

# CAUGHT BETWEEN TWO WORLDS

by Jennifer Raifteiri-McArdle  
illustrated by Wesley Lowe

**B**etween 15,000 and 20,000 Native Americans participated in the Civil War. They served as scouts, guides, interpreters, river pilots, peacekeepers, and soldiers. Meet three Native Americans who played different roles during the Civil War.

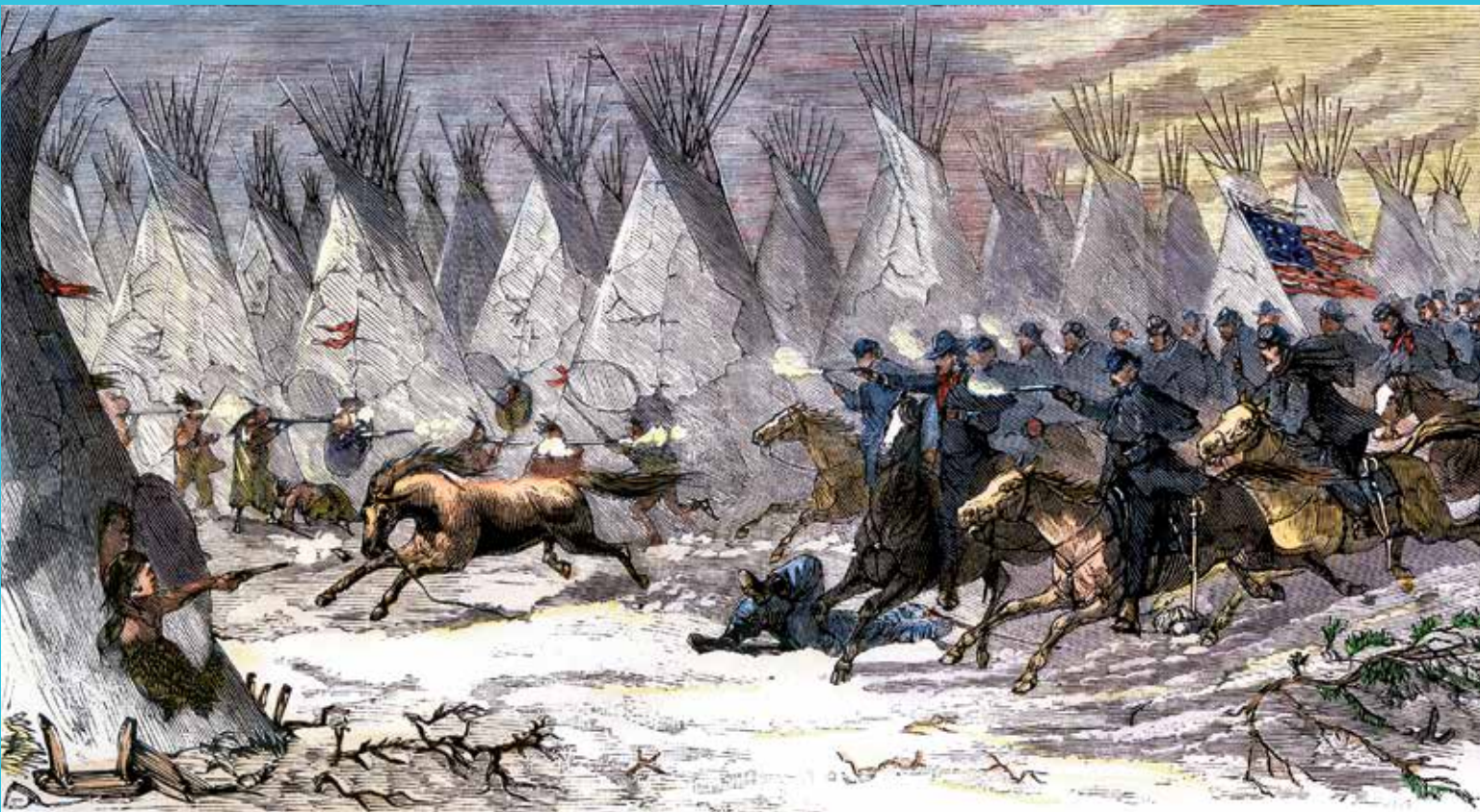
**Ely S. Parker** was a Seneca from Indian Falls, New York, who experienced an unusual upbringing. He learned his Iroquoian grandfather's religion and was educated at the local Baptist mission school. Parker also studied law and civil engineering. However, he was not eligible to become a lawyer because New York State did not recognize Native Americans as citizens. He became an engineer for the U.S. Treasury Department, which sent him to supervise the construction of a customhouse in Galena, Illinois. There, he became friends with a local store clerk, Ulysses S. Grant.

Parker was initially turned down for army service because of his race, but his friendship with Grant, who began his own rise in the Union army's ranks around 1863 before becoming the leader of all Union armies in 1864, offered him opportunities that had previously been closed to him. Parker joined the army as a captain of engineers and eventually served as Grant's personal military secretary, writing much of Grant's correspondence in his clear handwriting.

On April 9, 1865, Parker (by that time promoted to lieutenant colonel) drew up the articles of surrender for Confederate general Robert E. Lee to sign at Appomattox Court House. He later served as the first Native American commissioner of Indian Affairs in Washington, D.C. After the Civil War, he received the rank of *brevet* brigadier general. He died in 1895.

Ely S. Parker, second from the right, was an important member of Ulysses S. Grant's staff.





**Black Kettle** was a prominent Southern Cheyenne leader who worked to keep the peace between his people and settlers and emigrants. He believed that it was fruitless to try to fight the U.S. military and the endless waves of settlers that moved westward in the 1800s. In 1861, he and several other Cheyenne and Arapaho leaders signed the Fort Wise Treaty, which gave up a previously promised reservation for a smaller reservation in Colorado.

Army officers promised Black Kettle that his people would be safe at Sand Creek, about 40 miles from the fort where they had signed the treaty. But on November 29, 1864, Colonel John Chivington and his troops attacked Black Kettle's camp, ignoring the American flag and white banner tied to a pole above his tepee. More than 200 Cheyenne, including women and children, died in the massacre.

Less than a year later, in October 1865, Black Kettle agreed to another treaty, the Little Arkansas River Treaty, which exchanged the Sand Creek Reservation for land in southwestern Kansas. Black Kettle still hoped to find a peaceful way to coexist with white Americans. But on November 27, 1868, Lieutenant Colonel George A. Custer's 7th U.S. Cavalry attacked Black Kettle's camp without warning. Hundreds of Native Americans were massacred. Soldiers killed Black Kettle and his wife as they tried to escape the attack by crossing the Washita River.

Despite Black Kettle's willingness to agree to and uphold treaties, the U.S. Army attacked his peaceful camp in 1868.

Black Kettle's effort to promote peace was admirable.



**Black Beaver** was a Lenape with skills as a trapper, scout, guide, and interpreter. He spoke at least a dozen languages and used sign language to communicate with people whose languages he didn't know.

General William H. Emory was stationed in Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma) when Civil War fighting began in the spring of 1861. He learned that 6,000 Confederate troops were advancing toward his location from Texas and Arkansas. He gathered the soldiers from nearby forts in Oklahoma—Arbuckle, Cobb, and Washita—to regroup at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. But he needed an experienced guide to get his large company there safely.

Most Native American guides refused to help Emory because they feared repercussions from the invading Confederate army. With Emory's promise that the government would reimburse him for any losses, Black Beaver agreed to help the Union forces safely reach Fort Leavenworth.

When Black Beaver detected approaching troops, Emory was able to capture the Confederate's advance guard. Those men became the first prisoners captured during the Civil War. Traveling across 500 miles of open prairie, Black Beaver safely guided more than 800 Union soldiers, their prisoners, 200 teamsters, 80 wagons, and 600 horses and mules across without losing a single man, horse, or wagon.

The Confederate army seized Black Beaver's cattle, horses, and crops and destroyed his farm. They also placed a **bounty** on his head, which forced him to remain in Kansas for the duration of the war. He was never fully compensated by the U.S. government for his losses. He died on May 8, 1880. Black Beaver was the first inductee into the American Indian Hall of Fame in Anadarko, Oklahoma, located on part of his former ranch. ★

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