

Review of *Civil War and the Indian Wars*

Civil War and the Indian Wars

by Roy Bird

Includes Bibliographic references and index. Also includes illustrations by Michael Almond. Gretna:

Pelican, 2007. \$10.95. ISBN: 9781589804807. 128 pages.

Reviewed by Tom Roth, Interlibrary Loan Librarian

Roy Bird has produced a book on a period when the Nation was not only divided in the Civil War, but there was a second war going on in the West and on the Great Plains for the land. The Indians who were there wanted to protect their lands and rights, but were continuously brutalized by the whites who were slowly moving west as the Civil War broke out. Like the people of the United States, the Indians had divided loyalties. Some sided with the North and some sided with the South, thus dividing tribe against tribe. Some tribes who wanted to stay neutral were later dragged into the Indian Wars.

Mr. Bird paints a vivid picture of growing tension between whites and Indians on the Plains from the Dakotas to Texas, from Missouri to New Mexico. As the Civil War broke out, many Indians saw this as an opportunity to fight to get back their lands. Both the Union and the Confederacy offered enticing deals to get Indians to side with them, none of which either side really meant to keep. This book paints a very clear picture of growing racial tension between whites and Indians. Massacres like Sand Creek show the hatred many whites felt toward the Indians and such massacres further inflamed tribes that, up until that time, had not wholly been a part of the Indian wars. After the Civil War wound down, as Mr. Bird points out, the Re-united States could turn its full attention to the Indian Wars.

This tragedy, which would last from 1861 until almost the turn of the twentieth century, would change the face of the West and would spell the end of many Indian nations. Roy Bird has once again produced a short, but very interesting, book that also has a good bit of Kansas history in it. One item that should be mentioned is the index on the final page that lists the battles and their page numbers in the book. It makes an interesting reference tool for history buffs.

This book is recommended for high school and adult readers.

