyoming Territory expanded women's political rights because white women's presence in the West would help secure an American Empire there.

[348] Idaho GAR, *Journal of the Eight Annual Encampment, Grand Army of the Republic Department of Idaho* (Coeur D'Alene, ID: n.p., 1895), 9. See also Missouri GAR, *Proceedings of the Nineteenth Annual. Encampment of the Department of Missouri, Grand Army of the Republic held at Springfield, Missouri, May 16 and 17, 1900* (St. Louis: A. Whipple, 1900), 24.

Indebted to the legacy of republican motherhood, white women held an elevated symbolic place in western Unionists' efforts to assimilate American Indians.[349] In his Memorial Day address at Tower City, North Dakota, Alanson W. Edwards declared the Republican Party "stood by the soldier in whose memory we assemble here to-day. It inaugurated the free-school system, gave land to the homeless, and made this northern wilderness possible of civilized habitation." Echoing Republican Motherhood, he proclaimed, "thoughtful mothers who teach their children to do right and fear God, will inculcate precepts that will insure a permanency of moral and good government" in the West.[350]

Figure 14. Photograph of Sherman County, Kansas Woman's Relief Corps with American flags[351]

[349] Pioneer mother monuments likewise held white settlers, especially women, "up as the embodiment of national ideals of freedom, democracy, and individualism." See Prescott, *Pioneer Mothers,* 14.

[350] Edwards, "N. Dakota Eagles," 6. See Kerber, *Women of the Republic*.

[351] *Scenes from Sherman County, Kansas – Woman's Relief Corps,* Kansas Historical Society, Topeka, Kansas, accessed June 21, 2022, https://perma.cc/AZ3F-G765.

Alice Mae Armstrong of a Missouri Woman's Relief Corps asserted that "every God-fearing mother in all this land, who at her own home and at her hearth-stone, instills into the minds of her boys and her girls the immutable principles of right and wrong." She "teaches her boys to be clean, manly men, and her girls to be pure, virtuous women" and "teaches them both to love their country and its flag, and to emulate the virtues of its heroes living and dead." As such, every "God-fearing mother is a recruiting officer for the Grand Army that shall perpetuate the Republic."[352] The move from white women inculcating republican values within their own children to instilling republican values within Native children, therefore, was viewed as a natural extension of white woman's place.

By annually inspecting local American Indian schools, GAR and WRC members directly engaged in assimilationist work. At one inspection of the Children's Home in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, the state's Grand Army and Relief Corps members met with a young unnamed boy whose deceased father had been a Union soldier. After his wife died, the boy's father remarried an Indigenous woman who allegedly "abused him and treated him in such a manner" that when his father died, he was removed from her care to the children's home in Sioux Falls.[353]

Relying on tropes of Indigenous women as "squaw drudges" who failed to embody white femininity, the GAR and WRC lauded the child's removal to the Sioux Falls Children Home and raised funds for his care. Maternalist reformers regularly

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[352] "What the Grand Army of the Republic Stands For" in Armstrong, *History of the State Federal Soldiers' Home*, 147.

[353] South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the Fifteenth Annual Encampment of the Department of South Dakota, Grand Army of the Republic* (Canton, SD: n.p., 1898), 38–39.

defended the removal of Native children to Indian schools as an effort to "rescue indigenous children from … a savage background and to raise them instead in a 'civilized' environment."[354] By 1900, Indian schools had become commonplace in the United States, with 150 boarding schools and 150 day schools for around 21,500 Indigenous children.

Indian school inspections were a regular feature of GAR and WRC work. [355] Each year, the Washington Post No. 12 and the Washington Corps No. 9 of Lawrence, Kansas, for example, visited local public schools and the Haskell Institute, a local Indian boarding school. Their inspections—especially of Haskell—were intended to "inspire the children to a higher standard of patriotism" and "to a greater devotion to the stars and stripes."[356] The Kansas Veterans' Glee Club, echoed this idea when they sang, "take a car to Haskell, where our Indian girls and boys learn that life means something more than tepees, smoke, and noise."[357] They asserted GAR and WRC inspections of Indian schools throughout the West were "a great necessity" because without assimilation "ten million colored

[354] Margaret Jacobs, "Maternalism Colonialism: White Women and Indigenous Child Removal in the American West and Australia" *Western Historical Quarterly* 36, no. 4 (Winter 2005): 462–464. See also Margaret Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia, 1880–1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009).

[355] See Kansas WRC, *Journal of the Forty-Fourth Annual Convention Department of Kansas Woman's Relief Corps Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic* (Topeka: Kansas State Printers, 1928), 100; Colorado and Wyoming WRC, *Journal of Proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Convention of the Department of Colorado and Wyoming Woman's Relief Corps Auxiliary to the G. A. R.* (Denver: Rocky Mountain Herald, 1895), 24–25; Colorado and Wyoming WRC, *Journal of Proceedings of the Fourteenth Annual Convention of the Department of Colorado and Wyoming Woman's Relief Corps Auxiliary to the G. A. R.* (Denver: World, 1898), 22.

[356] "Patriotic Talks Preceding Memorial Day," *Daily Gazette* (Lawrence, KS), May 20, 1914.

[357] Kansas GAR, *Journal of the Thirtieth Annual Encampment*, 12.

people—the Mormon and Indian" threatened the American values Union veterans' military service had secured.[358]

Institutions like Indian schools assaulted Native culture and kinship patterns to undermine Native self-determination.[359] Many Native parents, however, resisted the institutionalization of their children by withdrawing them from Indian schools, encouraging truancy, and challenging state control of their children in US courts. Some worked to sustain their traditions and kinship patterns keeping Indigenous histories alive through storytelling and reinscribing their culture during school breaks.[360]

Western veterans and their wives, however, wielded the GAR and WRC's commemorative and memorial ceremonies as an instrument of Native American assimilation to combat Native parents' efforts. Posts and Corps regularly exploited Indigenous children from nearby reservation, mission, and boarding schools to perform flag rituals, deliver readings, and produce music during Memorial Day services, Grand Army encampments, and monument dedication ceremonies.[361] The Great Western Indian

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[358] Kansas WRC, *Woman's Relief Corps of The Department of Kansas Auxiliary of the Grand Army of the Republic Journal Twenty-Fifth Annual Convention* (n.p.: n.p., 1909), 158–159.

[359] Jacobs, "Maternalism Colonialism," 459 and Susan Burch, *Committed: Remembering Native Kinship in and beyond Institutions* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2021), 12. See also P. Jane Hafen, "Gertrude Simmons Bonnin: For the Indian Cause" in *Sifters: Native American Women's Lives* edited by Theda Perdue (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 128–129; Brianna Theobald, *Reproduction on the Reservation: Pregnancy, Childbirth, and Colonialism in the Long Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019); Laura Wexler, *Tender Violence: Domestic Visions in an Age of U.S. Imperialism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).

[360] See Burch, *Committed* and Jacobs, "Maternalism Colonialism."

[361] See "Memorial Day is fittingly observed in Capital City," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, May 30, 1908; "Pawnee Rock Monument, *Larned (KS) Chronoscope*, May 9, 1912; "Loyal Valor Remembered," *Omaha Daily Bee*, May 31, 1895; "Graves of Soldiers," *Tacoma Daily News*, Washington, May 31, 1897; New Mexico GAR, *Department of New Mexico Grand Army of the Republic Twenty-Fourth, Twenty-Fifth and Twenty-Sixth Annual Encampment* (Albuquerque: Albuquerque Morning Journal, 1909), 25–27; Minnesota GAR, *Journal of the Annual Sessions of the Department Encampment, Grand Army of the Republic, Minnesota* (Minneapolis: n.p., 1885), 87; "Garlands of Glory," *Weekly New Mexican Review* (Santa Fe), June 4, 1885.

Band, for example, played at the dedication of the WRC co-sponsored Pawnee Rock Monument dressed as "picturesque Indians" in "uniforms" of buckskin and feathers. "The boys in the band," as the *Pratt Independent* reported were "receiving a musical education that will last them for life."[362]

American Indian school bands regularly performed at Civil War commemorative events, typically opening and closing the ceremonies and marching in parades.[363] When four hundred students from the Rapid City Indian School gathered to sing nationalist songs and perform flag drills for the GAR and WRC's thirty-second annual encampment and convention, GAR Commander-in-Chief David J. Palmer praised the departments of South Dakota for the work Grand Army and Relief Corps "were doing in making good patriotic citizens of the youth of the State of South Dakota."[364] Similarly, one observer remarked, "To see the Indian children honoring the dead and living heroes" in Tecumseh, Oklahoma "shows how patriotism is being taught them."[365]

South Dakota WRC member, Mary Noyes Farr boasted Memorial Day celebrations at Pierre "have the advantage of the assistance of the Indian children." While the South Dakota WRC felt "that it is a great opportunity to teach these wards of Uncle Sam patriotism," they also theorized that engaging Native American children in

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[362] "The Pratt Indian Band," *Pratt (KS) Independent*, December 10, 1913.

[363] A glance at Lawrence, Kansas, for example, shows how regular this practice was. See "Memorial Services," *Lawrence (KS) Daily Journal*, May 30, 1891; "Memorial Day Exercises," *Lawrence (KS) Daily World*, May 24, 1899; "Memorial Day Services," *Lawrence (KS) Daily Journal*, May 29, 1901; "Crowds Bigger," *Lawrence (KS) Daily Journal*, September 17, 1903; Kansas GAR, *Proceedings of the Twenty-Third Annual Encampment*, 15, 151, and 161; "Memorial Parade to be Short One," *Lawrence (KS) Daily Journal-World*, May 30, 1918. This practice was not exclusive to Lawrence and appeared regularly throughout the West. See "Memorial Day Being Observed," *Albuquerque Citizen*, May 30, 1903; "Memorial Day Exercises," *Albuquerque Citizen*, May 23, 1901; "At Fort Shaw," *Great Falls (MT) Tribune*, May 31, 1904; "Memorial Day Program," *Pierre (SD) Weekly Free Press*, May 27, 1909.

[364] South Dakota WRC, *Journal of the Thirty-First Annual Convention*, 98.

[365] "Indian Children," *Shawnee (OK) News-Herald*, May 30, 1906.

commemorative and memorial rituals may be the most effective way to assimilate American Indians because "the Indian likes display." They posited, "anything in the line of flags or flowers he is very quick to welcome" while "he does not grasp" intellectual or "mental matters" so easily.[366] If performed correctly, the GAR and WRC believed that Memorial Day would ensure the "country … is superlatively Americanized."[367]

The incorporation of Indigenous children into these ceremonies not only intended to teach "good citizenship" but also to replace Native kinship patterns with separate spheres gender ideology. In addition to the performances by American Indian school bands, Native children sang patriotic songs throughout the festivities, such as "My Own United States," "the Star-Spangled Banner," and "America." Typically, boys and girls accompanied one another, but select songs were performed only by the girls. At the 1901 Memorial Day services in Albuquerque, sixteen "little girls" from the local Indian school sang "Our Young Soldier's Grave," which describes scattering flowers over the grave of a deceased soldier boy.[368] Lyrics like "for our boy is lying there" and "where our darling lies asleep," reinscribed womanly devotion to male soldiers.[369]

The gendered dimensions of these ceremonies extended beyond music. Unlike the other Native children in attendance, the "older girls" from the Indian school marched clothed entirely in white dresses—the symbolic color of women's purity and virginity—during the Memorial Day parade in Albuquerque that year.[370] At the Ponca Indian

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[366] South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the Thirtieth Annual Encampment of the Department of South Dakota Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p., 1913), 8.

[367] South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the 20th Annual Encampment of the Department of South Dakota, Grand Army of the Republic* (Canton, SD: N. C. Nash & Son, 1903), 39.

[368] "Memorial Day Exercises," *Albuquerque Citizen*, May 23, 1901.

[369] F. W. Smith, *Our Young Soldier's Grave*, recorded 1866, notated music, accessed December 28, 2021, https://perma.cc/3S7W-NZFH.

[370] "Memorial Day!," *Albuquerque Citizen*, May 30, 1901.

Agency in Indian Territory, forty-five Indigenous girls were followed by forty Indigenous boys "carrying miniature guns" in the 1890 Memorial Day parade.[371] The imagery of armed young men marching behind unarmed women evoked white patriarchal expectations that men protect women and women were entitled to that militarized protection.

Exploitation of Indigenous children was a regular feature of western Civil War commemorations, but the practice was not exclusive to the West. For example, students at Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania regularly participated in Memorial Day exercises.[372] However, using Indigenous children in Civil War commemorative and memorial rituals was more common in the West, where most Indian schools were located and where white settler colonists felt their assimilation efforts were most needed. Therefore, western veteran and auxiliary associations viewed Civil War remembrance rituals and narratives as more critically important to defending colonization and assimilation practices than their eastern counterparts.

In addition to using Native children for their own ceremonies, western Grand Army posts and Relief Corps encouraged Indigenous Americans to hold their own Memorial Day ceremonies under the supervision of the GAR and WRC. While Memorial Day was a solemn day to mark the loss of men who died saving the Union, in the West instructing Indigenous people to hold Memorial Day ceremonies on May 30 for deceased Native Americans became a tool of assimilation. These instances had little to do with the American Civil War itself, except for the important fact that the desire among white

[371] "Civilized Indians," *Topeka Daily Capital*, July 14, 1890.

[372] See "Carlisle Indians Observe Memorial Day," *Sentinel* (Carlisle, PA), May 30, 1910; "All Carlisle Pays Tribute to Heroes of the Civil War," *Carlisle (PA) Evening Herald*, May 31, 1918.

veterans and their families to spread Civil War commemorative practices and its Expansionist legacy helped contribute to Native displacement and assimilation.

Therefore, Grand Army and Relief Corps members sent delegations to Indian schools and reservations around the West to instruct students on Memorial Day rituals.[373] In supposedly "the first exercise[s] of the kind ever held in these agencies" in 1890, American Indians at the Ponca, Otoe, Pawnee, and Oakland reservations in Indian Territory celebrated Memorial Day. At the Ponca Agency, Union veteran A. D. James delivered a speech on the causes of the American Civil War and the sacredness of the Union. Remembrances of the Civil War were vital, according to James, because the "Indian children would shortly become a citizen" therefore they must learn to "prize this government."[374]

Western Union veterans and their wives continually wielded Memorial Day ceremonies as weapons of assimilation and colonization. On Memorial Day in 1914, around fifty Grand Army and Relief Corps members from Lawrence, Kansas visited the Haskell Institute—a nearby boarding school for Indigenous children—so "that patriotism might also be fostered in the lives of young Indians, men and women."[375] Native Americans at the Warm Springs Indian Reservation in Oregon similarly celebrated Memorial Day. "Scores of Indians," visited the Indian burying grounds at the Knights of Pythias Cemetery, where "every grave in the plot was heaped with wild flowers gathered from surrounding hills" and a small American flag was flown over each tombstone.[376] In

[373] See "Memorial Parade to be Short One," *Lawrence (KS) Daily Journal-World,* May 30, 1918; "Haskell Memorial," *Lawrence (KS) Daily Journal*, May 29, 1906.
[374] "Civilized Indians," *Topeka Daily Capital*, July 14, 1890.
[375] "The Haskell Visit," *Daily Gazette* (Lawrence, KS), May 26, 1914.
[376] *Hood River (OR) Glacier*, June 5, 1919.

1913 the *Tacoma Daily News* reported, "Indians Observe Memorial Day." Granting permission for their participation, the editor added, "Well They May, as Red Men Were in Both Armies."[377]

One witness optimistically observed, "these Indians are looking up and advancing as never before. They are situated on small farms and are farming their own lands." Native American engagement in Memorial Day services and the emergence of self-employed Indigenous farmers within permanent, individual homes signified American Indians were becoming "Civilized Indians."[378] Commemorative practices, therefore, were used as a benchmark for progress of assimilation.

Native Membership in Veteran Associations and Auxiliaries

Other American Indians formally joined the Grand Army of the Republic and Woman's Relief Corps. While the GAR and WRC were open to Native members, these organizations rarely identified their membership by race or ethnicity in their records. Therefore, it is difficult to identify and gauge Native participation in Civil War associations. However, the Oklahoma-based Grand Army posts whose membership was majority-Native and the Wisconsin-based posts and corps whose membership was entirely Native, offer a rare glimpse into American Indian participation in the GAR and WRC.

Wisconsin is not within the boundaries of this study, as it is located just east of the Mississippi River, however, the state is geographically close and culturally similar to nearby departments in Minnesota and Iowa. Like many western state GAR and WRC

[377] *Tacoma (WA) Daily News*, May 31, 1913.
[378] "Civilized Indians," *Topeka Daily Capital*, July 14, 1890.

departments, Wisconsin possessed a significant American Indian population and an Indian reservation and boarding school system. Consequently, including Wisconsin's all-Native GAR posts and WRC corps offers a unique opportunity to examine Native participation in Civil War associations.

During the Civil War five to six hundred Menominee, Oneida, and Stockbridge-Munsee men served in Wisconsin Union regiments.[379] After the war, Menominee veterans formed the Joseph Ledergerber Grand Army Post No. 261 at Keshena in February 1889, and the following year its members' wives created the Joseph Ledergeder Relief Corps No. 127. Oneida veterans similarly founded the Oneida Grand Army Post No. 278 at Oneida in 1900 and their wives formed the Oneida Relief Corps No. 73 in 1918. Participation in these organizations remained small, typically ranging from about ten to twenty members, until they disbanded in 1925.[380]

Likewise, significant numbers of Cherokee men fought in Union armies, and veterans formed two Native Grand Army posts in Indian Territory in present-day Oklahoma. Cherokee veterans from Vinita organized Cabin Creek Post No. 1 in 1883 and those from Tahlequah founded Captain White Catcher Post No. 2 in 1889. Unlike Wisconsin, Oklahoma's GAR posts were majority Native and larger with their membership ranging anywhere from twenty to fifty members.[381]

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[379] Russell Horton, "Unwanted in a White Man's War: The Civil War Service of the Green Bay Tribes," *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 88, no. 2 (Winter, 2004–2005): 18–27.

[380] See Wisconsin GAR, *Journal of the Annual Encampment* (publishers and places of publication vary); Wisconsin WRC, *Journal of the Annual Convention* (publishers and places of publication vary); Grand Army of the Republic Dept. of Wisconsin Records, 1861–1986, Wisconsin Veterans Museum, Madison, Wisconsin; Women's Relief Corps, Department of Wisconsin Records and photographs, 1884–1963, Wisconsin Veterans Museum, Madison, Wisconsin.

[381] See Indian Territory GAR, *Journal of the Annual Encampment* (publishers and places of publication vary); "G. A. R. Post Organized," *Vinita (OK) Leader*, March 18, 1897.

Non-Native Grand Army and Relief Corps members often touted Native membership in these organizations as evidence of assimilation, however records suggest American Indians used their membership in the GAR and WRC to create vital forms of welfare, secure political rights, and resist ethnocide.[382] For example, Native Wisconsin posts and corps rarely donated funds to state or national GAR and WRC endeavors, however, they frequently expended relief locally.[383] For example, the *Appleton Crescent* observed, "when there is sickness in a family [the Ledergerber Corps No. 127] go themselves and take care of them, carrying food, clothing or anything needed."[384] Native GAR and WRCs could provide a form of private welfare for destitute and sick American Indians on the Menominee and Oneida reservations.

Native American members of the GAR and WRC also used their membership in these organizations to expand American Indian rights. Members of the Cabin Creek Post at Vinita, Oklahoma, for example, used their influence to endorse pension commissioners favorable to Cherokee veterans and remove those who were not.[385] Not only were military pensions a vital form of financial security, but pensions, accolades for wartime service, and membership in the GAR also reminded the nation of Native American

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[382] See Wisconsin WRC, *Journal of the Twenty-Seventh Annual Convention of the Department of Wisconsin Woman's Relief Corps Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p., 1910), 24–25 and 93; Wisconsin WRC, *Journal of the Thirty-Seventh Annual Convention of the Department of Wisconsin Woman's Relief Corps Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p., 1920), 27; Wisconsin WRC, *Journal of the Thirty-Ninth Annual Convention of the Department of Wisconsin Woman's Relief Corps Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p., 1922), 29; "Visiting Chiefs Go on Sightseeing Trip," *New York Times*, February 24, 1913.

[383] See Wisconsin GAR, *Journal of the Annual Encampment* (publishers and places of publication vary); Wisconsin WRC, *Journal of the Annual Convention* (publishers and places of publication vary); Grand Army of the Republic Dept. of Wisconsin Records, 1861–1986, Wisconsin Veterans Museum, Madison, Wisconsin; Women's Relief Corps, Department of Wisconsin Records and photographs, 1884–1963, Wisconsin Veterans Museum, Madison, Wisconsin.

[384] "Indian Women W.R.C.," *Appleton (WI) Crescent*, November 16, 1895. See also *Indian Chieftain* (Vinita, OK), February 28, 1884.

[385] See *Weekly Chieftain* (Vinita, OK), April 29, 1897; *Chandler (OK) News*, July 20, 1900.

military service in the Civil War and could be leveraged for political rights.[386] Native membership in the GAR and WRC may have persuaded some non-Natives. Wisconsin's *Appleton Crescent,* for example, asserted the "soldierly appearance and manly deportment" of the Ledergeber Post No. 261 at Keshena, should lead Americans to question why the Menominee are "not made citizens of the United States" seeing as they are "quite as capable of citizenship as the average of civilized men."[387]

Figure 15. Photograph of the officers of the Wisconsin Ledergerber Woman's Relief Corps celebrating Memorial Day with American flags in 1917[388]

American Indians further wielded their participation in the GAR and WRC to resist ethnocide. While they often followed the national GAR and WRC's prescribed rituals, members typically performed the rites in their native languages and amended aspects of them to suit their needs. For example, members of the Ledergerber Corps No.

[386] See also "Menominee Tribe Offers to Fight Nation's Enemies," *Green Bay Press-Gazette*, April 18, 1917.

[387] "The Twenty-First," *Appleton (WI) Crescent*, September 17, 1892.

[388] *Untitled,* ca. 1917, Neville Public Museum, Green Bay, Wisconsin, in Stephen J. Herzberg, "The Menomonee Indians: From Treaty to Termination," *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 60, no. 4 (Summer 1977), 282.

127 at Keshena altered the WRC Flag Ritual to salute, "one country, *two languages*, one flag."[389] While very few members of the Ledergerber Corps spoke English, their insistence on continuing WRC rituals in Menominee, despite earlier promises to memorize and perform the rituals in English, reflects their commitment to preserving Menominee language and culture.[390] A tribe's ability to maintain their distinctive language was critical to gaining federal recognition of their separate status but it was also vital to maintaining tribal members' cultural and spiritual heritage and therefore resisting ethnocide.[391] Leveraging their membership in the GAR and WRC, American Indian members employ their membership to resist colonization and the war's expansionist legacy.

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South Dakota Union veteran Henry Roberts Pease celebrated Union veterans who, "inspired with faith in this new life of the Nation, and the supremacy of its power over the Republic's undivided and imperial domain" left their homes "with the magic rod of development" on a "western march of empire" during his 1887 Memorial Day address at Volga. He celebrated Union veterans for extending republican institutions like schools, churches, agriculture, the printing-press, and, most significantly, permanent free-labor households westward. Ideas about gender were deeply ingrained in Pease's remembrances. With the creation of these institutions, he declared, "we have consecrated

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[389] Emphasis is mine. Wisconsin WRC, *Journal of the Twenty-Seventh Annual Convention*, 93.

[390] See Wisconsin WRC, *Journal of the Thirtieth Annual Convention of the Department of Wisconsin Woman's Relief Corps Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic* (Fond du Lac, WI: P. B. Haber, 1913): 75; "Indian Relief Corps," *Appleton (WI) Crescent*, May 14, 1892; Wisconsin WRC, *Journal of the Twenty-Seventh Annual Convention*, 24–25.

[391] See Clifford Abbott and Loretta Metoxen, "Oneida Language Preservation," *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 96, no. 1 (Autumn 2012), 3 and Grua, *Surviving Wounded Knee*, 101.

the freedom of our manhood, and the purity of our womanhood, to the most sacred relations of life."[392]

His remembrances were not an anomaly. Rather, they reflect the unique meaning many western Union veterans and their families constructed from Union victory. Relying on gendered language to bolster their western-centric narrative, many argued the establishment of permanent white gender patriarchal constructions—particularly separate spheres ideology symbolized by the construction of permanent, single-family households—were integral to the success of white western development. Arguing that white women represented refinement and "civilization," Union veterans maintained that the establishment of white gender roles in the West provided the ultimate symbol of the Union's dual victory over barbarism. As one Grand Army comrade put it, "build true homes and you will take a long step toward Americanizing our citizenship."[393]

As the best representatives of manhood and womanhood, Grand Army and Relief Corps exploited Indigenous children in their rituals and ceremonies, which they wielded as a tool of assimilation in the West. They encouraged Native participation in Civil War commemorative acts, especially Memorial Day, to inculcate "civilization" and separate spheres gender roles in Native communities, symbolized most concretely by the construction of permanent homes throughout the West.

As Colorado and Wyoming WRC member Emma D. Adams boasted, "across this continent from the rock bound coast … there is to-day a great unbroken level of happy American homes, in which live the representatives of all races, of all nationalities, of all

[392] Pease, "Memorial Day Address," 4–5.

[393] Idaho GAR, *Journal of Proceedings Thirty-Eighth Annual Encampment Department of Idaho G. A. R.* (Boise: Capital News, 1925), 93.

civilizations, and all are gathered around the altar of one common country in the brotherhood of universal freedom."[394] With the colonization of the West, symbolized most concretely by the spread of separate-spheres gender roles through the construction white homesteads and assimilation of Native Nations, Union veterans and their families asserted the legacy of the American Civil War had been secured.

[394] Colorado and Wyoming WRC, *Journal of Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Convention*, 55–56.

CHAPTER VI – "OWES A PECULIAR DUTY": UNION VETERAN & WOMEN'S ENTITLEMENTS & DEFENDING COLONIZATION

In 1911, South Dakota Lieutenant Governor Frank M. Byrne stood before the state's Grand Army encampment to honor Union veterans who rendered service to the nation not only as soldiers during the American Civil War but also as colonizers after 1865. He declared, "you represent … the day when men forgot selfish ambition and suffered hardships and privations for the common good" so that "the country might live…." After the Confederacy's surrender he observed that "in whatever community you went" in Dakota Territory, "the leaders in all lines of activity were soldiers of the civil war." He added, "I don't know whether the entire army came out to these prairies or not, but I sometimes thought they did." Considering the vital role Union veterans played in preserving the Union and settling the state, Byrne explained, "I often think that the state of South Dakota owes a peculiar duty to the old soldiers, members of the Grand Army of the Republic."[395]

During the Civil War, western Union soldiers fought Indigenous nations in the trans-Mississippi Theater, and many engaged in postbellum military conflicts with Native Americans on the frontier in provisional military companies. As settlers, Union veterans of all theaters and their families who moved West were part of an ongoing effort to colonize American Indians. As the previous four chapters have shown, they intertwined these roles with a western, expansionist legacy of the Civil War in their collective remembrances. Chapter 6 argues western Union veterans and their families wielded these

[395] South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the Twenty-eighth Annual Encampment Department of South Dakota Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p., 1911), 41.

collective remembrances of the war to articulate that their actions were not only beyond reproach, but also deserving of social, economic, and political reward. Through securing these entitlements, they were integral to the development and legitimation of US territorial control in the West.

Western veterans relied on the Union and emancipation's triumphant legacy to defend the violent colonization of Native Americans in the West in ways scholars have not fully recognized. Few historians distinguish between Civil War veteran- and civilian-settlers and therefore miss the ways in which Civil War collective remembrances were vital to securing the United States' nationalist aims in the West. Ari Kelman, however, convincingly demonstrates that white Americans' efforts to contextualize the 1864 Sand Creek Massacre within the Civil War reframed the murder of Cheyenne and Arapaho people as virtuous rather than an act of wanton violence.[396] Yet this use of the Civil War's ethos was not an isolated occurrence. Across the West, Union veterans and their families wielded the expansionist legacy of the Civil War they had articulated to proclaim that they were the most deserving of western lands and economic and political rights and privileges.

Western Union veterans and their families used collective war remembrances to defend their part in the violent colonization of American Indians as virtuous. Furthermore, they leveraged them for their own political, economic, and social gain by arguing for entitlements, including preferential hiring, pensions, and soldiers' homes, for ex-Union soldiers and an increased role in post-war commemorative work and suffrage

[396] Kelman, *A Misplaced Massacre*, 16–17, 23–25, and 31–37.

for western Union women. As one Minnesotan rationalized, "Surely they are entitled to a great reward for what they suffered for the sake of civilization."[397]

Securing Western Lands and Defending Colonization

Throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century, American reformers critiqued federal Indian policy as tantamount to defrauding and massacring peaceful Native Americans to obtain western lands.[398] Union veterans, however, employed their collective war remembrances, which interwove military conflicts against the Confederacy and Indigenous nations, to defend their actions and access to western lands. Cynthia Culver Prescott argues, "portraying an inevitable progression from Indian savagery to white civilization justified white settlers' displacement of Native peoples and absolved white guilt."[399] Union veterans and their families, however, defended their part in colonizing Indigenous nations by asserting that their role fighting American Indians and settling the West was a legacy of the Civil War and therefore unassailable.[400]

Western Union veterans resented the "critics" who claimed that the United States was "founded on conquest because of the Indian wars," so they hastily delineated their military service and nation-building from subjugation. As one Minnesota Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) member explained, the Mexican War was the nation's only war that ever "partook of the nature of a conquest." Furthermore, colonizing Native Americans was ethical "for the simple reason that the Indians that were located upon the land of this

[397] "Minnesota Pioneers," *Saint Paul Globe*, December 11, 1898.
[398] See Grua, *Surviving Wounded Knee*, 31–33; Kelman, *A Misplaced Massacre*, 213–218.
[399] Prescott, *Pioneer Monuments*, 24 and 42.
[400] See also Kelman, *A Misplaced Massacre*.

country were of nomadic character and roamed like the buffalo."[401] Besides, Iowa veteran James Willette added, "this Nation has been extremely kind and generous to the Indian."[402] Fellow Iowa veteran John Brown similarly asserted that in both military conflicts against Confederates and Native Americans "we didn't do anything but what we had to. We did everything straight and right."[403]

If easterners insisted on labelling them conquerors, then western Union veterans maintained it was a "peaceful conquest." As one Utah veteran claimed, "our Nation never conquers to oppress, but we conquer to relieve distress—to set free, to enlighten, to improve and to bless."[404] Montana Grand Army member Junius Sanders concluded that with "strength born of the war of the Rebellion," Union veterans migrated West and developed "State after State … as if by magic."[405] Fellow veteran E. C. Waters reminded Americans that this service deserved rewarding. Ex-soldiers with "venturesome spirits" moved West and "developed … happy and prosper[ous] homes," for which the nation owed them a "monstrous debt." Ignoring the military service of frontier regulars, they asserted Civil War veterans were the premier and morally superior pioneers of the West, and therefore the most deserving of western lands. In the process, they rebranded the

[401] Minnesota GAR, *Journal of Proceedings of the Fifty-seventh Annual Encampment of the Department of Minnesota, Grand Army of the Republic* (Minneapolis: Syndicate, 1923), 104.

[402] Minnesota GAR, *Journal of Proceedings of the Fifty-seventh Annual Encampment*, 104. See also South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the 24th Annual Encampment*, 17; Kansas GAR, *Journal of the Nineteenth Annual Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic, Department of Kansas* (Topeka: W. Y. Morgan, 1900), 53.

[403] Iowa GAR, *Journal of the 38th Annual Encampment Department of Iowa Grand Army of the Republic* (Des Moines: Gordon L. Elliot, 1912), 199. See also Oregon GAR, *Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Encampment*, 5–7.

[404] Utah GAR, *Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Encampment, Department of Utah, Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p., 1899), 8.

[405] Montana GAR, *Proceedings of the First, Second, Third and Fourth Encampments*, 5.

violent colonization of American Indians as the peaceful, even magical, transformation of western lands and territories.[406]

Celebrating colonization as a virtuous process was paramount to Union veterans because they leveraged their Civil War military service to defend western land claims, which preferenced Union military service. The Homestead Act reinscribed the idea that white Americans who were loyal to the Union—especially those with Civil War military service—deserved western lands. With the passage of the 1862 Act, which transferred 270 million acres of territory from public to private domain, the US government encouraged eastern Americans loyal to the Union to migrate west and claim Native lands for the nation.

While most western Grand Army Departments were in their infancy in 1870, Union veterans pressured their state legislatures throughout the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries to open reservation lands for settlement by non-Native settlers and to create greater entitlements for veterans who registered homestead claims.[407] Although they failed to implement a Union veterans' land bounty, they successfully urged Congress to pass the Soldiers' Homestead Bill, which allowed them to deduct their war service from the Homestead Act's five-year residency requirement.[408] In exchange, the presence of Union veteran-settlers in the West legitimized the United States' claim over

[406] Montana GAR, *Proceedings of the First, Second, Third and Fourth Encampments*, 48.

[407] See "Short Sketches of the Commanders of the Lyndon Post," *Patriotic Lyndon: History of Many Leading Organizations, Lyndon, Kansas* edited by C. R. Green (n.p.: n.p., 1897), 116–117; David T. Keating to J. H. Patterson, February 27, 1907, box 4, Grand Army of the Republic Records, Oregon Historical Society, Portland, Oregon.

[408] Minnesota GAR, *Proceedings of the Annual and Semi-Annual Encampments of the Department of Minnesota*, Grand Army of the Republic (n.p.: n.p., 1870), 72; Jordan, *Marching Home*, 181.

western lands.[409] Grand Army departments justified the state-sanctioned redistribution of Native land to western settlers, with Union veterans as the most deserving of land entitlements.[410]

Figure 16. Advertisement from the Northern Pacific Railroad for Union veteran land claims issued at the 30th Minnesota Grand Army encampment[411]

[409] Laura Jensen, *Patriots, Settlers, and the Origins of American Social Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 213.

[410] See Jensen, *Patriots, Settlers, and the Origins of American Social Policy*, 8–15.

[411] *Attention, comrades: the land department of the Northern Pacific Railroad can help you, if you desire to obtain a home of your own*, 1896, Washington State Historical Society, Tacoma, Washington, accessed June 21, 2022, https://perma.cc/C23Q-LHCH.

Western GARs also encouraged and aided Union veterans who were applying for homestead claims. In 1885, the South Dakota GAR believed veterans who faithfully served the United States were being prevented from "exercising a soldier's right upon the vacant lands … under the homestead act." They reasoned many men had quickly returned home to their families without formal discharges, which impeded their efforts to obtain land. Therefore, they petitioned Congress to correct war records that inaccurately labelled soldiers as absent without leave or deserted, so they could secure soldiers' homestead claims and pensions.[412] Other departments compiled and published the military records of all soldiers who served against Confederates and American Indians in their states between 1861 and 1865, which were invaluable resources for Union veterans seeking homestead claims, as well as pensions and admittance to state soldiers' homes. [413] Other states' GAR departments, including Iowa, Kansas, and Idaho, worked to pass legislation that would provide Union veterans with tax breaks on their homestead claims.[414]

Arguing these lands were symbolic of what Union soldiers fought to preserve, they asserted western homesteads were spoils of their Civil War military service. By placing westward territorial expansion within the shadow of the war, they manipulated

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[412] Dakota Territory GAR, *Proceedings of the Second Annual Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic Department of Dakota* (Chamberlain, SD: Parker & Blair, 1885), 8.

[413] See Minnesota GAR, *Journal of Proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Encampment of the Department of Minnesota, Grand Army of the Republic* (Minneapolis: Co-operative, 1891), 127; New Mexico GAR, *Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Encampment*, 10; New Mexico GAR, *Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Encampment*, 8; New Mexico GAR, *Twenty-Fourth, Twenty-Fifth and Twenty-Sixth Annual Encampment*, 6. See GAR departments even connected veterans to agents who could help them resolve homestead claims issues. Colorado and Wyoming GAR, *Official Roster Department of Colorado and Wyoming Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p., 1910), 68–70. See also Kansas GAR, *Journal of the Eighteenth Annual Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic, Department of Kansas* (Topeka: Crane, 1899), 281.

[414] See Kansas GAR, *Journal of the Twenty-Fifth Annual Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic, Department of Kansas* (Topeka: Corning, 1906), 32 and 113; Idaho GAR, *Proceedings of the Twentieth Annual Encampment*, 24 and 34.

this narrative to claim Union veterans were the most deserving of western lands and their presence on western homestead claims worked to legitimize US territorial control in the West.[415] "The boys who marched in blue to defend their county," they reasoned, deserved this "free land" as the "bonus payment of those times."[416]

Securing Entitlements for Veterans

Nationally the GAR worked to secure financial, political, and social entitlements for Union veterans, however, westerners argued their service merited these privileges in region-specific ways.[417] Like eastern veterans they relied on collective remembrances of the Civil War that credited themselves with saving the Union and ending slavery, but unlike their eastern counterparts they added colonization to their list of accomplishments. They maintained "this country is under a deep debt of gratitude" to the "great army of American volunteer soldiers [who] … preserved the old flag without the loss of a star" and even went on to add new stars "to its folds" through western territorial expansion.[418] By doing so they could leverage their expansionist legacy of the Civil War to secure careers, pensions, and state-funded homes for western Union veterans. These "great

[415] See Jensen, *Patriots, Settlers, and the Origins of American Social Policy*, 8–15.

[416] "Meeting Minutes, 1898–1903," box 1, folder 2, Grand Army of the Republic Department of North Dakota John F. Reynolds Post No. 5 Records, North Dakota Institute for Regional Studies, Fargo, North Dakota.

[417] Thomas J. Brown, *Civil War Monuments and the Militarization of America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019), 5.

[418] "Decoration Day," *Junction City (KS) Republican*, June 5, 1891. See also Washington and Alaska GAR, *Journal of the Fourteenth Annual Encampment Department of Washington and Alaska Grand Army of the Republic* (Spokane: H. W. Greenberg, 1896), 43; Washington and Alaska GAR, *Journal of the Twenty-Second Annual Encampment Department of Washington and Alaska Grand Army of the Republic* (Olympia: Blankenship-Satterlee, 1904), 49; William W. Denison, "Early Days in Osage County," in *Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society, 1926–1928* edited by William Elsey Connelley (Topeka: Kansas State, 1928), 392.

reward[s]" for their service as soldier-pioneers further reinscribed the United States' territorial control of the region.[419]

The Idaho Grand Army reasoned "the same enterprising and loyal spirit that made soldiers in the years from 1861 to 1865, made pioneers after the war," and therefore it was expected that "we find them generally first and foremost in every laudable enterprise … holding positions of trust and honor."[420] Arguing veteran-settlers were naturally better citizens than civilian-settlers, the Grand Army used its clout to endorse Union veterans for political office and appointments, including those that drove Indian policy like the Bureau of Indian Affairs.[421] When the Iowa GAR supported C. F. Bailey for leadership within the organization, they based his qualifications on his Civil War service and his efforts to settle "an uncultivated farm" in Iowa where he "applied his muscle to subdue the virgin soil as brave as when in the thickest of the fight."[422] Maneuvering "old soldiers" into these positions of power was critical, they reasoned, because it was "the duty of the old soldiers as well as the citizens to redeem the politics of the United States"

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[419] "Minnesota Pioneers," *Saint Paul Globe*, December 11, 1898.

[420] Idaho GAR, *Report of the Fourth Annual Encampment*, 5.

[421] See Nebraska GAR, *Journal of the Twentieth Annual Encampment*, 76–77; Bross, "Pioneers in Nebraska"; Montana GAR, *Journal of the 16th Annual Encampment of the Department of Montana Grand Army of the Republic* (Butte: Butte, 1900), 4; Minnesota GAR, *Journal of Proceedings of the Sixty-Fifth Annual Encampment of the Department of Minnesota, Grand Army of the Republic* (St. Paul: Louis F. Dow, 1931), 58; Colorado and Wyoming GAR, *Journal of the Thirty-Seventh Annual Encampment Department of Colorado and Wyoming Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p., 1916), 46–49; Idaho GAR, *Journal of the Sixteenth Annual Encampment Department of Idaho Grand Army of the Republic* (Boise: Capital News, 1903), 19; "McRae Post, 1867–1873," Box 2, Grand Army of the Republic Department of New Mexico Records; Oregon GAR, *Proceedings of the Twenty-Seventh Annual Encampment of the Department of Oregon Grand Army of the Republic* (Oregon City: Oregon City Enterprise, 1908), 41. Union veterans even campaigned for Alice Risley, former Army nurse and member of the Missouri Woman's Relief Corps and Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic, to be appointed postmistress of West Plain, Missouri. See "Correspondence, 1886–1889," microfilm, roll 1, folder 3, Alice Cary Risley Papers, 1857–1991, State Historical Society of Missouri, Rolla, Missouri.

[422] Iowa GAR, *Journal of the Twenty-Fourth Annual Encampment, Department of Iowa, Grand Army of the Republic* (Keokuk, IA: W. W. & A. J. Leake, 1898), 62–63.

and together "bear the white man's burdens, meet the red man's needs, … and redress the black man's wrongs."[423]

Western Civil War collective remembrances were likewise vital to securing pensions for veterans, their widows, and dependent children. Nationally Union veterans and the Grand Army began aggressively pursuing pension legislation in 1877, but for significant numbers of western soldiers their Civil War military service had been against Native nations—not the Confederacy—in the trans-Mississippi West.[424] Consequently, their ability to secure pensions was often linked to their capacity to portray warfare against American Indians as an extension of the fight against the Confederacy.

For example, over fifteen thousand Californians enlisted for service during the Civil War. Commanded by Brigadier General George Wright in the Department of the Pacific, the First Battalion of Mountaineers fought against American Indian tribes in the northwestern part of California from 1862–1865. At the close of the war, the federal government regularly granted Civil War pensions to members of this unit, as well as their widows and children, until August 1908 when they denied the pension claim of Coral A. Skinner—the daughter of William G. Skinner, a deceased soldier who served in Company D. They rejected her application, and by extension revoked all pensions connected to this battalion, on the grounds "that the service rendered" was "against the

[423] Iowa GAR, *Journal of the 32d Annual Encampment, Department of Iowa, Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p. 1906), 189.

[424] See Brown, *Civil War Monuments and the Militarization of America*, 64–5; Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1995); Cahill, *Federal Fathers and Mothers*, 241.

Indians, and in California" and therefore, cannot "be regarded as service during the War of the Rebellion."[425]

Outraged by this decision, the California GAR argued a "large proportion of Southern men and Rebel sympathizers" posed a significant threat to keeping California in the Union, which was "augmented by serious Indian uprising and outbreaks."[426] Like their collective remembrances, they asserted service rendered in California against Native Americans must be remembered as part of the Civil War and therefore deserved financial compensation. Besides, comrade Shepard pragmatically offered, "The act does not say that any man who served '*in*' the war of the rebellion shall be pensioned, but any man who served '*during*' the war of the rebellion."[427] Consequently, they worked to restore the First Battalion of Mountaineers' pension status so they may "enjoy the same privileges as are by law extended to all others who served their country in arms during the War of the Rebellion."[428]

While the GAR defended the First Battalion of Mountaineers' pensions rights, they did not extend the same logic to veterans of the Lot Smith Company, a Mormon cavalry unit in Utah that guarded the Overland Trail against American Indians in 1862. The federal pension bureau ruled they were ineligible to receive federal Civil War pensions because it "was not organized for service in connection with the war of the

[425] National GAR, *Journal of the 43d National Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p., 1909), 244–245. See also California and Nevada GAR, *Proceedings of the Forty-Second Annual Encampment of the Department of California and Nevada, Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p., 1909), 131–134.

[426] National GAR, *Journal of the 43d National Encampment*, 243.

[427] Emphasis in original. California and Nevada GAR, *Proceedings of the Forty-Second Annual Encampment*, 133.

[428] National GAR, *Journal of the 43d National Encampment*, 245.

rebellion."[429] While the board reversed this decision in 1909, granting the Lot Smith Company access to pensions and Grand Army membership, the Utah GAR continued to squabble over their eligibility to the organization. Many argued they should be barred from membership "for the reason they were only emergency men, called out to protect the property of the Telegraph and Overland Mail Co."[430] While western Union veterans leveraged their collective remembrances of the Civil War to assert that their service against American Indians was part of the Civil War and therefore deserved financial compensation, many Utah veterans refused to aid Latter-day Saints' analogous efforts to obtain pensions and join the GAR.

Speaking at the Minnesota encampment, Illinois Lieutenant Governor Ira Chase supported issuing service pensions to Union veterans and their widows—rather than allocating pensions based on physical injury or disability—and framed service pensions as a western issue. Following their military service, he argued, many veterans found jobs and opportunities at home filled by civilians, so they marched West, settled in places like Kansas, and "made this great empire." They argued these men had sacrificed opportunities for education and advancement, and therefore deserved service pensions for their lost prospects. However, Chase felt that "the East and the South" had "combined[d] against this Mighty West" to oppose this measure.[431] Service pensions would have aided western Union veterans' efforts to assert their control over western lands and strengthen their position as arbiters of American citizenship.[432]

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[429] Kenneth L. Alford, "Mormons and the Grand Army of the Republic" in *Civil War Saints* edited by Kenneth L. Alford (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, 2012), 330–331.

[430] Alford, "Mormons and the Grand Army of the Republic," 330–331.

[431] Minnesota GAR, *Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Encampment*, 140–141.

[432] See Jensen, *Patriots, Settlers, and the Origins of American Social Policy*, 8–15.

Other veterans complained that money that could have been allocated to Civil War pensioners went to American Indians. They argued Union veterans and their dependents were owed compensation by the federal government, but American Indians were wards of the state and therefore not as deserving of federal dollars.[433] One Relief Corps member inspected Teller Indian School near Grand Junction, Colorado and "wish[ed] her children were Indians, so that the Government would take better care of them." She reasoned the "pitiful pension" she received "was not sufficient to support herself and children in the comforts that these Indian children possessed." While she did not object to caring for "these 'wards of the Nation'," she believed "the old soldier should rank first in the esteem of our rulers and law makers."[434] In his effort to support the construction of a Union veterans' home in the Gulf South, Charles W. Keeting—an African-American veteran and commander of the Grand Army Department of Mississippi and Louisiana—similarly argued, "it appears rather unjust that the Government should continue to appropriate millions of dollars yearly for the care of the savage Indians, who are cruel enemies of the country, and cannot appropriate a few thousand dollars to protect the crippled and destitute Union soldiers who gave up the best years of their young manhood to uphold its flag."[435]

[433] See Utah GAR, *Proceedings of the Thirteenth Annual Encampment*, 5.

[434] Colorado and Wyoming GAR, *Journal of the Sixteenth Annual Encampment of the Department of Colorado and Wyoming, Grand Army of the Republic* (Denver: Rocky Mountain Herald, 1895), 24–25.

[435] Louisiana and Mississippi GAR, *Proceedings of the Sixteenth Annual Encampment of the Department of Louisiana and Mississippi, Grand Army of the Republic* (New Orleans: Merchants, 1899), 11.

Like their efforts to secure pensions for veterans who fought American Indians during the Civil War, they also worked to ensure veterans who fought in the trans-Mississippi theater would be allowed admittance to state facilities. Veterans' homes (also called soldiers' homes) were state and federally run institutions that served as long-term residential facilities for destitute Union veterans. Minnesota, for example, sent volunteers like the First Minnesota Infantry Regiment to fight against the Confederacy in the eastern and western theaters of the war. But the state also formed the First Minnesota Mounted Rangers to pursue, imprison, and expel Chief Taoyateduta's (also known as Little Crow) forces and Dakotan non-combatants in the 1862 Dakota War. Naturally, volunteers of units like the First Minnesota Infantry Regiment who fought at Gettysburg could apply for admittance to the state's veterans' home in Minneapolis, which was only open to "ex-soldiers, sailors and marines, who served … during the war of the rebellion, or the Mexican War."[436] However, it was unclear whether men from the First Minnesota Mounted Rangers could seek admittance to the home because they fought the Dakota, not Confederate forces, in 1862.

In 1870, Minnesota GAR member Henry A. Castle, who served in the 73rd Illinois Volunteer Regiment, advocated for all honorably discharged officers and soldiers who joined the First Minnesota Mounted Rangers to be eligible for membership in the Grand Army of the Republic. Believing it had "been satisfactorily established that the Indian massacre of 1862 in Minnesota was a part and parcel of the late rebellion," the Minnesota Grand Army unanimously agreed and opened its membership to men who had

[436] "Chapter 148 [H. F. No. 680]" in *General Laws of the State of Minnesota Passed During the Twenty-Fifth Session of the State Legislature* (Minneapolis: Harrison & Smith, 1887), 250 (hereafter cited as *Minnesota Laws of the Twenty-Fifth Session*).

fought in the Dakota War.[437] This decision created a precedent for admitting the First Minnesota Mounted Rangers to the state veterans' home when it opened eighteen years later.

The Minnesota GAR began advocating for the construction of a veterans' home as early as 1885, and the state legislature appropriated funds for that purpose in 1887. When the Minnesota Soldiers' Home opened its doors to Mexican War and Union Civil War veterans the following year, it admitted not only men who fought against Confederates but also those who fought against the Dakota in 1862. The act declared that all veterans who "actually served in any campaign against the Indians in Minnesota in 1862," whether they enlisted or not, would be eligible for admission to the Minnesota Soldiers' Home.[438]

The liberal manner in which the state incorporated veterans of the Dakota War into the home was not always explicit in practice, however. Worried that Joe Reynolds, a supposed civilian "who never was a soldier," was "receiving benefits of that Home," Minnesota Grand Army member L. W. Pruss brought his concerns before fellow comrades at the 1889 annual encampment. Settling the matter, Castle reminded them that "the law expressly provides that men engaged in the Indian war of '62," like Reynolds, could be "taken into the Home, whether they ever enlisted or not."[439] Castle reaffirmed the Dakota War was an extension of the Civil War and defended its veterans' rights to entitlements for Union service, including membership in the Grand Army and admittance to the state's veterans' home.

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[437] Minnesota GAR, *Proceedings of the Annual and Semi-Annual Encampments*, 45.
[438] "Chapter 148 [H. F. No. 680]" in *Minnesota Laws of the Twenty-Fifth Session*, 250.
[439] Minnesota GAR, *Journal of the Ninth Annual Encampment of the Department of Minnesota, Grand Army of the Republic* (Minneapolis: Co-operative, 1889), 170.

So many Union veterans believed moving west offered them not only financial opportunity but also "solace, healing, and escape," that the postwar West became a national symbol of redemption, healing, and recuperation.[440] As one veteran testified, Comrade Swords, "disabled to a great degree," moved to Indian Territory and "found such benefit from the pure air and the springs he located there."[441] Believing in the healing powers of high altitudes, dry climates, and natural mineral and hot springs, western veterans re-imagined the purpose of soldiers' homes to not only serve as long-term residential facilities for Union veterans but also spaces for convalescence. On these grounds, western Grand Army departments in Arkansas, Oklahoma, Montana, and South Dakota advocated for the creation of institutions that served as residential facilities and sanitariums within their states.[442] While Union veterans saw these facilities as recuperative homes, their construction was also part of a continuing effort to occupy and claim Native lands for the use and possession of Union veteran-settlers.

The South Dakota Grand Army of the Republic, for example, reviewed several sites for the state's future soldiers' home, but the committee unanimously recommended an eighty-acre plot near a natural hot spring located along the southern edge of the Black Hills in the southwestern corner of the state. In 1889, the state legislature donated eigthy

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[440] Deverell, "Redemption Falls Short," 143 and 159. See also Hackemer, "Wartime Trauma and the Lure of the Frontier," 75–103.

[441] National GAR, *Journal of the Thirty-Sixth National Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic* (Minneapolis: Kimball & Storer, 1903), 210. See also Utah GAR, *Journal of the Tenth Annual Encampment, Department of Utah. Grand Army of the Republic* (Salt Lake City: Kenny, 1892), 9; South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the Twenty-eighth Annual Encampment*, 66–67.

[442] See Arkansas GAR, *Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Encampment of the Department of Arkansas Grand Army of the Republic* (Little Rock: Gazette 1886), 17; Arkansas GAR, *Proceedings of the Eighteenth Annual Encampment of the Department of Arkansas Grand Army of the Republic* (Fayetteville: Washington County Review, 1900), 6; National GAR, *Journal of the Thirty-Sixth National Encampment*, 307; Montana GAR, *Journal of the Seventh, Eighth, Ninth and Tenth Annual Encampments Department of Montana Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p., 1894), 71.

acres of land and allocated $47,000 to construct a four-story building at the site for the long-term accommodation of two hundred comrades.[443] Building a sanitarium at Hot Springs was intended to restore Union veterans "to health by the use of the healing waters found there."[444]

Figure 17. Photograph of residents and visitors at the State Soldiers' Home in Hot Springs, South Dakota[445]

The facility was under the charge of the state of South Dakota and its Grand Army department until Union veterans from South Dakota, Iowa, and Nebraska began calling on Congress in 1898 to appropriate funds to add a national sanitarium for "rheumatic and debilitated old Soldiers of the War of '61 and '65," as well as for "the malaria and fever stricken Soldiers of the Spanish-American war."[446] The bill was

[443] *State of South Dakota, Journal of the House of Representatives of the Special Session of the South Dakota Legislature* (Pierre: Free Press, 1889), 32.

[444] South Dakota GAR, *Journal of the Seventh Annual Session of the State Encampment, Department of South Dakota, Grand Army of the Republic* (Mitchell, SD: Mitchell, 1890), 28.

[445] *State Soldiers Home*, 1905, South Dakota State Historical Society, Pierre, South Dakota, accessed June 21, 2022, https://perma.cc/JY53-2CNZ.

[446] Iowa GAR, *Journal of the Twenty-Fifth Annual Encampment Department of Iowa. Grand Army of the Republic* (Mason City, IA: Globe-Gazette, 1900), 102–103.

approved on May 29, 1902, and they allocated $170,000 to construct a treatment hospital at the now nationally affiliated, Battle Mountain Sanitarium. No longer solely a long-term residential facility, it opened in 1907 and offered veterans medical treatments, such as bathing in the mineral waters, and hospital services. When treatments concluded, veterans either returned home or to the long-term residential branch of the campus.[447]

Western veterans' homes like Battle Mountain Sanitarium were constructed in "pioneer fashion."[448] Lakotas, for example, have a profound spiritual and historical connection to the Black Hills (or *Paha Sapa*). Not only are the Hills their homelands, but they also believe Wind Cave within the Hills is the site of the bison and humanity's origin.[449] Treaty agreements between the Lakota and the United States in 1851 and 1868 formally secured their possession of the Black Hills, but in 1877 Congress ignored its prior legal agreements and seized the Hills for use by non-Native settlers.[450]

The South Dakota Grand Army took advantage of this change and claimed Hot Springs and the Black Hills, with its "wonderful climatic conditions, altitude, bracing atmosphere, and health giving waters," for the use of Union veterans at that state's veterans' home. As they noted obtusely, "these Hot Springs were the resort of the Indian long before the white man found his way into the jealously guarded realm of the Black

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[447] "Battle Mountain Sanitarium: Hot Springs, South Dakota," National Park Service, accessed January 31, 2022, https://perma.cc/EYE5-Y753.

[448] Colorado and Wyoming WRC, *Journal of the Proceedings of the Fifteenth Annual Convention of the Department of Colorado and Wyoming, Woman's Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the G. A. R.* (Denver: Marsh, 1899), 19. See also Colorado and Wyoming GAR, *Journal of the Fourteenth Annual Encampment of the Department of the Colorado and Wyoming, Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p., 1893), 14; National GAR, *Journal of the Thirty-First National Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic* (Lincoln: State Journal, 1897), 137–138; National GAR, *Journal of the Seventeenth Annual Session National Encampment, Grand Army of the Republic* (Omaha: Republican Book and Job, 1883), 152; National GAR, *Journal of the 37th National Encampment*, 312.

[449] Jeffrey Ostler, *The Lakotas and the Black Hills: The Struggles for Sacred Ground* (New York: Viking, 2010), 3–27.

[450] Ostler, *The Lakotas and the Black Hills*, xiii–xiv.

Hills county."[451] At Battle Mountain Sanitarium, the national GAR boasted that "white settlement had … driven the Indians" from the land leaving the Hot Springs and the Black Hills within the dominion of the 'Anglo Saxon'."[452]

Convalescence homes and hospitals for the sole use of Civil War veterans also conferred special status on ex-Union soldiers. For example, western Grand Army departments infrequently exercised their collective remembrances for the benefit of Indian War veterans who enlisted after 1865.[453] Recognizing this, these veterans often resented them for ignoring the history of frontier regulars—and in some instances even co-opting their military service—and begrudged the GAR for failing to share the glory and privileges associated with it. One Indian War veteran lamented, "seldom, if ever, when the civil war veterans are celebrating Decoration day, does one hear one word of remembrance for the services most arduous and heroic of the Indian war veterans."[454]

By constructing collective remembrances of the Civil War that credited its soldiers with securing the nation's future and territorial expansion, western Union veterans defended their claims to entitlements including political appointments, pensions, and veterans' homes. In the process, these privileges legitimized non-Native claims over western territory, like the Black Hills, by seizing land and sacred spaces from Native people and repurposing them in ways that recognized service and loyalty to the Union.[455]

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[451] Iowa GAR, *Journal of the Twenty-Fifth Annual Encampment*, 103.

[452] National GAR, *Journal of the Thirty-Sixth National Encampment*, 221.

[453] Cecily N. Zander, "We Are the Forgotten Men: Indian Was Veterans Fight for National Recognition" (paper presented at the 60th annual meeting of the Western Historical Association, virtual, October 12–17, 2020). See also Cecily N. Zander, "'Victory's Long Review:' The Grand Review of Union Armies and the Meaning of the Civil War," *Civil War History* 66, No. 1 (March 2020): 45–77.

[454] *Winners of the West*, January 1926, quoted in Zander, "We are the Forgotten Men," 1.

[455] See Jensen, *Patriots, Settlers, and the Origins of American Social Policy*, 8–15.

Securing Entitlements for Union Women

While Union veterans leveraged their western collective remembrances of the Civil War to advocate for preferential positions, pensions, and state soldiers' homes, western Union women likewise sought social and political capital. In contrast to their southern counterparts, northern men were largely silent about the wartime roles of northern women because they did not lead postwar commemorative efforts for the Union the way southern Ladies' Memorial Associations and the United Daughters of the Confederacy did for the South. Instead, northern women formed chapters of the Woman's Relief Corps (WRC), which focused less on commemoration and more on charity and relief work for Union veterans and their families.[456]

The rudimentary and rural nature of western settlement, however, made the Woman's Relief Corps more essential to the operations and sociability of western Grand Army posts. Furthermore, as the previous chapter demonstrates, white women performed symbolic work stabilizing gender roles and sustaining colonization in Civil War collective remembrances in the trans-Mississippi West. Like their male counterparts, western women leveraged these unique factors to forge a stronger relationship with the Grand Army and advocate for women's political rights.

Western life made the Woman's Relief Corps indispensable to the region's Grand Army departments. Posts sprang up in rudimentary communities dispersed over long distances, often with small female populations. Consequently, many Grand Army departments saw their relationship with the WRC as a way to entice more comrades to

[456] Janney, "Hell Hath No Fury," 63–64.

join the GAR.[457] The New Mexico Grand Army department exemplifies this. Originally hesitant and even hostile to the WRC in their state, they gradually reversed their position thanks to the efforts of men like Department commander Lee Rudisille. "In a lonesome country like New Mexico, where distance is measured by leagues instead of miles, where so many of our comrades are deprived of the comforts and refining influences of the home life," he believed "comingling of Posts and Corps" would "result … in their mutual pleasure and benefit." Within two years the New Mexico GAR found greater interest and attendance at post meetings once they began socializing with the WRC afterwards. "Secure her assistance," Albert J. Fountain advised, "and she will make you take a greater interest in the post…."[458]

While many western GAR departments were initially hesitant to interact with Relief Corps, WRCs could also provide crucial relief to financially struggling Union veterans and Grand Army departments in tenuous communities where financial failure rather than upward mobility was all too common.[459] When its Grand Army was robbed and subsequently bankrupted, the South Dakota WRC, for example, "came in and laid down two thousand dollars" and saved the state's GAR from financial ruin.[460] Grand Army posts in Kansas did not have to address the "destitution and suffering among our comrades … in some of our Western counties," because the Kansas WRC's relief funds

[457] See South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the 26th Annual Encampment of the Department of South Dakota Grand Army of the Republic* (Yankton, SD: Yankton, 1909), 14.

[458] New Mexico GAR, *Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Encampment*, 6. See also Oregon GAR, *Proceedings of the Twenty-Fifth Annual Encampment* (Oregon City: Courier, 1906), 14. See also New Mexico GAR, *Proceedings of the Department of New Mexico Grand Army of the Republic* (Albuquerque: Evening Citizen, 1907), 52; Idaho GAR, *Journal of the Ninth Annual Encampment*, 15.

[459] See Marten, *Sing Not War*. See also Hackemer, "Union Veteran Migration Patterns to the Frontier," 84–108.

[460] South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the 23rd Annual Encampment*, 29.

filled that vacancy.[461] Western Relief Corps provided a vital form of economic security for comrades and their families. As Idaho GAR comrade M. H. Barber observed, "without the Relief Corps the Grand Army would be a failure."[462]

For many western Grand Army men, the WRC was not only a chance to achieve female companionship and ensure economic viability, but it was also an opportunity to ossify separate-spheres ideology in a region where gender roles were unstable. The relationships that developed out of the cooperation between the GAR and WRC were another step in the ongoing movement to protect Union veterans and their families' interests in the West. Throughout the region, Relief Corps women performed assimilation and Americanization work, which many white westerners viewed as vital to stabilizing gender roles and colonizing American Indians.

As Chapter 5 argues, white women's presence in the region and their involvement in the WRC served as a symbolic counterpart to Indigenous women and gender roles. Believing WRC women were "representative of the best type of American womanhood," their membership modeled separate spheres ideology to local Indigenous populations.[463] For example, members of the GAR and WRC typically arrived separately to conventions, but "nearly every man" of the South Dakota and North Dakota GAR "escort[ed] a lady"

[461] Kansas GAR, *Journal of the Fourteenth Annual Encampment Department of Kansas. Grand Army of the Republic* (Wichita: Wichita Eagle, 1895), 80 and 66. See also Colorado and Wyoming WRC, *Journal of the Proceedings of the Fifteenth Annual Convention*, 20; Colorado and Wyoming WRC, *Journal of the Seventeenth Annual Convention of the Department of Colorado and Wyoming Woman's Relief Corps Auxiliary to the G. A. R.* (Pueblo, CO: Chieftain, 1901), 116.

[462] Idaho GAR, *Proceedings of the Eighteenth Annual Encampment of the Department of Idaho Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p., 1905), 23

[463] Arizona GAR, *Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Encampment*, 10. See also Colorado and Wyoming WRC, *Journal of Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Convention*, 55–56; New Mexico GAR, *Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Encampment*, 11.

of the Relief Corps from the train depot to the 1889 national convention.[464] As gendered role models, Relief corps women were viewed as the symbolic wives of Grand Army men and together they demonstrated heteronormative patriarchal relationships. This display was critical to colonization efforts.[465]

Figure 18. Photograph of LGAR and GAR members atop horse-drawn parade float on July 4, 1913 in Tacoma, Washington[466]

Asserting "woman is the best influence on this earth," Relief Corps also engaged in patriotic education intended to Americanize Indigenous children "to make … solid the bulwarks for this republic."[467] Western Grand Army men consequently celebrated Relief Corps for "beautifying and glorifying the citizenship of to-day and to-morrow with higher

[464] Dakota Territory WRC, *Proceedings of the Sixth Annual Convention of the Woman's Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the G. A. R. Department of Dakota* (Aberdeen, SD: Fred H. Shoals, 1889), 34.

[465] See Kansas WRC, *Journal of the Nineteenth Annual Convention*, 11.

[466] *Ladies of the G.A.R. Logan Circle Parade Float, July 4, 1913, Tacoma*, 1913, Washington State Historical Society, Tacoma, Washington, accessed June 21, 2022, https://perma.cc/GBC5-C47X.

[467] South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the 23rd Annual Encampment*, 29; South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the Fourteenth Annual Encampment of the Department of South Dakota, Grand Army of the Republic* (Canton, SD: News Print, 1897), 39.

ideals and better impulses."[468] Western white women were viewed as essential to "civilizing" American Indians in the trans-Mississippi West, and as such, white women played an even more significant symbolic role in western collective remembrances of the Civil War than their eastern counterparts.

Historians Nina Silber and Francesca Morgan argue the WRC recognized and accepted their "marginalized status" and even rejected opportunities for their own political visibility, but their evidence is largely grounded in eastern records.[469] In the trans-Mississippi West, however, the essential role the WRC played by providing companionship, financial relief, sustaining GAR posts in rural and rudimentary communities, as well as modeling gender roles and Americanizing Indigenous children, led western Grand Army men to repeatedly declare "our success greatly depends upon our auxiliaries."[470] Western GAR departments often viewed the WRC as indispensable.[471]

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[468] Kansas GAR, *Journal of the Twenty-Sixth Annual Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic, Department of Kansas* (Topeka: Corning, 1907), 30. See also Idaho GAR, *Proceedings of the Twentieth Annual Encampment*, 12; Idaho GAR, *Journal of the Sixteenth Annual Encampment*, 18; South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the 21st Annual Encampment of the Department of South Dakota Grand Army of the Republic* (Canton, SD: N. C. Nash & Son, 1904), 18; Oregon GAR, *Journal of the Twenty-Eighth Annual Encampment of the Department of Oregon Grand Army of the Republic* (Oregon City: Oregon City Enterprise, 1909), 30; Idaho GAR, *Proceedings of the Twenty-first Annual Encampment of the Department of Idaho G. A. R. and the Journal of the Thirteenth Annual Convention Department of Idaho, W. R. C.* (n.p.: n.p., 1908), 11; J. D. Barker, *Address Delivered at the Fifth Annual Reunion of the Grand Army of the Republic, at Topeka, Kansas, October 2, 1888* (Girard, KS: Girard Press, 1888), 12–14.

[469] See Nina Silber, *Gender in the Sectional Conflict* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 89; Morgan, *Women and Patriotism in Jim Crow America*, 41.

[470] Utah GAR, *Proceedings of the Twenty-Second Annual Encampment Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p., 1904), 11. Adam Chamberlain and Alixandra Yanus, "Our One Great Hope: The Interdependence of the WRC and the GAR," *Armed Forces & Society* (March 2021): 1–22, argues the WRC sustained the GAR after 1890 when Grand Army membership began to decline. Grand Army posts did not decline as rapidly in states with strong WRC departments.

[471] See Idaho GAR, *Journal of the Ninth Annual Encampment*, 15; Kansas GAR, *Journal of the Fourteenth Annual Encampment*, 66; New Mexico GAR, *Proceedings of the Department of New Mexico Grand Army of the Republic* (Albuquerque: Evening Citizen, 1898), 52; Oklahoma GAR, *Journal of the Fifteenth Annual Encampment Department of Oklahoma Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p., 1905), 23; North Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the Eighteenth Annual Encampment Grand Army of the Republic Department of North Dakota* (Fargo: Knight, 1907), 17; Montana GAR, *Journal of the Fifteenth Annual Encampment of the Department of Montana Grand Army of the Republic* (Helena: Thurber, 1899), 15–16; California and Nevada GAR, *Proceedings of the Forty-sixth Annual Encampment of the Department of*

Or as Oregon veterans put it, "it is the posts where there are no corps … that [are] in a state of dry-rot; weak and lacking in that true spirit of comradeship so necessary to make a good post." Wherever he found "a post without a corps," he "likened it to a ship without a sail, a kite without a tail, or a boat without an oar."[472]

Western Relief Corps departments leveraged their improved relationship with the GAR to increase their role in relief, memorial, and commemorative work. The Colorado and Wyoming WRC department, for example, petitioned the legislature to allow women on the Soldiers' Home Commission board.[473] The request was denied on the basis of gender in 1893, but the WRC persisted, and in 1895 Janette L. Todd was appointed Commissioner of the Soldiers' and Sailors' home at Monte Vista, Colorado.[474] Women also regularly served as aides to the Idaho Soldiers' Home and on the boards of the Iowa Soldiers' Orphans' Home and Iowa's Memorial University.[475]

Western Grand Army posts actively sought the opinions of Relief Corps women on Memorial Day ceremonies and encouraged the WRC to "assume more responsibility" in memorial and commemorative work.[476] In South Dakota, for example, Lucy P. Beyson gave the 1891 Memorial Day address at Gettysburg, the state's Union veterans'

California and Nevada, G. A. R. (n.p.: n.p., 1913), 53; Idaho GAR, *Proceedings of the First Annual Encampment*, 5.

[472] Oregon GAR, *Journal of the Twenty-Ninth Annual Encampment of the Department of Oregon Grand Army of the Republic* (Oregon City: Oregon City Enterprise, 1910), 25.

[473] Colorado and Wyoming GAR, *Journal of the Fourteenth Annual Encampment*, 13–4; Colorado and Wyoming GAR, *Journal of the Fifteenth Annual Encampment of the Department of Colorado and Wyoming, Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p., 1894), 15.

[474] Colorado and Wyoming WRC, *Journal of Proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Convention*, 19.

[475] See Idaho GAR, *Report to the 28th Annual Encampment Department of Idaho, G. A. R.* (n.p.: n.p., 1915), 67; Emma Robinson, *History Department of Iowa Woman's Relief Corps Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic, 1884-1934,* ed. Marie L Basham, (History Department of the Woman's Relief Corps, 1934), 36–38; Idaho GAR, *Proceedings of the Eighteenth Annual Encampment*, 15–16.

[476] Idaho GAR, *Proceedings of the Twenty-Seventh Annual Encampment Department of Idaho G. A. R.* (Nampe, ID: Leader-Herald, 1914), 28. See also D. B. Osrusby to H. H. Learned, November 30, 1898, box 4, Grand Army of the Republic Records, Oregon Historical Society, Portland, Oregon.

colony.[477] South Dakota women's increased involvement in Memorial Day exercises compared to the East was reflective of their GAR's belief that "the W. R. C. stands on the same platform with the G. A. R." and is therefore "accorded participation in its campfires, sits down at its banquets, shares in its honors and divides its cares."[478]

Declaring "man is a failure when left alone," many western Grand Army posts believed they had "been strengthened and improved" by their partnerships with the WRC, but harmony between GARs and WRCs was not universal or perpetual.[479] Montana president Isabella Kirkendall wondered why their local Grand Army post "seems so indifferent and fails to recognize our efforts in their behalf." She had "not received any proof of their dislike officially" but interpreted their silence toward the WRC in negative terms.[480] Sarah E. Calvert, a member of the Colorado and Wyoming Relief Corps, felt when working with the GAR "sometimes the opposite sex would like to make us feel our dependence."[481] While strife existed between Grand Army comrades and Relief Corps women, western veterans' departments typically publicly avowed "the auxiliary work of the W. R. C. has been of decided advantage to our order."[482]

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[477] "The Grand Army," *National Tribune* (Washington, DC), July 30, 1891.

[478] South Dakota WRC, *Proceedings of the 20th Annual Encampment of the Department of South Dakota, Grand Army of the Republic* (Canton, SD: N. C. Nash & Son, 1903), 60. Northern women's role in Memorial Day was largely confined to gathering flowers to decorate the graves of deceased soldiers. See Janney, "Hell Hath No Fury, 64.

[479] New Mexico GAR, *Proceedings of the Department*, 52; South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the Fifteenth Annual Encampment of the Department of South Dakota, Grand Army of the Republic* (Canton: SD: Sioux Valley News, 1899), 48. See also Kansas GAR, *Journal of the Fourteenth Annual Encampment*, 66.

[480] Montana WRC, *Proceedings of the First Convention Provisional Department of Montana Woman's Relief Corps* (Helena: State, 1910), 23.

[481] Colorado and Wyoming WRC, *Journal of Proceedings of the 7th Annual Convention of the Department of Colorado and Wyoming, W. R. C.* (Denver: Merchants, 1891), 27. See also Idaho GAR, *Proceedings of the Nineteenth Annual Encampment of the Department of Idaho Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p., 1906), 11–12; Kansas GAR, *Journal of the Fourteenth Annual Encampment*, 66.

[482] Kansas GAR, *Journal of the Fourteenth Annual Encampment*, 66.

Western Relief Corps women relied on the critical role they played in Grand Army affairs, Civil War commemorations, and colonization to campaign for greater political rights and suffrage. Many women from western states viewed their membership in the WRC as indicative of their independent capacity for political thought. As the North Dakota WRC boasted, "we are the only organization of patriotic women basing our membership not on relationship to the soldier, but loyalty to our government."[483] The Colorado and Wyoming WRC similarly urged its members to "avow their allegiance to our Government" independent of their husbands. Women's self-governing rights and privileges, they reasoned, were exceptionally important in the West and the South "on account of the mixed condition of society," which was "a state of things wholly unknown to the Departments of the East."[484]

[483] North Dakota WRC, *Proceedings of the Thirty-Ninth Annual Convention Woman's Relief Corps Department of North Dakota* (n.p.: n.p., 1928), 34. See also Missouri WRC, *Proceedings of the Nineteenth Annual Convention of the Woman's Relief Corps Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic Department of Missouri* (Kansas City, MO: Tiernan-Dart, 1903), 19.

[484] Colorado and Wyoming WRC, *First Journal and Early History of the Woman's Relief Corps Department of Colorado and Wyoming* (n.p.: n.p., 1886), 7 and 4. See also Colorado and Wyoming WRC, *Journal of Proceedings of the Twelfth Annual Convention of the Department of Colorado and Wyoming, Woman's Relief Corps Auxiliary to the G. A. R.* (Laramie: Republican Book and Job, 1896), 12.

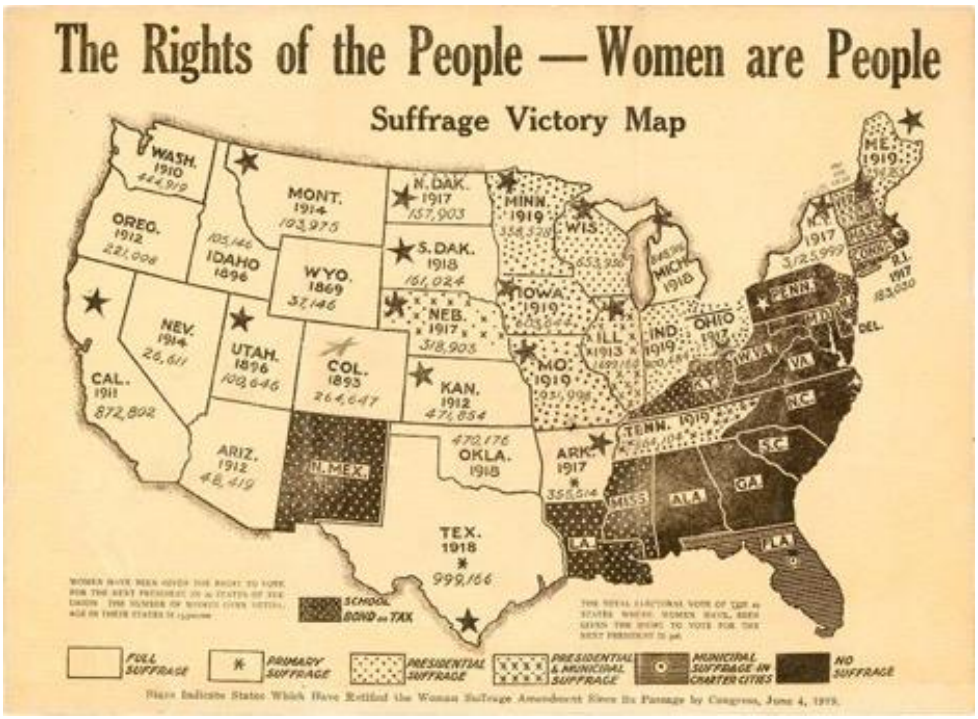

Figure 19. Map of American women's suffrage by state and year[485]

In 1916, the National WRC endorsed women's suffrage, but by this point most states west of the Mississippi River had already passed legislation granting women the right to vote.[486] By 1896, the women in Wyoming, Colorado, Idaho, and Utah had obtained full suffrage, seven more western states granted it by 1914, and most of the remaining trans-Mississippi West states permitted it by 1919. Suffrage came early to the West, in part because granting women the right to vote aided the United States' colonial ambitions. For example, Wyoming territory expanded women's political rights to attract more white women "who would demonstrate with their very presence the permanence of American empire."[487] Western Relief Corps leveraged their efforts stabilizing gender

[485] "United States Women's Suffrage Map, c. 1919", 1919, *Wikimedia Commons*, accessed September 24, 2022, https://perma.cc/6UXM-XDAX.

[486] See Morgan, *Women and Patriotism*, 87; O'Leary, *To Die For*, 99.

[487] Scharff, "Broadening the Battlefield," 218.

roles and assimilating Indigenous children—which western veterans and their families viewed as critically important—for women's expanded political rights.

Western Relief Corps women and Grand Army men regularly campaigned for women's right to vote.[488] In 1899, the Iowa WRC published information about the National Council of Women in their annual convention journal and encouraged individual corps to consider the matter.[489] Believing "our wives should be permitted to vote," GAR comrade J. C. Milliman endorsed women's suffrage before the state's Grand Army encampment in 1912.[490] By 1916, the Iowa WRC officially endorsed women's suffrage. Believing we "have done our duty just as much in times of war as in times of peace" they declared that they "represent[ed] a total of 12,000 women in the state of Iowa who are for suffrage unconditionally."[491]

Twenty years before South Dakotan women were granted voting rights in 1918, that state's WRC department endorsed equal suffrage for women in 1898.[492] While the Equal Suffrage amendment submitted before the state legislature that year did not pass, they continued to campaign for women's voting rights on the grounds that they would instill "a movement of … higher patriotism."[493] In Kansas, GAR comrade Kelly declared

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[488] See National GAR, *Journal of the Fiftieth National Encampment*, 203; Utah LGAR, *Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic Department of Utah* (n.p.: n.p., 1917); Utah GAR, *Proceedings of the Thirty-Seventh and Thirty-Eighth Annual Encampment Department of Utah G. A. R.* (n.p.: n.p., 1919), 16; Kansas WRC, *Journal of the Thirty-Third Annual*, 122.

[489] Iowa WRC, *Department of Iowa Annual Convention Journal* (Denison, IA: Review, 1899), 52.

[490] Iowa GAR, *Journal of the 38th Annual Encampment*, 172.

[491] *Evening Times-Republican*, 23 June 1916. See also Iowa GAR, *Journal of the Forty-second Annual Encampment Department of Iowa Grand Army of the Republic* (Des Moines: Welch, 1916), 31 and 90–91; "Iowa Suffrage Memorial Commission," *Annals of Iowa* 14, no. 5 (1924): 360.

[492] South Dakota WRC, *Journal of Proceedings of the Fifteenth Annual Convention of the Department of South Dakota, Woman's Relief Corps* (Gettysburg, SD: Gettysburg Courier, 1898), 87.

[493] South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the 26th Annual Encampment*, 27; South Dakota WRC, *Journal of the Twenty-Sixth Annual Convention of the Department of South Dakota Woman's Relief Corps Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic* (Yankton, SD: Press and Dakotan, 1909), 27. See also South Dakota WRC, *Journal of the Thirty-first Annual Convention*, 58.

the WRC was a "body of superior women" and supported their right to vote. He questioned, "who stands for clean morals, pure homes and right conduct; who has at heart the proper training for citizenship of the rising generation?" "Only one answer can be given," he concluded, "our women."[494]

In states that had already passed women's suffrage, Grand Army men and Relief Corps women continued to campaign for federal legislation granting women the right to vote.[495] In 1900, Major Mink of the Colorado and Wyoming GAR advocated for a federal amendment, declaring "there is but one thing that could … make our Republic better, and this is to give the American women the ballot and let them stand side by side with men, equal in all things and worthy of our country."[496] Minnesota comrade J. D. Dudd proudly asserted before the state Grand Army encampment that "if the members of the Grand Army of the Republic could cast their vote … it would go unanimously for the amendment."[497] Another boasted, "we have with us a lady from the State of Washington, the State where the 'Women have the vote.'" Here, he observed, "we have morally cleaned out that State, and any State will be cleaned out where the women are allowed to vote."[498]

Like western Civil War veterans, Union women leveraged the crucial role they played in western relief efforts and commemorative work to create a stronger relationship with Grand Army men and argue for greater social and political rights, including

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[494] Kansas WRC, *Journal of the Twenty-Seventh Annual Convention, Department of Kansas Woman's Relief Corps Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p., 1911), 79–80.

[495] See Kansas WRC, *Journal of the Thirty-Third Annual Convention*, 122.

[496] Colorado and Wyoming WRC, *Journal of the Sixteenth Annual Convention of the Department of Colorado and Wyoming Woman's Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the G. A. R.* (Denver: Marsh, 1900), 58.

[497] Minnesota GAR, *Journal of Proceedings of the Fifty-Fourth Annual Encampment of the Department of Minnesota Grand Army of the Republic* (Minneapolis: Syndicate, 1920), 101 and 24.

[498] Utah GAR, *Proceedings of the Thirty-Seventh and Thirty-Eighth Annual Encampment*, 16.

suffrage. Western GAR and WRC members often viewed women's expanded political roles as vital to "civilizing" the West and employed the WRC and women's suffrage as a tool to delineate citizenship between themselves and Natives Americans in the region.

* * *

Just as he had done when he was Lieutenant Governor of South Dakota in 1911, now-governor Frank M. Byrne stood before the GAR again in 1916 and asserted the state of South Dakota "owes an especial duty to the old soldier." South Dakota, he continued, "was settled by the soldiers of the Civil War" who "gave their time and their services to the building up of this country." By placing the colonization of the West within the shadow of the Civil War, western Union veterans and their families defended their role in violently colonizing American Indians as beyond reproach. They employed the uniquely western collective memory of the Civil War they had constructed to argue western states like South Dakota "[owe] to them a duty."[499]

Consequently, they leveraged their collective remembrances to advocate for Union veterans' homestead rights, careers, pensions, and soldiers' homes, while western Union women fostered a stronger relationship with the GAR and argued for increased political rights, including suffrage. Vital to asserting the United States' claim over western lands, these entitlements played a critical role in redistributing Native territory to western Union veterans and conferring social, economic, and political rights to western veterans and their families. The nation could never meet the debt Union veterans believed

[499] South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the Twenty-Third Annual Encampment*, 31.

they were owed, but as Bryne asserted, they could at least "attempt to pay it as we go along."[500]

[500] South Dakota GAR, *Proceedings of the Twenty-Third Annual Encampment*, 32.

CHAPTER VII – "TAKE IT DOWN": AMERICAN INDIAN COUNTERMEMORIES & MONUMENT REMOVAL

In recent years, especially as Black Lives Matter activists drew nationwide attention to the connections between racially motivated violence against African Americans and Confederate monuments, more Americans began to look critically at public commemorations, including the Santa Fe's Soldiers' Monument. Although urging them to remain in place, in June 2017 the city's mayor Javier Gonzales announced, "I do believe that there are statutes around Santa Fe that were put up to celebrate that history of Manifest Destiny."[501] Gonzales' contention that the Santa Fe Soldiers' Monument was a relic of Manifest Destiny was germane, but he failed to recognize its profound connections to the American Civil War. At sites across the West, Union veterans and their families dedicated statues like the one in Santa Fe's historic plaza to US soldiers "who have fallen in the various battles with savage Indians."[502]

Union veterans and their families wielded Civil War commemorations as a colonial weapon in the trans-Mississippi West. Their collective remembrances, like the soldiers' statue erected in the plaza, drew deep connections between securing a free-soil West and colonizing Indigenous nations by celebrating these efforts as key to and reflective of Union victory. By placing western expansion within the shadow of the Civil War, they depicted colonization as defensible and even commendable. When Civil War memory scholars base their work in eastern-grounded source materials, they miss the

[501] Aaron Cantú, "Against Conquista: Santa Fe Considers its Own Monuments to the Past as Confederate Statues Fall Elsewhere," *Santa Fe Reporter*, August 17, 2017.

[502] *Civil War Monument (Santa Fe, New Mexico)*, 2016, accessed June 21, 2022, https://perma.cc/LHQ6-ZE3W.

complex connections between collective Civil War remembrances and the postwar West that profoundly impacted the United States' expansionist movement in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.

As they constructed it, the West was paramount to the Civil War's causes and consequences. Union veterans and their families' efforts to incorporate the role of antebellum western territorial acquisition and exploration in causing national disunity reveals they understood the war as part of a long-term fight for white American exceptionalism. Slavery and emancipation were key to these commemorations because they described military conflicts with Confederates and American Indians as a dual fight against uncivilized slaveholders. Linking the memory of Indigenous Nations to the Confederacy worked to justify violence against Native Americans as commendable in the fight to end slavery and secure a free-labor empire.

Fulfilling that vision, Union veterans and their families moved west as part of a massive migration of American settlers in the postbellum era. Unlike their civilian-settler counterparts, western Union men and women shaped and leveraged the legacy of the Civil War and emancipation to defend western colonization. They employed Civil War commemorations to argue westward expansion was a spoil of their military victory and relied heavily on racialized and gendered rhetoric to bolster their colonial ambitions. Believing Union veterans and their wives were the best representatives of manhood and womanhood, they employed commemorative associations to not only model separate-spheres gender roles but to also carry out assimilationist work—especially with Native children—by compelling American Indians to practice Civil War commemorative rituals. Just as white southerners had wielded the Lost Cause to subjugate African Americans,

Union veterans and their families crafted an expansionist memory of the Civil War to colonize Native peoples in the West.

Veterans and their families leveraged their expansionist collective memory of the war to defend their role as colonizers and secure entitlements, including land, pensions, soldiers' homes, and political rights. In turn, these privileges further reinscribed their claims to western lands by creating and sustaining non-Native communities throughout the region. Ultimately, by rooting their defense of western colonization in the Civil War, Union veterans and their families used collective remembrances of the Union cause as a "good war" to secure an American empire and erase the violence of colonization.

While scholars have extensively studied westward expansion, less attention has been paid to the role of memory building in that process. When Henry Robert Pease delivered his Memorial Day address at Volga, South Dakota in 1887, he proclaimed, "the custom of dedicating days for the observance of festal and solemn rites in honor of illustrious men [and] great events … are contemporaneous with the period of civilization." He added, "the veneration of the dead distinguishes mankind from the brute creation."[503] Western Union veterans and their families' Civil War commemorations placed westward expansion within the shadow of the Civil War to glorify and justify the violent colonization of American Indians. Doing so not only reinforced and encouraged a western expansionist movement that privileged themselves, but it also demonstrates how the act of commemoration itself could be used as a weapon of colonization.

[503] Pease, "Memorial Day Address," 4–5.

By disrupting and destroying Native forms of memory making, such as tribal histories, gravesites, ceremonies, and languages, and replacing them with their own forms of commemorations, such as monuments and Memorial Day celebrations, Union men and women claimed spaces for western settlers and contributed to the imagery of Native Americans as an ahistorical people without memory. For example, veterans commemorated efforts to construct western transportation networks, including roads and railroads, as a "consequence of our Civil War, and the men it educated."[504] In many instances these transportation networks destroyed Indigenous gravesites and other spiritual spaces. In the mid-twentieth century, western Grand Army departments framed highways as monuments to the Civil War and Union veterans, including the Grand Army of the Republic Highway (or US Route 6) designated in 1937.[505] Coercing Indigenous participation in Civil War commemorative rituals, including Memorial Day, furthered this process. Deeming themselves the arbiters of an "authentic history," western Civil War veterans and their families used their war commemorations to defend, bolster, and measure the colonization of Native Americans.[506]

These rhetorical moves did not go unchallenged by Indigenous people, however.[507] Throughout the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, many American Indians resisted the colonial power of Civil War commemorations from within

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[504] Iowa GAR, *Journal of the 33d Annual Encampment Department of Iowa Grand Army of the Republic* (n.p.: n.p., 1907), 163.

[505] See Sheldon, "Transportation in Nebraska and Ft. Kearney"; John G. Spielman, "U.S. 6: The G.A.R. Highway," Nebraska Grand Army of the Republic Clippings, Vol. 2, Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, Nebraska. For scholarship on the destruction of Native gravesites and spiritual spaces see Beck, *Columns of Vengeance*, 87; James Riding In, "Our Dead Are Never Forgotten" in *"They Made Us Many Promises": The American Indian Experience 1524 to the Present* edited by Philip Weeks (Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 2001), 291–310.

[506] See Kelman, *A Misplaced Massacre*; O'Brien, *Firsting and Lasting*; Burch, *Committed.*

[507] Schubert, "Monument's word removed."

by formally joining the GAR and WRC and without. The scorched grounds and destroyed homes of the Five Tribes of Oklahoma in Indian Territory, for example, served as a counter-monument of sorts to the United States' failed promises and challenged the glorified war Union veterans had constructed by drawing attention to the destruction caused by Union forces.

While there were numerous barriers to Indigenous memory-making practices, many Native Americans practiced self-silence and focused on survival instead.[508] Members of the Five Nations and other tribes could severe the deep connections western Union veterans and their families created between colonization and the Civil War by remaining quiet about them. As Black Lives Matter activists drew increasing nation-wide attention to Confederate monuments in the early twenty-first century, however, countless American Indians abandoned self-silence and focused instead on the connections between the Civil War and western colonization.

Between August 11 and 12, 2017, white supremacists gathered at the "Unite the Right rally" in Charlottesville, Virginia to unify white nationalists and protest the removal of the city's statue to Confederate General Robert E. Lee. Violence erupted between the protestors and counter-protesters, and on August 12, James Alex Fields Jr. drove his car into a gathering of counter-protestors, murdering Heather Heyer and injuring thirty-five others.[509] In response to the violence in Charlottesville, Santa Fe

[508] Jeff Fortney, "Lest We Remember: Civil War Memory and Commemoration among the Five Tribes," *American Indian Quarterly* 36, no. 4 (Fall 2012), 526; Amanda Cobb-Greetham, "Hearth and Home: Cherokee and Creek Women's Memories of the Civil War in Indian Territory," in *The Civil War & Reconstruction in Indian Territory*, 154–155. See also Grua, *Surviving Wounded Knee,* 94; Kelman, *A Misplaced Massacre,* 33.

[509] Colin Dwyer, "Charlottesville Rally Aims to Defend A Confederate Statue. It May Have Doomed Others," *NPR*, August 14, 2017.

mayor Javier Gonzales announced his "plan to address Santa Fe's own complicated history with race and memory head-on," and he directed the city manager to take an inventory of Santa Fe's historical public markers.[510]

Indigenous New Mexicans, however, supported removing the Soldiers' Monument long before 2017.[511] In 1973 the American Indian Movement (AIM) advocated for the monument's removal, and when the Santa Fe City Council unanimously voted to take down the Soldiers' Monument, it sparked a backlash and the obelisk was ultimately left on its pedestal.[512]

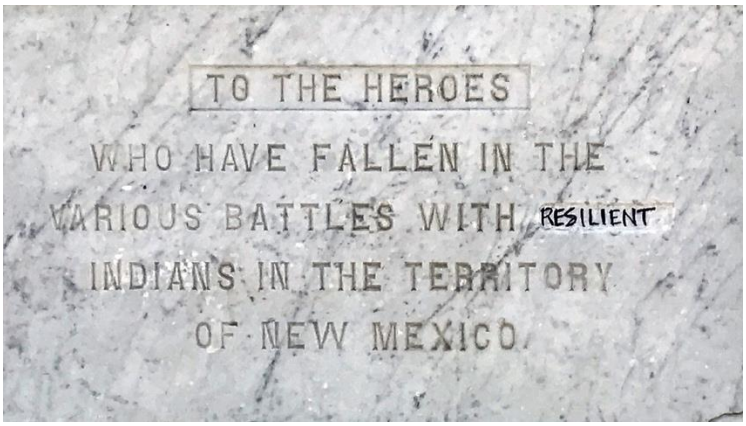

Figure 20. Photograph of Santa Fe, New Mexico Soldiers' Monument's revised inscription[513]

The following year Michael McCabe of Taos Pueblo allegedly chiseled away the word "savage" from the monument's north-facing inscription, and forty-three years later in August 2017 an unidentified person wrote "courageous" in its hollowed-out place. Using a power-washer, the city blasted "courageous" from the monument's surface a few

[510] Megan Bennett and Mark Oswald, "Santa Fe to review markers, monuments," *Albuquerque Journal*, August 17, 2017.

[511] For other examples of protests to the monument, see Alves and Land, "A History of Controversy."

[512] Alves and Land, "A History of Controversy."

[513] Aaron Cantú, *Untitled*, 2018, accessed June 21, 2022, https://perma.cc/DS36-XQMX.

months later, but in April 2018 someone once again revised its inscription to read: "To the heroes who have fallen in the various battles with *resilient* Indians in the territory of New Mexico."[514] These alterations to the Soldiers' Monument reflect Indigenous New Mexican's long-term determination to resist the use of Civil War commemorations to colonize them.

As Americans across the country protested Confederate statues and other colonial monuments, like those dedicated to Christopher Columbus, New Mexicans continued to advocate for the Soldiers' Monument's removal.[515] The Three Sisters Collective, an Indigenous women's advocacy group, presented "The Memory Project," which demonstrated that over eighty percent of public art and monuments around the city were dedicated to colonizers, and they led efforts to legally remove the obelisk from the Plaza.[516] Others tagged the monument with "racist" and "Tewa Land."[517] While Gonzales instituted formal procedures to review the Soldiers' Monument, in March 2018 mayoral candidate Alan Webber replaced Gonzales as mayor, and by May 2020 the monument was still standing.[518]

But in the wake of the murder of George Floyd by Derek Chauvin, a white Minneapolis police officer, on May 25, 2020, Americans increased their push to remove public monuments that glorified and inscribed racial hegemony. Webber met with the Three Sisters Collective and signed an emergency proclamation to remove three Santa Fe

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[514] Emphasis is mine. Schubert, "Monument's Word Removed."

[515] See Christopher Brito, "Dozens of Christopher Columbus statues have been removed since June," *CBS News*, September 25, 2020.

[516] Kalen Goodluck, "Indigenous Symbols Rise as Colonial Monuments Fall in New Mexico," *National Geographic*, January 6, 2021.

[517] "3 'sisters' success in removal of racist monuments," *Navajo Times*, June 25, 2020.

[518] Part of the delay was due to legal considerations because the Plaza was registered as a National Historic Landmark.

statues, including the Soldiers' Monument, on June 18, 2020.[519] While the Don Diego de Vargas statue was removed later that morning, by October that year the Soldiers' Monument stood resolute in the plaza.

Alicia Inez Guzmán, art history and cultural studies scholar, placed the Soldiers' Monument within the context of historical and contemporary colonization in her appraisal of it. She noted, "if you didn't know, colonialism and imperialism are ongoing; erasure and amnesia walk hand-in-hand."[520] Guzmán's modern-day critique of the obelisk links the Civil War and colonization in ways most previous Indigenous protests had not: "it's a monument to men, soldiers, and to two separate but entangled wars, the Civil War and the Indian Wars, both of which were interlinked in the West with the American impulse to expand." She described efforts to treat Native Americans and Confederates as an interrelated enemy as part of a strategic and "most of all violent" approach to nation building. She continues, "when nations feel vulnerable, they … create symbols of the nation state [and] craft mythical narratives." These performances, she argues, "legitimate their presence in a specific place. They create spaces where they belong even if they are not totally welcome."[521] Santa Fe's Soldiers' Monument functioned in this capacity for white settlers, especially Union veterans and their families.

The goals of the obelisk were not unique. Western Unionists crafted collective remembrances across the trans-Mississippi West that bolstered colonization. Commemorations and monuments, like the Santa Fe Soldiers' Monument, linked

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[519] "Santa Fe Mayor orders removal of three controversial monuments," *KRQE News*, June 18, 2020.

[520] Alicia Inez Guzmán, host, "Oga Po'geh," Tilt: Unsettled Series (podcast), *Santa Fe Art Institute*, December 19, 2020, accessed March 11, 2022, https://perma.cc/S495-32EJ.

[521] Guzmán, "You're Not From Here," Tilt: Unsettled Series (podcast).

westward expansion to the Civil War to justify and glorify warfare and settler colonialism. Their narrative was extremely effective, as today many Americans celebrate the Union war effort as beyond reproach. Fighting to preserve the Union and emancipate four million enslaved people were worthy goals, especially in comparison to the Confederacy's war aim to preserve slavery and the Lost Cause's efforts to reinforce racial violence and segregation. Reckoning with the role western Union Civil War collective remembrances played in historical colonization, however, is critically important because these public commemorations are part of an ongoing process of settler colonialism today.

When New Mexicans protested the Santa Fe Soldiers' Monument in 2020 and in previous years, they resisted the role Civil War commemorations played in validating colonization. Concerned that the city's failure to remove the statue would become more "broken promises to Native people," hundreds of protestors gathered in the Plaza during Indigenous Peoples Day on October 12, 2020. Armed with signs, they asked, "Mayor Webber when are you going to act?"[522] Melissa Rose, a member of the Three Sisters Collective, lamented, "people are tired of these broken promises and broken treaties and telling us one thing and doing the complete opposite."[523]

[522] Carrie Wood, interviewee, "Let's Talk Monuments and Reckoning with Colonial Histories," Ty Bannerman, *Let's Talk New* Mexico, aired July 1, 2020 on KUNM, accessed March 11, https://perma.cc/5LR8-Q5PJ; Darryl Wellington, interviewee, "Axis Mundi," Tilt: Unsettled Series (podcast).

[523] Quoted in Goodluck, "Indigenous symbols rise as colonial monuments fall in New Mexico."

Figure 21. Photograph of Indigenous People's Day protestors removing the Santa Fe, New Mexico Soldiers' Monument[524]

Having waited almost four months, if not decades, for the city to take down the Soldiers' Monument by law, protestors decided to remove it "by force of the people."[525] A demonstrator scaled the obelisk, wrapped it in ropes and chains, and amid cheers and cries of "take it down," protestors toppled the 152-year-old statue to Union soldiers. The monument crashed to the ground, and with it, the fragmented remains of a 150-yearlong effort to use the Civil War and Union victory to justify colonization languished in the rubble.

[524] Santa Feans React to the Toppling of the Plaza Obelisk, 2020, accessed June 21, 2022, https://perma.cc/QP9G-9VKX.

[525] Guzmán, "Axis Mundi," Tilt: Unsettled Series (podcast).

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Bisbee, Ariz. Memorial Day Committee

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GAR Starr King Post 52 Collection

Colorado:

Western History Collection, Denver Public Library, Denver, Colorado
New Mexico Grand Army of the Republic Circular Letter No. 2 (1884)

State Historical Society of Colorado, Denver, Colorado
Address of S.W. DeBusk at Unveiling of Kit Carson Statue
Colorado and Wyoming Daughters of Union Veterans Roster
Delph Carpenter Collection
Dept. of Colorado and Wyoming Grand Army of the Republic Records
GAR Joseph A. Mower Post No. 31, Breckenridge, Colorado Collection
Isaac N. Stevens Collections

Lobach Family Papers
Mary O. Root Davis Collection
Neil Kimball-West Kimball Collection
Senechal Family Papers

District of Columbia:

Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
Mary Ann Bickerdyke Papers

Idaho:

Idaho State Archives, Boise, Idaho
Dept. of Idaho Women's Relief Corps. Records
Grand Army of the Republic. Dept. of Idaho Phil Sheridan Post No. 4 Records

Illinois:

Daughters of Union Veterans National Headquarters, Springfield, Illinois
DUV Army Nurse Ledger, 1903–1923
DUV Record of Members on Semi-Annual Reports, 1910–1912
DUV Record of Tents Instituted, Disbanded, etc.
DUV, Wellington, Kansas Records
Ida McKinley Tent No. 2 DUV, Independence, Kansas Records
Nina M. Fry Tent No. 12 DUV, Seattle, Washington Records
Nina Fry Thimble Club, Seattle, Washington Records

Woman's Relief Corps National Headquarters, Springfield, Illinois
J. G. Miller Corps No. 12, Boone, Iowa Collection
Kansas Sunflower Quilt Collection
National WRC Home Record Book No. 2 Records
Pension Relief Committee Records
Roster of the National Officers of the WRC
WRC Corps No. 64, Randalia, Iowa Collection
WRC, Newton, Kansas Collection

Iowa:

Buena Vista County Historical Society, Storm Lake, Iowa
Grand Army of the Republic Records

Boone County Historical Society, Boone, Iowa
Woman's Relief Corps Records

Cedar Falls Historical Society, Cedar Falls, Iowa
Military Affairs, Woman's Relief Corps Records

Crawford County Historical Society, Denison, Iowa
Woman's Relief Corps Records, on display at W. A. McHenry House

Humboldt County Historical Society, Humboldt, Iowa
Grand Army of the Republic, Dakota City Records

Iowa Women's Archives, The University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa
James A. Throop Papers
Josephine M. Kuba Papers
Mary Sears McHenry Papers
Welch and Angrick Collection

Oelwein Area Historical Museum Library, Oelwein, Iowa
Groups and Organizations, Auxiliaries, Military, Woman's Relief Corps #281

Sioux City Public Museum, Sioux City, Iowa
Floyd Monument Collection
Grand Army of the Republic Records
Woman's Relief Corps, Lentz Corps Records

State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines, Iowa
Annie Wittenmyer Papers
Civil War Photograph Collection
Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War, Department of Iowa Records
Daughters of Union Veterans Records
Grand Army of the Republic, Department of Iowa Records
Grand Army of the Republic Photograph Collection
Portrait Photograph Collection
Veterans' Organizations, Women's Auxiliaries Photograph Collection
Women's Relief Corps, Department of Iowa Records
Woman's Relief Corps, Kinsman Corps #24 Records

State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa
Civil War Photograph Collection
Daughters of Union Veterans, Aunt Maria Hammer Tent #26 Records
Department of Iowa WRC Henry Seibert Corps #212 Kalone Records
Department of Iowa WRC William McKinley Corps #338 Wilton Records
Grand Army of the Republic Auxiliaries Records
Grand Army of the Republic Records
Iowa Federation of Women's Clubs Records
Ladies' Soldiers' Aid Society of Fort Dodge, Ia. Records

Special Collections, The University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa
Shelton Family Papers

Kansas:

Leonard H. Axe Special Collections, Pittsburg State University, Kansas
Grand Army of the Republic Records

State Archives, Kansas Historical Society, Topeka, Kansas
Abbie Bright Papers
Albert Robinson Greene Papers
Art Carmody Collection
Benjamin Franklin Simpson Papers
Daughters of Union Veterans, Department of Kansas Records
Eliza Goodrich Papers
Emma and Charles J. Drew Papers
Eugene Fitch Ware Papers
Francis Marion Stahl Collection
George Putnam Washburn Papers
George W. Weed Papers
Grand Army of the Republic, Department of Kansas, Administrative Records
Grand Army of the Republic, Department of Kansas, Post Records
History McPherson County Collection
Hodgeman County History Collection
Indian History Collection
John Alexander Martin Papers
Joseph Kennedy Hudson Papers
Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic, Department of Kansas Records
Lawrence, Kansas Memorial Album
Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States, Kansas Commandery History Records
Patrick Henry Coney Papers
Reggie Smith Collection
Samuel James Reader Papers
Soldiers' Reunions History Collection
Wilson Fraternal and Veteran Organizations Collection
Women's Relief Corps History Collection

Louisiana:

Special Collections, Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana
Grand Army of the Republic Post No. 1 Records

Special Collections, University of Louisiana, Baton Rouge, Louisiana
Fisher (Alice Risley) Family Papers
Grand Army of the Republic, Department of Louisiana and Mississippi Records

Special Collections, University of Louisiana, Lafayette, Louisiana
National Women's Relief Corps, Jennings Corps Records

Minnesota:

Minnesota State Archives, St. Paul, Minnesota
Breckenridge, Elizabeth E. Stone and Family Papers
Civil War Memorial Commissions Collection
Grand Army of the Republic Records
Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic. Dept. of Minnesota Records
Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States, Miscellaneous Papers
Woman's Relief Corps. Dept. of Minnesota Records

Missouri:

State Historical Society of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri
Benecke Family Papers
Edward D. Phillips Papers
John Blackwell Papers

State Historical Society of Missouri, Rolla, Missouri
Alice Cary Risley Papers
Grand Army of the Republic Dan McCook Post No. 312 Records
Grand Army of the Republic Post 48 Records

Special Collections, Truman State University, Kirksville, Missouri
Corp. Dix. Post No. 22 Grand Army of the Republic Records

Montana:

State Historical Society of Montana, Helena, Montana
Grand Army of the Republic Department of Montana Records
LeRoy A. Foot Speech

Nebraska:

State Historical Society of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska
Department of Nebraska Grand Army of the Republic Clippings
Department of Nebraska Grand Army of the Republic Records
Daughters of Union Veterans Tent No. 1 Records
Joan Bennet Papers

Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic Circle N. 36 Records
Woman's Relief Corps Belknap Corps No. 192 Records
Woman's Relief Corps Farragut Corps No. 10 Records
Woman's Relief Corps Grant Corps No. 104 Records
Woman's Relief Corps Reno Corps No. 93 Records

New Mexico:

State Historical Society of New Mexico, Santa Fe, New Mexico
Grand Army of the Republic Records
Historical Celebrations and Dedications Miscellany
New Mexico Secretary of State Records

North Dakota:

North Dakota State University, Fargo, North Dakota
Grand Army of the Republic. Department of North Dakota. John F. Reynolds Post No. 5 Records
Smith Stimmel Records
Woman's Relief Corps Department of North Dakota John F. Reynolds Corps No. 1 Records

State Historical Society of North Dakota, Bismarck, North Dakota
Grand Army of the Republic James B. McPheron Post No. 2 Records
Linda Warfel Slaughter Papers
Women's Relief Corps, Jamestown Chapter Records

University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, North Dakota
Carleton Ellito Simensen Military Heritage Collection
Dagne Olsen Papers
Grand Army of the Republic-Grand Forks Chapter Records

Oklahoma:

State Historical Society of Oklahoma, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Barde Collection
Jesse Dunn Collection
General Fed. Women's Clubs–Governors Gary, Raymond Collection
Grand Army of the Republic National Woman's Relief Corps Collection
Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic Collection
Union Soldiers Home Collection
Wuestengberg's Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic Scrapbook

Oregon:

State Historical Society of Oregon, Portland, Oregon
Grand Army of the Republic Records
Grand Army of the Republic, J. W. Geary Post #7 (Eugene, Or.) Records
Manners and Customs Verticle File

University of Oregon Special Collections, Eugene, Oregon
Woman's Relief Corps Meade Corps No. 18 Records

South Dakota:

State Historical Society of South Dakota, Pierre, South Dakota
Grand Army of the Republic Records
Henry Robert Pease Papers
Major John A. Pickler Family Papers
Robert Dollard Papers

Utah:

Utah Division of State History, Salt Lake City, Utah
Grand Army of the Republic and Women's Relief Corps Records

Special Collections Division, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah
Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic Records

Utah State University Special Collections and Archives, Logan, Utah
James O. Martin Civil War Collection

Washington:

Washington State Archives, Olympia, Washington
Department of Veterans' Affairs, Orting Soldiers' Home Records
Gov. Albert Mead Papers
Gov. John Rogers Papers
Gov. Lister Papers
Gov. McGraw Papers

Washington State Library, Tumwater, Washington
Grand Army of the Republic, George H. Thomas Post No. 5 Minute Book and Records
Woman's Relief Corps (U.S.) Geo. H. Thomas Corps No. 34 (Olympia, Wash.) Records

Wisconsin:

Wisconsin Veterans Museum, Madison, Wisconsin
Grand Army of the Republic Dept. of Wisconsin Records
Women's Relief Corps, Department of Wisconsin Records

Wyoming:

Buffalo Bill Center of the West
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