

ABSTRACT

CREATIVE PROJECT: Sheridan at the Reins: Changing Perceptions of the Cavalry, Sheridan, and Native Americans during the Indian Wars, 1868-1877

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This creative project uses digital history tools to examine primary sources related to the United States Cavalry, General Philip Sheridan, and Native Americans during the years 1863-1877. An interactive timeline places the life of Phil Sheridan and the Cavalry in the context of American History. Spatial and statistical analysis shows changes in the western landscape and the U.S. Army of the late nineteenth century. Textual analysis of the *Army & Navy Journal 1863-1876* shows the changing opinions of the officers in the Army during the Civil War and the Indian Wars that followed. In comparison, during the years 1868-1877, the newspapers of Montana, South Carolina, Illinois, and New York had consistent portrayals of both the Indians and cavalry in the West. The Natives were depicted in the papers and viewed by the public as “murderous savages” of the West. The officers in the Army at this time had different opinions of the natives; the officers pursued ways to find peace and did not share the primarily negative views of the public. The U.S. Cavalry were vital to American expansion West following the Civil War. Army officers saw the role of the cavalry change during this time and with these changes brought new opinions of the Native Americans.