

Civil War, Reconstruction, and the Indian Wars

Overview of the War

- There have been millions of pages written on this subject
 - Doing an abbreviated summary in some ways detracts from the memory of the people who fought and lived through this conflict but, none the less, we will try to establish some of the major points
- The War was fought on a western and eastern front – for the South the war was lost on the western front
- High Level Strategy
 - The North sought to strangle the South of resources in what was called the Anaconda Plan which was devised by Winfield Scott
 - The South as opposed to fighting a purely defensive war (similar to US revolution) chose to initiate offensive campaigns which consumed resources they didn't have – possibly to get foreign support
- Leadership
 - Officers from both sides generally served in the Mexican American War
 - The South is considered to have had better officers but there were a large number of political appointees on both sides
 - Lee was not originally given charge of the Confederate armies due to his association with Scott
 - Stonewall Jackson's death at Chancellorsville was the single most important loss in the war
 - McClellan was unwilling to fight "hard war" or to absorb huge losses capitalizing on numbers
- Logistics
 - As time passed in the war the Confederacy became increasingly short of all forms of supply
 - Rapid movement often made it seem as if they had more forces than there actually were
 - Confederate forces were fairly effective at attacking Union supply lines
 - Lack of supplies impacted Confederate strategy and was major factor in the outcome of the war
 - Conditions by the end of the war in the South for both combatants and civilians could rightfully be described as near starvation

Overview of Major Battles

- **Weaponry**
 - Rifled barrels (much greater distance and accuracy) were available before the war -However smooth bore was the norm at the start of the war
 - The Confederacy got rifled barrels initially by taking them from the Union forces
 - Cannons incorporated rifled barrels and then air burst munitions
 - By 1863 the war had become a trench war for the most part
- **First Manassas (Bull Run, July 21 1861)**
 - First major battle with spectators from DC gathered to watch the route of the Confederacy
 - After initial success, Union troops were routed but Confederacy didn't press advantage
- **Shenandoah Valley Campaign (Spring 1862)**
 - Jackson with a small force of no more than 17K drove four union armies with more that 52K out of the area, inflicted 5K casualties, captured 3500 prisoners, massive quantity of supplies and arms
 - The eccentric physics teacher from VMI had become world famous
- **Ft Donaldson (Feb 1862)**
 - Grant defeats Confederate forces ensuring Kentucky remains in the Union and controls waterway
- **Shiloh (April 6th and 7th 1862)**
 - Grants defeats Confederate forces in Southern Tennessee – very heavy casualties on both sides
- **Battle of Seven Days (first defense of Richmond June 1862)**
 - Lee's first major engagement after being given general command of the Confederate forces
 - A good deal of confusion and questionable decision making on both sides - still debated
- **2nd Manassas (Aug 28-30, 1862)**
 - Lee and Longstreet decisively defeat Pope's Union forces

Overview of Major Battles (cont..)

- **Harper's Ferry (Sept 12-15 1862)**
 - Jackson's troops take federal armory taking 13K prisoners
- **Antietam (Sharpsburg – Sept 17th 1862)**
 - First major Southern offensive attack on Union territory
 - Very heavy losses on both sides but hurt the Confederacy more – War's bloodiest day
- **Fredericksburg (Dec 11th – 14th 1862)**
 - Federal attack on prepared Confederate defenses resulted in decisive Confederate victory
- **Vicksburg (Mid May – July 4th 1863, crippling defeat for the South)**
 - Gave the Union full control of the Mississippi after siege of the city following loss of New Orleans
 - Confederacy surrendered due to lack of food (but not ammunition) – bad management of theatre
- **Chancellorsville (April 30 – May 6 1863)**
 - Major Confederate victory that routed Federal troops
 - Stonewall Jackson killed by friendly fire surveying battle field
- **Gettysburg (July 1st – 3rd 1863) / Wilderness**
 - 2nd major confederate offensive to the North – Confederate disaster on the last day (Pickett)
 - Battle of Wilderness covered gradual retreat South – Very high federal losses
- **Atlanta (Sept 1864)**
 - Hood's attack on Sherman's forces is repulsed with heavy losses
- **Franklin (Nov 1864)**
 - Last confederacy offensive against entrenched federal forces results in 20% casualties
 - Five Confederate generals killed and Confederate army largely loses combat capability

Understanding Lee's Decision

- It's commonly known that Robert E Lee was offered command of Union forces
 - Robert E Lee's decision to turn down the opportunity to lead Union forces in an invasion of the "*Cotton States*" and to remain loyal to his home state and the South, despite opposing slavery and being a Unionist, is very difficult for people in the context of today's society to understand
 - Lee wrote of the secession movement in January of 1861 that it was "*folly, selfishness and short-sightedness*" that would lead to a "*fearful calamity*".
 - It also highlights regional cultural differences (Yankee vs Cavalier and Borderlander)
- Lee's professional mentor was Winfield Scott who was also from Virginia
 - Could be described as a sort of father-son relationship
 - Scott sided with the Union in part because of his hatred for Jefferson Davis
- Lee was a professional soldier who was away from his home for long periods
 - His service prior to 1861 was in Texas fighting on the Texas frontier
 - He returned to Arlington in 1857 after the death of his father-in-law, George Washington Parke Custis, and then again in 1860
 - Lee never bought or sold slaves but he did wind up managing approx 200 slaves after the death of his father-in-law – they were manumitted (freed) per the direction of the will
 - Lee met several times with Scott and the Blair family before submitting his resignation
- Nationalism or Religious Nationalism was not a concept that existed in the South
 - "*Lee's view of honor would not allow him to lead an invading army that would make war on his family, relatives, friends, and fellow Southerners*" Lee biographer Scott Bowden
 - the primary political loyalty of the time period was to the state as an independent and autonomous political unit and even that was below loyalty to God and family or clan

Copperheads in the North

- Copperhead was a general name applied to antiwar Democrats in Union states based on what was probably a random incident in April 1861
 - Story based on two copperhead snakes that were probably specimens sent to the Smithsonian
 - Col. Frank P. Blair called the Maryland state legislature a “nest of Copperheads”
- Opposition to the war based largely on the suspension of Habeas Corpus, the draft, and the federal income tax – also expansion of federal government
 - They were not abolitionists and generally didn’t want economic competition moving north
 - The area with the highest Yankee populations would have had the fewest dissenters
 - Based on 1864 election it could be concluded that at least 30% of the population had copperhead sympathies
 - The most notable copperhead going into the war, although the term hadn’t been established as yet, was former President Franklin Pierce of New Hampshire
 - High level of desertion and draft avoidance
- Suppression of Copperheads
 - When Habeas Corpus was suspended to silence war critics somewhere between 10,000 and 40,000 dissenters were imprisoned for periods of time ranging from a few weeks to more than two years with incidents peaking around elections and significant political events
 - Almost none were charged with any sort of crime. After the war the Supreme Court ruled that these actions were illegal
 - There were some Copperhead protestant clergy in the North prior to and at the start of the war but were largely driven out of their pulpits

War Democrats

- Another large grouping of non-Yankee voters in the North was War Democrats and conservative Republicans who favored the war for preservation of the Union
 - didn't subscribe to Evangelical political activism in general and specifically were either neutral or against abolition for the same reasons Copperheads
- Many War Democrats in the Border States who were slave owners believed that slavery had a much better chance of survival with the Union
 - The original 13th amendment, the Corwin Amendment, which was proposed with all the states of the Confederacy already having left the union, was to give permanent constitutional protection to slavery anywhere it existed
- Two prime examples of War Democrats were General McClellan and General Grant
 - Grant opposed abolition and was a slave owner (Wife was from the Dent family)
- War Democrats were ardent anti-secessionists and their opinions about the South and the confederacy were in many cases about as strong liberal Republicans
 - Methodist parson William Gannaway Brownlow, a Unionist from Tennessee had this to say: *"If I had the power, I would arm and uniform in the Federal habiliments every wolf and panther and catamount and tiger and bear in the mountains of America; every crocodile in the swamps of Florida and South Carolina; every Negro in the Southern Confederacy, and every devil in hell, and turn them on the rebels in the South, if it exterminated every rebel from the face of God's green earth – every man, woman and child south of Mason and Dixon's line."*

Ethnic Immigrants

- Irish Immigrants
 - Flooding into Boston and New York at this time (see movie – Gangs of New York)
 - Refugees from the later stages of the Potato Famine
 - Conscripted or enlisted for pay - given inferior weapons and put in most dangerous positions
 - Also a significant number of Irish immigrants in the Confederate armies - generally arrived at Charleston or New Orleans
- Germanic and Hungarian Immigrants
 - As many as 40% of Union Army were first or 2nd generation immigrants
 - Frequently lived in ethnic communities and didn't speak English as primary language for multiple generations
 - A large percentage didn't speak English
 - Generally commanded by their own people
 - Arrivals just prior to the war were generally refugees from failed socialist revolutions in Europe in 1848 – referred to as “free thinkers”, “48ers”, or “Red Republicans” (no religious affiliation)
- Canadians
 - There were some “war tourists” looking for adventure but alignment was largely based on family origin – there were probably more on the Union side
- Both sides said of the other that they raised an army by “emptying the prisons of Europe”

Demographics of the Confederate Armies

- The major component of the Confederacy was yeoman farmers who were not slave holders and were tied deeply to the land and an agrarian tradition
 - As late as 1850 only about 10% of Southern land had been cultivated (half that of the North)
 - Tended to come and go in order to maintain crops
 - Saw themselves as fighting a foreign invader and understood deep cultural differences
- Fire Eaters
 - Generally former Southern Whigs that took over the Southern Democrats when the party dissolved
 - Had a large footprint in the society of the time that extended beyond politics. Edmund Ruffin in particular also contributed significantly to agricultural science
 - The establishment Democratic politicians had to align themselves with the fire-eaters to survive politically
- Ethnic Minorities
 - Southern Indian Tribes seceded and were the last to surrender
 - The *“Declaration by the People of the Cherokee Nation of the Causes Which Have Impelled Them to Unite Their Fortunes With Those of the Confederate States of America”*
 - There were roughly 10,000 Jewish soldiers along with Jewish Chaplains in the confederate forces. Judah P. Benjamin (a Jew) held several high ranking posts in the confederacy during the war
 - There were tens of thousands of Hispanics in the Confederate armies, generally from the Deep South and some from Mexico – some didn’t speak English
 - Black Confederates – Often disputed but is supported by a good deal of firsthand and secondhand accounts along with pension records, pictures, reunions of confederate soldiers, and grave markers

The Planters

- According to the 1860 census app. 65,000 people in slave holding states owned 10 or more slaves
 - App 2300 owned 100 or more with nearly half being in the western states (Miss, Louisiana)
 - 7K in Union states
 - Because the data was compiled by county and summed there would be some significant level of over counting for landowners that owned land in multiple counties
- It would probably be assumed that this group would be strong supporters of the Confederacy but this wasn't necessarily the case.
 - Planters in the western states that were most recently populated in particular didn't show much support and many were not from the South and left during the war
- Although this hasn't been adequately studied there are a few subgroups that are summarized as follows:
 - "Southern" Planters: most common on older eastern seaboard states – deep family ties to area
 - Economic migrants from the north or other areas: heaviest in the interior and western regions
 - Black planters – Not a numerically large groups but some of the largest operators were
 - French Huguenots (protestants) – These were new arrivals in the early to mid 1800's and are distinct from other groups
 - Lease hold planters – These would be operators that did not own the land and leased it, sometimes from family members
 - Bank owned or corporate owned - These would show in the census as an individual as this was prior to corporations being given legal status as a person

Cultural / Religious Profile of a Few Key Figures

- Abraham Lincoln

- Lincoln was raised in a Baptist family in Lincoln City, Indiana and his step mother in particular was an ardent believer with whom he had a close relationship. She died when he was a teenager
- In 1834 he is said to have written a critique of Christianity based in part on *The Age of Reason* that didn't survive
- Those who were closest to him throughout his life viewed him as a deist or, in the terminology of the time, a free thinker
- Lifelong friend Ward Lamon said *"Never in all that time did he let fall from his lips or his pen an expression which remotely implied the slightest faith in Jesus as the son of God and the Savior of men"*
- recast mainly by the New England clergy not simply as a Christian but as a sort of saint – they produced volumes of material that was by in large made up – much if it has survived in sermons

- Ulysses S Grant

- Grant was born in Ohio in 1822 to Methodist parents who were politically Whigs
- He was not forced to attend church as a child and never joined a church later although he would periodically attend the Methodist Church with his family
- It is not clear what religious beliefs he actually held to - his son described him as an agnostic
- Managed the Dent family plantation for a while but didn't do well and wound up working for his brother before the war.
- He was largely apolitical and voted for either party at different times. If he held to any political standard, it was that of a nationalist

Cultural / Religious Profile of a Few Key Figures (cont..)

- William Tecumseh Sherman

- Sherman was born in 1820 to a politically prominent family in Ohio
- His father was on the Ohio Supreme Court but died in 1829. He was then raised by Thomas Ewing who was a state senator and a prominent Whig
- His original family was Presbyterian and his second family was Catholic. He said “my immediate family is strongly Catholic, I am not and cannot be”
- Sherman was not a religious man and is best seen through his actions which are appropriately summarized in the following exchange of letters between him and his wife
- *In a July 31, 1862 letter to his wife (from his Collected Works) he wrote that his purpose in the war was: "Extermination, not of soldiers alone, that is the least part of the trouble, but the [Southern] people." His wife Ellen wrote back that her fondest wish was for a war "of extermination and that all [Southerners] would be driven like the Swine into the sea."*

- Jefferson Davis

- Davis was born in Kentucky in 1808 to an Episcopalian family
- His secondary education was at St Rose Priori which was a Catholic school run by the Dominican Order in Washington County, Kentucky. He was the only non-Catholic at the school and, although he never became a Catholic, he held the church in high regard throughout his life
- During the war he corresponded with Pope Pius IX who was the only head of state to recognize the Confederacy – continued after the war when he was imprisoned
- Jefferson Davis and his wife Varina adopted a Black child named Jim Limber during the war

Cultural / Religious Profile of a Few Key Figures (cont..)

- Robert E Lee

- Lee was born in 1806 in Stratford Country Virginia and had an Episcopalian background which he held to throughout his life - not confirmed until age 46
- Episcopalian church of the time there were two camps one of which was more deistic, followed by his father, while the other was more evangelical (Lee's wife and mother)
- By virtually all accounts General Lee was a devout Christian who lived an honorable and exemplary life
- *Help me to be, to think, to act what is right because it is right; make me truthful, honest, and honorable in all things; make me intellectually honest for the sake of right and honor and without thought of reward to me." Prayer written by Robert E Lee*

- Thomas Stonewall Jackson

- Of the notable figures of the war Jackson was the most pious and religiously complex
- Jackson was a committed conservative Calvinist and attended the Lexington Presbyterian Church. He attended virtually every church function although he was known for falling asleep
- His strongly Calvinistic belief system caused him to see all situations as having been determined by God's sovereignty and was therefore, very fatalistic in battle
- Jackson owned two slaves but under unusual circumstances. Both individuals had masters that died and asked Jackson to buy them and they would work for him for a number of hours for their freedom
- Jackson organized, supported, and ran a Black church or Sunday school where he taught people to read and write – this continued to be very important to him even during the war
- Jackson, like Lee, was a Unionist but had primary loyalty to his native state and was not a believer in a centralized nation state

Waging War Against Civilians

- Increasingly throughout the course of the War, the Union engaged in hard war against Southern civilians (the war was fought almost entirely in the South)
 - The main implementers of the policy of “hard war” were common names still recognized like Sherman, Pope, Sheridan, and Custer
- Historian James M. McPherson estimated that 50,000 southern civilians were killed in the course of the war (main stream historian – low end estimate)
 - Other estimates were much higher including some by Union officers after the war with a high range being as many as 300,000
- Attempts to justify all of this tend to focus on blaming the victims
 - especially Southern aristocracy and slave owners, but poor people in general including slaves and free-Blacks fared no better (and frequently worse)
- From the onset of the war the possibility of plundering was a concern to some Union officers
 - Then, as in other wars, how to deal with conquered or occupied peoples was a concern and there are consistently two diverse opinions
 - The Geneva Convention established a set of standards that documented what was largely in place during that prior century
 - Confederate Secretary of War, Judah P. Benjamin said this in response to a foreign visitor who inquired as to why the Yankees were so cruel
 - *“If they had behaved differently; if they had come against us observing strict discipline, protecting women and children, respecting private property.... But they could not help showing their cruelty and rapacity, they could not dissemble their true nature, which is the real cause of this war. If they had been capable of acting otherwise, they would not have been Yankees, and we should never have quarreled with them.”*

The Story of Jack Hinson

- In the fall of 1862 two of Jack Hinson's sons, George 21 and John 17 were hunting near the family's farm when they were arrested by Union Troops
 - They were executed alongside of the road as being suspected confederate guerillas or spies
 - They could have enlisted in the Fourteenth Tennessee but didn't as the family were Unionists
 - The patrol leader then beheaded the bodies with his saber, put the bodies on display, and proceeded to the Hinson farm to arrest the rest of the family
 - According to many accounts they hung their severed heads on the gate to the property
- Until that moment, Jack Hinson (57 years old) was a man of peace, a leading citizen of Stewart County, Tennessee
 - he was opposed to both secession and the war - General Grant was even a guest in his home
- When the union troops came he remained calm but planned his vengeance
 - studied Union supply routes and troop behaviors while having a custom made rifle built with a rifled barrel. It was 15 pounds and had to be fired off a stand but was accurate at long distances
 - When the time was right, he sent the remainder of his family away to relative safety and disappeared into the countryside
- He would take a particularly heavy toll on Union shipping on Twin Rivers to the point where he would affect Union war policies
 - He is believed to have killed over 100 Union Officers and soldiers focusing on officers along with a number of bandits and other predators preying on the local population
 - He was never caught

Assignation of the President

- Abraham Lincoln is regarded by most today in America as a sort of national saint yet his place in the collective memory was actually very unlikely and was largely dependent on his untimely death
 - The degree to which all different political factions in the Union and abroad disliked Mr. Lincoln was extreme and maybe unique as was the aggressiveness in which this was expressed
 - “*a first-rate second-rate man.*” abolitionist Wendell Phillips
- When Lincoln died on Good Friday of 1865 Secretary of War Edwin Stanton used his funeral and 1600 mile railroad tour of his corpse as a propaganda tool
 - Soon anyone speaking ill of the dead president was in danger from both the law and mobs
 - Yankee clergy who ensured that the sudden sainthood of the president would become cultural wrapped around a network of newly created false memories
 - Easter sermons two days after Lincoln’s death framed him as the “*American Moses*”
 - Considering that Lincoln was not liked and not trusted by abolitionists and Radical Republicans and never claimed to be any form of Christian despite fairly intense pressure to do so, his death provided his more progressive opponents an extremely fortuitous opportunity to recast an adversary
- Alternate theories about the assignation, which generally center on the banking system, have existed since the event
 - He arguably tried to remain independent from European financial interests. A fair question to ask when analyzing a complex event is who benefits

Reconstruction

- While the reconstruction policies exasperated the suffering in the South it is important to first understand the scope of the economic destruction
 - Approximately 300,000 Southern white males in the prime of adulthood died during the war, and perhaps 200,000 more were incapacitated
 - This translated to about 18 percent of the region's approximately 2.75 million white males in all age groups in 1860 - It was about 36 percent of those over age nineteen
 - Although the total losses to the war and post war period can't be definitively calculated due to lack of (or destruction of) data, a good estimate is that over a million black and white Southerners died and this sort of depopulation by itself would bring about economic ruin
 - The war destroyed two-thirds of Southern railroads and two-thirds of the region's livestock. One hundred million dollars in insurance investments and twice that amount in bank assets had vanished
- Grant's assessment of the destruction in a letter to his wife
 - *"The suffering that must exist in the South the next year . . . will be beyond conception. People who talk of further retaliation and punishment . . . do not conceive of the suffering endured already, or they are heartless." The mayor of Columbia, South Carolina, said "hundreds of people lived on loose grain picked up where army horses were fed". A federal official wrote, "It is common . . . [to see] women and children, most of whom were formerly in good circumstances, begging for bread from door to door. . . . They must have immediate help or perish. . . . Some are without homes of any description"*
- Reconstruction started in 1863 but changed direction after Lincoln's death
 - His goals for Southern Whites seemed to be to attract enough of them into the Republican Party to remain in power based in part on bringing in former Southern Whigs

Reconstruction (cont.)

- After Lincoln's assassination, the radical Republicans were very aware that their party would rapidly lose power if they didn't control readmission requirements and manage voting populations
 - attracting willing converts to their party ceased to be a strategy
- Johnson was seen by many Republicans as a deliverance from Lincoln's policies
 - In sermons Lincoln was compared to Moses and Johnson to Joshua
 - Johnson, however, held true to Lincoln's visions and was soon impeached
- As early as November 1863, Secretary of War Stanton instructed Bishop Ames of the Northern Methodist Church to take over the Southern churches and install ministers
 - These were in fact cultural missionaries. Presbyterian, Lydia Schofield contended the role of the Northern churches was to change the hearts and minds of Southerners
 - After the war African-Americans began to leave mixed Baptists and Methodist congregations and set up their own churches
- Reconstruction ended when it did not due to lack of perseverance on the part of the reformers but because it was bad for Northern business
 - Cotton production and exports had not recovered and were not moving towards recovery causing large trade deficits
 - The redeemer governments that came to power were not a re-establishment of the former Southern agricultural aristocracy but many were former Whigs and a far lower percentage were agricultural
 - Reconstruction ended in 1876 as compromise to resolve disputed election

The New Southern Economy and Sharecropping

- The new Southern economy benefited a few at the top of the food chain to the detriment of everyone else
 - Absentee ownership, which existed before the war but wasn't common, became far more prevalent taking Southern wealth and income North
 - Former Virginia senator and author Jim Webb wrote in *Born Fighting*, when the Yankees left, *"they did so with their ownership of the Southern economy firmly in place so that their businesses could be controlled from outside the region thereby sucking generations of profits out of the South and into their own communities."*
- Sharecropping, which can rightfully be seen as form of pseudo slavery, was driven by a regional capital shortage and was the only alternative to starvation
 - disassociated the farmer from the land and encouraged practices that led to soil erosion. Historians Thomas Clark and Albert Kirwan concluded, *"Erosion and soil wastage were high crimes, which robbed the region of more wealth than half a dozen Yankee armies marching to the sea."*
 - Sharecropping and the hardships of Southern agricultural workers tend to be seen as a condition that largely fell upon African-Americans but as late as 1940 whites made up 2/3 of this group
- Five years after the war app. 80% of former slaves had returned to the plantations where they were previously employed
 - However, according to accounts in the "Slave Diaries" compiled in the early 1930's and other data, their economic conditions had significantly worsened

The Klan and the Union League

- Almost everyone has some superficial knowledge of the Klan but generally only those who have objectively studied this period are aware of the Union League
- The story actually starts with the US Sanitary Commissions and Unitarian Minister Henry Whitney Bellows
 - Bellows eventually sold the idea to Lincoln's cabinet despite Lincoln initially referring to it as being as useful as a "*fifth wheel on a coach*" – this would eventually become the modern day red cross
 - Paramilitary offshoot was the Union League that was focused on northern dissenters initially
 - After the war they became the state military arm of reconstruction governments in the South
 - Membership eventually became almost entirely Black except for officers and leadership
- The First Klan formed in 1865 in Tennessee and spread
 - It became an umbrella group for other paramilitary organizations
 - Maintained low profile through 1867 elections and were initially targeting radical white agitators
 - Increasingly targeted Blacks after that as well as Union League which acted as enforcers of tax liens
- Anti-Klan enforcement acts in 1869 and 1871, after Republican midterm election losses, resulted in hundreds of arrests with many serving prison terms
 - Martial law was declared in nine South Carolina counties causing thousands to flee to avoid arrest
 - By 1872 the Klan was broken and the Carpetbagger governments fell

The Indian Wars

- California Indians
 - Northern California was strongly pro-Union while the Southern and interior areas were largely Confederate – large presence of federal troops during the war
 - California had a large and diverse Indian population that was “squeezed” by immigration
 - Republican Governor Peter H. Burnett called for a “*war of extermination*” to continue “*until the Indian race becomes extinct*” - contested lands included rich mineral deposits
 - Military actions ramped up before and during the war
 - By the mid-1860's only 34,000 Native Americans remained alive in California which was an estimated 90% attrition rate
 - In the 1870's, the federal post-war reconstruction government began moving on creating 'Indian' reservations in southern California. 13 were created between 1875 and 1877
- Plains Indians (Wisconsin / Minnesota)
 - The wars against the plains Indians started in 1862 in what was then the Northwest or modern Minnesota and Wisconsin when General Pope was dispatched to deal with the Lakota Sioux
 - There were broken commitments that led to raids against new settlers (Scandinavian mostly)
 - General Pope was assigned to deal with the problem after his sound defeat by SW Jackson
 - General Pope declared, “*It is my purpose to utterly exterminate the Sioux*”
 - Led to largest mass execution in American history, 39 people, out of nearly 400 that were to die. Those killed were selected lottery
 - The primary problem faced by Plains Indians was that their culture was fundamentally at odds with the dominant American culture - Nomadic vs. small farm and cities

Indian Wars (cont..)

- Plains Indians (Dakotas and Montana)
 - The Nez Perce under Chief Joseph waged a skillful war against the federal troops until being cornered in the Montana territory in October 1877
 - At that time he was seeking asylum in Canada along with the Lakota people under Sitting Bull
 - *“Nez Perce never make war on women and children... We could have killed a great many ... while the war lasted, but we would feel ashamed to do so”* Chief Joseph
- Little Big Horn
 - The wars against the Plains Indians were directed by the same group that waged total war against the South a few years' earlier including Sherman, Sheridan, and Custer
 - Custer met his fate against Sitting Bull at Little Bighorn in Southern Montana in June of 1876
 - Sitting Bull was Catholic as were many of his men. Sitting Bull always kept and cherished a cross given him by Fr. De Smet
 - A large percentage of Custer's doomed troops were Germanic immigrants and Civil War veterans
- While this encounter went favorably for Indians, virtually all others did not
 - Bear River: In the Northwestern state of Idaho on January 23, 1863 – resulted in killing of 400 Shoshoni, many of them unarmed men, women, and children. Some 21 Shoshoni women who survived the attack were raped by the troops
 - Sand Creek Massacre: In 1864 the Third Colorado Cavalry under Colonel John Chivington killed app 500 two thirds of which were women and children. Chivington was from Ohio and was both a Methodist minister and an abolitionist
 - Battle of Washita River: On November 27, 1868 Col Custer's 7th US Calvary attacked a Cheyenne Camp under Chief Black Kettle
 - Wounded Knee: The final and most well-known incident happened on December 29, 1890 at the now infamous Battle of Wounded Knee. Several hundred Indians were killed along with 25 of the attackers

Black Elk Speaks

- Modern political and social narratives portray the Indian as the victims of both Christianity and the White man without making any distinction as to what type of white man as if there was really only one common group identity
 - The book *Black Elk Speaks: the Life Story of a Holy Man of the Oglala Sioux* by John D. Neihardt from 1932 contains a collection of sayings arranged in such a way as to make them seem superior to Christianity
- Not long after, Black Elk became a Catholic Christian and told a different story
 - *“I shake hands with my white friends. Listen! I will speak words of truth. I told about the people’s ways of long ago and some of this a white man put in a book but he did not tell about current ways. Therefore I will speak again, a final speech.”*
 - *“Now I am an old man. I called my priest to pray for me and so he gave me Extreme Unction and Holy Eucharist. For the last thirty years I have lived very differently from what the white man told about me. I am a believer. The Catholic priest Short Father baptized me thirty years ago. ! “*
Black Elks last speech
- There was a cultural conflict but not with Christianity in general; only with a highly politicized and secularized form of it that was very different from any form of historical Christian orthodoxy
 - The justification is always much the same generally looking to a “greater good” where events like this were either necessary to achieve a greater good in the end (end justifies the means) or ultimately caused by the victim’s lack of compliance

Closing Thoughts

- The life of Supreme Court Justice and former Union soldier Oliver Wendell Holmes and his evolving views of the war provide an interesting retrospective look
 - Holmes was from Massachusetts and as a young man was roughly in the mold of Emerson
 - While at Harvard he was associated with radical abolitionist Wendell Phillips
 - As opposed to adopting this sort of progressive thought, Holmes grew to be a pragmatist. In the book, *The Metaphysical Club*, Louis Menand explains that the “*lesson Holmes took from the war can be put in a sentence. It is that certitude leads to violence.*”
- When Holmes' personal writings were released to the public for the first time biographers were anxious to find material to support the standard narrative
 - But that's not what they found
 - to the extent there were radical progressives and abolitionists in the Union Army, he would have been amongst them but most of the troops he knew wanted nothing to do with social causes
 - Many openly expressed sympathy and respect for the Southern cause and Confederate soldiers
 - One of Holmes' biographers wrote, “*The regulars did not serve in order that they might contribute to the achievement of certain defined objectives, whether political or humane, but because they were professional soldiers who had chosen the career of arms.*”
 - He later regretted the war and its destruction
 - One biographer observed, “*The longer he was in the war, the more he was convinced that not death was the horror, but the loss of a young man's chance to live*”
- This is a link to a song by country group Joey and Rory written from a relative's letter home from the war – [Josephine](#)