

## Section

# 2

## War on the Plains

### Main Ideas

1. The Salt Creek Raid affected military policy toward American Indians on the frontier.
2. The spread of railroad lines west and the slaughter of the buffalo greatly affected life for Plains Indians.

### Why It Matters Today

The Plains Indians relied heavily on the buffalo for clothing, food, and shelter. Use current events sources to learn about how American Indian life today.



**TEKS:** 1B, 6A, 8A, 9A, 9C, 20A, 20C, 21A, 21B, 21C, 21D, 21H, 22A, 22B, 22C, 22D

### myNotebook

Use the annotation tools in your eBook to take notes on how the destruction of the buffalo affected Plains Indians.

### Key Terms and People

- Salt Creek Raid
- Quanah Parker
- Cynthia Parker
- buffalo guns

## The Story Continues

Fannie Beck's parents were away at the funeral of her cousin, Jesse, who had been killed by Texas Indians while hunting. Fannie and her brother Milton had been left overnight to watch the younger children. They huddled together by the fire. "We suffered an agony of fear every time Sue, the baby, stirred. . . . We didn't want her to cry and let the Indians know there was a houseful of unprotected children."



### The Salt Creek Raid

After the Treaty of Medicine Lodge, tensions between Plains Indians and settlers remained high. Indians living on the reservation were frustrated with the quality of life there. Other American Indians were upset by the continued westward movement of U.S. settlers into their hunting grounds. Some of these Indians began to attack Texas settlements. In July 1870 a large group of Kiowas attacked a stagecoach carrying mail near Fort Richardson. U.S. Army troops chased the raiders but were defeated in battle by the larger Kiowa force. Then in August a Kiowa leader named White Horse led a series of attacks. The Texas legislature complained to federal officials about these and other attacks.

In 1871 the U.S. Army sent General William Tecumseh Sherman to investigate Texans' complaints. Sherman doubted that American Indians posed a serious threat in Texas. However, early in May some 100 Kiowas and Comanches crossed into Texas. Led by Big Tree, Satank,

and Satanta, they attacked a wagon train near Salt Creek on May 18, killing seven men. A wounded survivor of this **Salt Creek Raid** made his way to Fort Richardson and reported the raid to Sherman. The general sent troops after the raiders and then traveled to Fort Sill near Indian Territory.

When the raiders came to the Indian Territory reservation for food supplies, Lawrie Tatum asked them about the attack. Satanta responded, “If any other Indian comes here and claims the honor of leading the party he will be lying to you, for I did it myself.” Satanta defended the raid by charging that the government had not treated the Indians fairly. He also accused Tatum of stealing supplies. The hardships of reservation life would result in more attacks, warned Satanta.

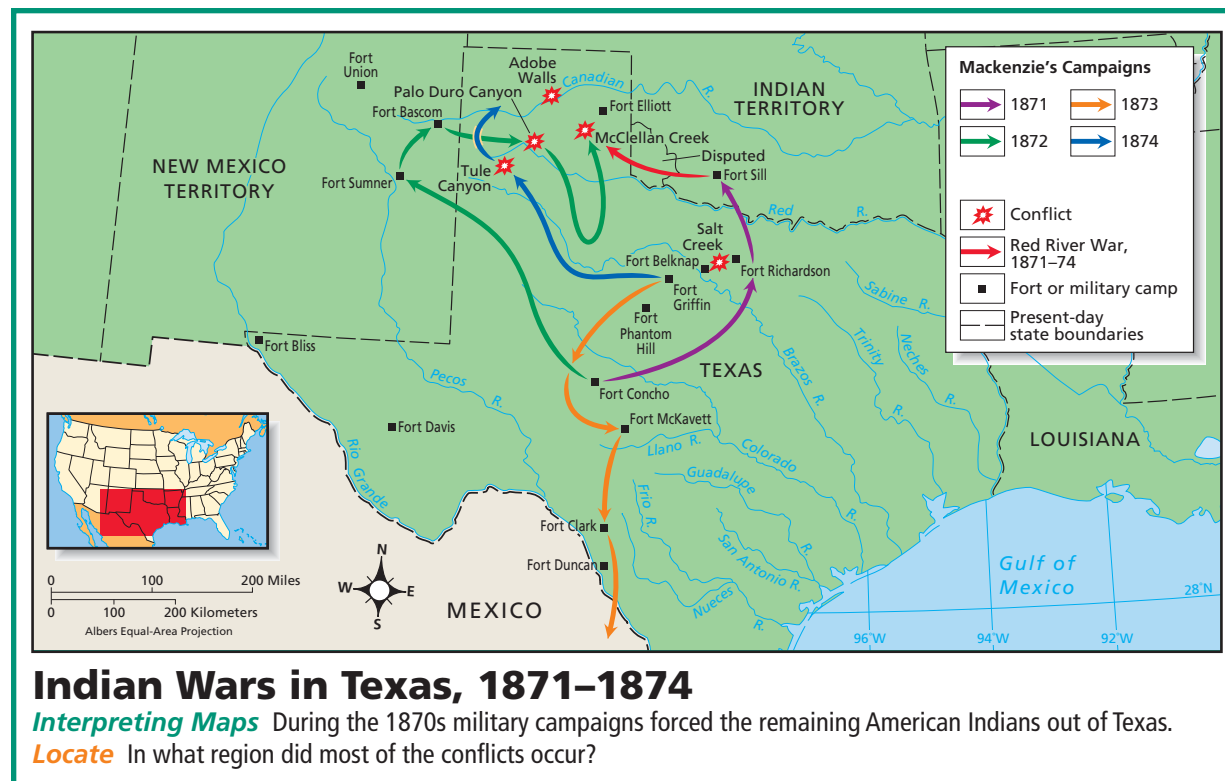
When Sherman learned of Satanta’s statements, he had Big Tree, Satank, and Satanta arrested in a tense confrontation at Fort Sill. Satank was later killed while trying to escape. Big Tree and Satanta were tried for murder and sentenced to death. Tatum and other supporters of the peace policy worried that hanging the men would only make matters worse on the frontier. Texas governor Edmund J. Davis shared this concern, and he changed the death sentence to life in prison. Big Tree and Satanta were released from prison on parole, or let go under condition of good behavior, in 1873.

**Reading Check Summarizing** What significant events occurred on the Texas frontier in the early 1870s?

**That's Interesting!**

### General Sherman's Near Miss

On May 17, 1871, General Sherman's wagon train was on its way to Fort Richardson. Unknown to Sherman, a group of Kiowas and Comanches considered attacking the wagon train. Instead, they attacked the next wagon train in the Salt Creek Raid.





## BIOGRAPHY

### Cynthia Parker

(c.1825–1871) On May 19, 1836, Comanche raiders attacked Parker's Fort in what is now Limestone County. The Comanches captured five settlers, including Cynthia Ann Parker, who was then 10 or 11 years old. Parker remained with the Comanches for almost 25 years. During that time, she married Peta Nocona and had three children. Her son Quanah Parker became one of the most important Comanche leaders of his time. In 1860, Texas Rangers attacked a Comanche camp and captured Cynthia Parker. Relatives forced Parker to settle with them. Parker, however, regarded herself as Comanche. She tried several times, without success, to escape from her relatives. **Why did Parker consider herself to be a Comanche?**



## Mackenzie's Raids

In response to the Salt Creek Raid, the U.S. War Department planned a series of attacks against Plains Indians who refused to live on reservations. Colonel Ranald S. Mackenzie—whom Ulysses S. Grant had called the most talented young officer in the U.S. Army—led the campaign. He commanded the 4th Cavalry regiment, which was stationed at several posts along the Texas frontier in the 1860s and 1870s.

Mackenzie and his troops, called Mackenzie's Raiders, achieved great fame fighting on the Texas frontier. The *Galveston News* expressed support for their actions, a view shared by many Texans.

### TEXAS VOICES



**"Go into the heart of their country. . . until the Indians are caught. . . . Lay waste [destroy] their villages, burn everything within reach, kill every warrior found in fighting trim [equipped to fight], and so utterly desolate [ruin] their regions that by sheer weakness they will never be able to send another war party to our border."**

—*Galveston News*, March 14, 1873

Mackenzie began his raids in the fall of 1871, traveling northwest from Camp Cooper on the Clear Fork of the Brazos River. Mackenzie's troops were guided by Tonkawa Indian scouts. At Blanco Canyon, Mackenzie's troops fought a battle against a Comanche group led by **Quanah Parker**. Parker was the son of **Cynthia Parker**, a captured settler, and Peta Nocona—a Comanche. Forcing the Comanches to flee, Mackenzie pursued them deeper into the Panhandle. However, the Comanches escaped during a heavy snowstorm.

Following several Indian raids in the spring of 1872, Mackenzie renewed his attacks on the Comanches. He also crossed the Panhandle into New Mexico, chasing cattle thieves. On September 29, 1872, Mackenzie's troops defeated a Comanche force at McClellan Creek, near present-day Pampa. They killed many Comanches, destroyed their village, and took some 120 women and children prisoner.

Quanah Parker led an attack on Mackenzie's camp the following night and stampeded the animals that the Texans had captured. But he could not free the Comanche prisoners. Mackenzie kept the prisoners at Fort Concho to pressure the others to surrender. As a result, many Comanches abandoned life on the plains and moved to the reservation. It was a major victory for Mackenzie.

With the raids temporarily halted in northwest Texas, Mackenzie and the 4th Cavalry headed for the Mexican border. Stationed at Fort Duncan near Eagle Pass, Mackenzie led the effort to stop Kickapoo and Lipan Apache raids along the Rio Grande. By the end of 1873, Mackenzie had brought a stop to most of the border raids.

**Reading Check Sequencing** Describe in order the actions Colonel Mackenzie took against the Comanches.





### Interpreting Visuals

**Buffalo.** During the late 1800s the buffalo were hunted to nearly extinction. How did buffalo hunters' means of hunting differ from those of American Indians?

## ★ The Slaughter of the Buffalo

Other events also threatened Plains Indians. For generations, they had depended on the buffalo. By the 1870s the survival of the buffalo—and the Plains Indians' way of life—was at serious risk. As American railroad companies built lines across the Great Plains, non-Indian hunters killed hundreds of buffalo to feed the rail crews.

Once railroads reached towns in Kansas, buffalo hides could be moved quickly and cheaply to eastern cities. The buffalo hide industry began in 1871 when J. Wright Mooar shipped 56 hides to his brother John in New York City. John sold the hides to a tanning firm, which soon ordered 2,000 more.

A new method for tanning buffalo hides into high quality leather led to a sharp rise in demand and price. With an average hide worth more than three dollars on the market, buffalo hunters swarmed onto the plains to make their fortune.

Most buffalo hunters used a method called still hunting. In the early morning, hunters would sneak downwind of a herd and set up powerful rifles known as **buffalo guns**. These guns had telescopes, allowing hunters to slowly pick off members of the herd from a distance. One Texan later recalled, "A remarkably good hunter would kill seventy-five to one hundred [buffalo] a day."

## MATH

**The Buffalo Population**

Scholars have had great difficulty determining the size of the buffalo population over time. Historians agree that during the late 1800s the herds were nearly wiped out. The following are estimates of the population.

YEAR	BUFFALO POPULATION
1800	30 million
1850	20 million
1889	835
2000	200,000
2013	400,000

**Interpreting Data**

1. Use the information above to create a graph showing the buffalo population from 1800 to 2000.
2. By what percentage did the buffalo population decrease from 1800 to 1850?
3. By how much did the buffalo population grow between 1889 and 2013?

Under the terms of the Treaty of Medicine Lodge, buffalo hunters were not allowed onto Indian hunting grounds south of Kansas. These lands were reserved exclusively for Indian use. The U.S. Army was supposed to patrol the Kansas–Indian Territory border to enforce this provision of the treaty, but it failed to do so. As a result, by 1873 hunters were illegally pouring into Texas.

Contrary to their assigned role, many military officials actually encouraged hunters to follow the buffalo herds. They supported the extermination, or complete destruction, of buffalo on the Plains. General Philip Sheridan, who commanded the region including Texas, believed that killing off the buffalo would force Plains Indians onto reservations. In 1875 he urged the Texas legislature to allow the hunters to continue the slaughter. “Let them [hunters] kill, skin, and sell until the buffaloes are exterminated. Then your prairies can be covered with speckled cattle.”

Between 1872 and 1874, hunters killed an estimated 4.3 million buffalo. The buffalo hunters’ activities—particularly their practice of taking the hides and leaving the meat to rot—outraged Plains Indians. As a Comanche named He Bear explained, “Just as it makes the white man feel to have his money carried away, so it makes us feel to see others killing and stealing our buffaloes.”

**Reading Check Finding the Main Idea** What technological advances helped lead to the slaughter of buffalo herds in the late 1800s?



## Section 2 Review



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ONLINE QUIZ

**1. Define and explain:**

- buffalo guns

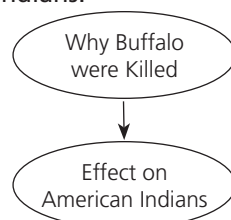
**2. Identify and explain**

the historical significance of:

- Salt Creek Raid
- Quanah Parker
- Cynthia Parker

**3. Analyzing Information**

Copy the graphic organizer below. Use it to explain how the destruction of the buffalo affected American Indians.

**4. Finding the Main Idea**

- a. How did the Salt Creek Raid affect the military’s policy toward American Indians on the frontier?
- b. What role did Colonel Mackenzie play in Texas?

**5. Writing and Critical Thinking**

myWriteSmart

**Identifying Points of View** Imagine that you are a Plains Indian. Write a poem that describes the importance of the buffalo.

Consider the following:

- how Indians used the buffalo
- the effect that hunters had on buffalo herds