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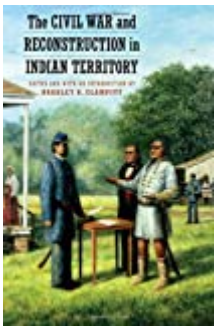

Bradley R. Clampitt. *The Civil War and Reconstruction in Indian Territory.* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2015. 200 pp. $25.00 (paper), ISBN 978-0-8032-7727-4.

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On June 23, 1865, six weeks after Robert E. Lee surrendered his Army of Northern Virginia at Appomattox Court House, Cherokee principle chief and Confederate brigadier Stand Watie surrendered his cavalry command to Union forces in Doaksville, Indian Territory (now Oklahoma), thus becoming the last Rebel general to lay down arms. For even seasoned scholars, knowledge of the Indian experience during the American Civil War typically begins and ends with Watieâs capitulation. If the trans-Mississippi theater exists only on the periphery of the warâs conventional narrative, then the involvement of the regionâs Native Americans is often barely a footnote. This collection of essays, superbly shepherded by Bradley R. Clampitt, is a strong addition to the warâs vast historiography.

While acknowledging that ânone of the military activity in the territory significantly affected the outcome of the war, and neither the military campaigns nor the civilian suffering proved especially urgent to officials in Richmond or Washingtonâ (p. 8), Clampitt and his contributors show that the Civil War was a watershed event for Native American participants. Collectively these essays show that for Indian Territory residents, the war proved to be an especially internecine conflict that further balkanized a region already rife with conflict between Indians of varying convictions, whites, slaves, and free blacks.

This phenomenon is most effectively discussed in Brad Agnewâs examination of the Five Nations (Cherokee, Choctaw, Creek, Chickasaw, and Seminole) during the war. Instead of the prewar years being a âgolden ageâ for native peoples, he shows that the decades following removal were fratricidal, chaotic, and fraught with the same white encroachment that Indians had faced for centuries. Aside from being the culmination of a period of strife, the Civil War, argues Agnew, was âthe greatest tragedy to befall the Five Nations since Columbus sailed westâ (p. 67). The nations had already suffered internal and external rifts due to disagreements over assimilation, intermarriage (with blacks and whites), Christianity, and emancipation before being forced to choose sides during the Civil War.

Richard B. McCaslinâs and Clarissa Conferâs respective essays on the military and civilian experiences in Indian Territory serve as the narrative scaffolding for the volume. Both authors demonstrate that, for Indians, deciding to ally oneself with either the Union or the Confederacy was a choice fraught with peril. Neutrality, however, was not a viable option. Having experienced the

duplicitous nature of Washingtonâs Indian policies, most Native Americans in the territory cast their lot with the South. For Indians, the devil they did not know seemed preferable to the one with whom they were well acquainted. Nevertheless, Confederate promises proved illusory; Richmond proved no more able or willing than Washington to fulfill its promises to its Indian allies.

Christopher B. Beanâs âWho Defines a Nation?: Reconstruction in Indian Territoryâ and Linda W. Reeseâs ââWe Had a Lot of Trouble Getting Things Settled after the Warâ: Freedpeopleâs Civil Warsâ are two of the volumeâs strongest chapters. Together these essays show that raceâs centrality to the Civil War does not pivot solely on the white/black axis; emancipation proved to be the most contentious issue in postwar Indian Territory. For the 8,400 former slaves in the region, freedom presented many of the same obstacles it did in the Deep South. Bean shows that the primary point of dispute among Indians was âwhether former slaves would be assimilated into the nations of the former mastersâ (p. 116). Some argued that freedpeople should be welcomed with open arms while others feared that emancipation and the subsequent granting of citizenship would dilute their culture and result in âtribal suicideâ (p. 118). Cherokees were especially loath to grant rights to their former slaves, while the Chickasaws and Choctaws repeatedly petitioned the federal government to remove freedpeople from Indian Territory. Miscegenation was also a fear among the Chickasaws and Choctaws; the former refused to recognize the legitimacy of intermarriage and reproduction between Indians and blacks, while the latter made such unions a felony.

To its credit, *The Civil War and Reconstruction in Indian Territory* is almost exclusively concerned with the experiences of those living in the region; government policies exist largely on the margins of these eight essays. Readers wanting a deeper insight into Washingtonâs perspective on Native American affairs should pair Clampittâs volume with David A. Nicholsâs now classic *Lincoln and the Indians: Civil War Policy and Politics* (1978). While the subject matter of this volume takes place on the warâs geographic periphery, it ultimately reflects many of the recent developments at the core of Civil War historiography: borderland studies, the integration of home front and battlefield histories, an increased emphasis on the construction of historical memory, and the melding of academic and public history. Readers seeking an introduction to the Native American experience of the Civil War and those hoping to broaden their geographic and thematic understanding of the conflict should read Clampittâs volume.

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