

The Battle of Beecher Island and the Indian War of 1867-1869, (Second Edition) by John H. Monnett. The University of Colorado Press, Louisville, 2021, 249 pp. Photographs, bibliography, appendices, index. Paperback, \$28.95

In this book, Mr. Monnett, told the story of the Indian wars of 1867 to 1869, the lead up to The Battle of Beecher Island, and the following battle that ended the Dog Soldiers as a fighting force. He explained the issues leading to the battles from both the Indians' and the whites' viewpoints.

In his introduction, Mr. Monnet explained that he intended to write this second edition to maintain a balanced point of view. He gave examples where he had relied on biased information in the first edition that he wrote and how he avoided it in this book. The author also explained some of the early history of the Indian wars. He introduced possible new information as to the location of the battle. The information in the introduction made the book more meaningful.

Mr. Monnett explained the actions taken by the Army leading up to the battle at Beecher Island and how ineffective those actions were. He also wrote about the common feelings among white settlers in the Colorado and Kansas Territories prior to the battle. General Sheridan had set up the highly mobile civilian scouts under Major Forsyth to keep the Indians moving and unable to conduct raids on civilians. The actions of the scouts lead them into defensive positions because of attacks by the Dog Soldiers.

The Battle of Beecher Island was considered to be a major battle by the people of the United States. To the Dog Soldiers it was minor fight. This battle did little to reduce the power of the Dog Soldiers and the other plains Indians. The Beecher Island battle did not stop the Indian raids either. However, publicity of the battle did make the rest of the United States aware that there were issues with the plains Indians because the news spread quickly.

General Sheridan had little trouble getting the troops he needed for his winter campaign. The Battle of Washita, which was a surprise attack by Custer's 7th Cavalry on Black Kettle's camp, suppressed the raids for a short time, but did little to reduce the power of the Dog Soldiers. The Battle of Summit Springs, near Sterling, Colorado, between the Dog Soldiers and Major Carr ended the power of the Dog Soldiers. The author's facts substantiate the idea that the Indian wars ended on the Kansas and Colorado Plains.

This book is well researched, and the writing is very well balanced.

Roy Richards