

to follow. Despite bold assertions of New Mexico's importance to the Civil War, questions about its significance nevertheless remain. Does the western theater's focus on resources, rather than slavery, make it a fundamentally different conflict than the eastern theaters of the war? Can New Mexico stand in for the entire West conceptually, or would stories about places like Oregon or Kansas complicate Nelson's argument? While it is evident that the war in the West was a consideration among high ranking politicians in the East, Nelson stops short of showing us that it was a priority.

Good historical work raises as many questions as it answers, and Nelson's work deftly explores the many facets of the Civil War in New Mexico. Readers interested in Iowa history will be particularly fascinated by the story of Alonzo Ickis, an Iowa farmer who went west in the Colorado gold rush and became a Union soldier in the Southwest Theater. After the war, Ickis returned to Iowa, bringing with him memories of the West and the war. The casual reader will find the stories compelling, the action exciting, and will appreciate the diverse perspectives Nelson provides. Students and professional historians can marvel at Nelson's extensive archival research, even as they long for a clear assertion of her historiographical intervention. Nelson's *Civil War West* is diverse, complex, and important. She demonstrates that a territory far from the major battles of the war nevertheless influenced its course.

John Finerty Reports the Sioux War, by John F. Finnerty, edited by Paul L. Hedren. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2020. xviii, 227 pp. Illustrations, map, notes, bibliography, appendix, index. \$34.95 hardcover.

Reviewer Denny Smith is Associate Professor of History and Native American Studies at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. He is the co-author of *The History of the Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the Fort Peck Reservation: 1600–2000* (2008).

In May 1876, *Chicago Times* senior editor Wilbur Storey dispatched trusted city reporter John Finerty to accompany Brigadier General George Crook's anticipated second campaign that year against Lakotas and Cheyennes. Crook's earlier winter campaigns, culminating in the March 1876 Powder River Battle, were widely acknowledged debacles. Finerty soon joined Crook's larger, but similarly inconclusive, summer 1876 Bighorn-Yellowstone Expedition.

In his magisterial 2019 study, *Rosebud, June 17, 1876: Prelude to the Little Big Horn*, historian Paul Hedren extensively cites Finerty's famous 1890 memoir, *War-Path and Bivouac*, which chronicled Crook's Bighorn-

Yellowstone Expedition. Finerty reported alongside four other journalists. He worked exclusively for the *Chicago Times*, but others reported to more than one newspaper. In *Rosebud*, Hedren ambitiously examined all of these newspaper stories, offering unprecedented perspective to Rosebud Battle analysis.

Also in *Rosebud*, Hedren admits that he and other scholars had mistakenly assumed Finerty based *War-Path and Bivouac* upon verbatim passages from his 1876 dispatches. However, Finerty had completely rewritten these accounts in 1890, offering different renderings of the same historic events.

In *John Finerty Reports the Sioux War*, Hedren assures that *War-Path and Bivouac* remains a “gem,” but adds that Finerty’s *Chicago Times* dispatches “comprise a jewel of another sort” (x). Finerty’s writings in the field allure because of their immediacy, but they also include a breadth of topics and opinions completely omitted in 1890. Hedren is correct: Finerty’s 1876 writings are a historical jewel, and they also elicit important questions about *War-Path and Bivouac*.

Hedren selects twenty-seven of Finerty’s *Chicago Times* dispatches, beginning with Finerty’s first correspondence of May 14, 1876, and ending with his last one of October 7, 1876. These include eight telegrams and nineteen correspondence writings. Hedren begins with a masterfully researched chapter on Finerty’s life. Hedren reproduces the twenty-seven dispatches in Chapters 2–8, with insightful commentaries introducing these seven chapters.

In Chapters 2 and 3, “Preparing for War” and “Life on the Trail,” respectively, Finerty begins with observations of Cheyenne, Wyoming Territory. He proceeds to overland travels north to Forts Laramie and Fetterman, northwest across the upper Powder River, and finally to the staging camp on Goose Creek (a Tongue River tributary). In Chapter 4, “The Rosebud Battle,” Finerty, who rode with Captain Anson Mills, presents first-hand descriptions of Mills’s initial Crazy Horse counterattack, and of Mills’s uneventful later advance up Rosebud Creek.

In Chapter 5, “Loafing Hangs Heavily upon Us,” Finerty details Crook’s return to Goose Creek, and soldier frustrations at protracted inaction. This chapter includes Lt. Frederick Sibley’s harrowing July 6–9 scouting expedition to the Big Horn River. Scout Frank Grouard’s heroic actions saved Finerty and Sibley’s company from certain death. In Chapter 6, Crook’s command on August 10 joins General Alfred Terry’s forces on lower Rosebud Creek. Chapter 7, “Mud, Mules, and Blood,” explains Crook’s rain-plagued, three-week-long “Starvation March” east to the Little Missouri River, and his disastrous decision to head south to the Black Hills. Finerty also recounts Captain Mills’s Slim Buttes Battle of

September 9. In the last chapter Finerty presents lively descriptions of Black Hills gold mining towns: Crook City, Deadwood, and Custer City.

Finerty was a uniquely gifted journalist. As a young Irishman, he studied classical literature, and such references infused his sophisticated, yet personally engaging, newspaper stories. He was a careful observer, noting urban and mining town cultural dynamics as precisely as natural world patterns and marvels. He rode with legendary Crook, but his gift was presenting the everyday world of Crook's soldiers. However, Hedren also properly notes that Finerty presented disturbingly racist depictions of Native Americans in his 1876 dispatches. And inexplicably, these remained unchanged in his 1890 memoir.

The Last Sovereigns: Sitting Bull and the Resistance of the Free Lakotas, by Robert M. Utley. Lincoln: Bison Books, 2020. xiii, 166 pp. Illustrations, maps, photographs, notes, index. \$24.95 hardcover.

Reviewer Tim Lehman is Professor of History at Rocky Mountain College in Billings, Montana. He is the author of *Bloodshed at Little Bighorn: Sitting Bull, Custer, and the Destinies of Nations* (2010).

Any book written by Robert Utley creates high expectations and this little gem will not disappoint. Utley is well known for his more than twenty works on a variety of topics in western and midwestern history, including the highly acclaimed *The Lance and the Shield: The Life and Times of Sitting Bull* (1994), on which this book is partially based. *The Last Sovereigns*, however, goes beyond Utley's earlier work to detail Sitting Bull's time in Canada and flesh out his friendship with Major James M. Walsh of the North-Northwest Mounted Police. This friendship forms the emotional center of the narrative and suggests the possibilities of political and personal alliances across boundaries, with a white Canadian police officer on one side and a Native American freedom fighter on the other.

With crisp prose and well-developed characters, Utley narrates the years of Sitting Bull's self-imposed exile in Canada. Here in the land of the "Great White Mother," (34) Sitting Bull's Lakotas sought the protection of Canadian laws and earned the respect of Major Walsh, the government's representative in this distant province. For four years, Walsh, backed by a mere handful of mounted police, spoke honestly with the Indigenous refugees, letting them know that their escape from the American military came with the requirement that they subsist on their own buffalo hunting and refrain from hostilities against other native nations or American settlers south of the border. Utley includes many of Sitting Bull's own words, which reveal the leader's eloquence and anger at American aggression into Lakota lands. Yet the focus on the