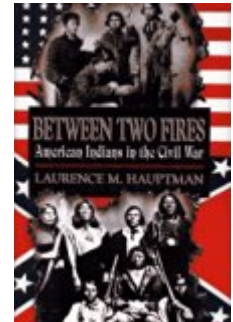


Laurence M. Hauptman. *Between Two Fires: American Indians in the Civil War.* New York: The Free Press, 1995. xv + 304 pp. \$25.00, cloth, ISBN 978-0-02-914180-9.



Reviewed by David Eyman

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The last chapter of Hauptman's book opens with a description of a scene from the 1976 motion picture, *The Outlaw Josey Wales*, in which Chief Dan George, playing the part of a Cherokee Indian named Lone Watie, explains what it meant to be a "civilized" Indian. Every time he appealed to the government for relief from problems visited on him as an Indian, he was told to "endeavor to persevere." When he eventually grew tired of hearing that, he joined up with the Confederacy. Hauptman goes on to suggest that Native Americans from a variety of tribes joined in a fight that was not really theirs for many reasons. Indian participation in the American Civil War, on both sides, was more extensive than most people realize, involving some 20,000 American Indians.

Laurence Hauptman, a professor of history at the State University of New York at New Paltz and the author of a number of works on American Indians, has provided an interesting examination of Indians who participated in the Civil War. By following the service of selected tribes and individuals, he recounts a number of stories, ranging from such relatively well-known personalities as Stand

Watie--the principal chief of the southern-allied branch of the Cherokee Nation and brigadier general of the Confederate States of America--and Ely Samuel Parker--a Seneca and reigning chief of the Six Nations and a colonel on General Ulysses S. Grant's staff--to lesser-known Native Americans who served both sides in the conflict. Although the narrative encompasses the actions of the units in which the individuals were served, Hauptman has attempted to use first-person accounts wherever possible, which makes this volume less a sweeping picture of the Civil War than a series of personalized stories.

Between Two Fires is divided into three main parts: "The Trans-Mississippi West," "The South," and "The North." After an opening chapter which sets the scene by describing the life of American Indians in the years immediately preceding the war, the reader is treated to a contrasting picture of allegiances in the Trans-Mississippi West. The Delaware, looking for promises of a new home, signed up with the Union. The Cherokee, engaged in a bitter internal struggle between Stand Watie and principal chief John Ross, split, with a pro-

Southern faction under Watie joining the Confederate cause.

The second portion of the book, labeled simply "The South," recounts three rather diverse sets of experiences. The pro-Union Pamunkey of Virginia and Lumbee of North Carolina served respectively as river pilots for George B. McClellan's Army of the Potomac in 1862 during the Peninsula campaign and as guerrillas in the swamp country of North Carolina in 1865 during William T. Sherman's Carolina campaign. The Catawba of South Carolina served the Confederacy loyally, both as catchers of runaway slaves and as volunteers for the Army of Northern Virginia. The Eastern Band of Cherokee, under the leadership of William Holland Thomas, a white man who was adopted by the Cherokee as a child, served the Confederacy as rangers to guard mountain passes and generally hindering Union operations in the Smokies.

The last part of *Between Two Fires* concentrates on American Indians from the Northern States who joined the Union Cause. The Ottawa and Ojibwa, from Michigan, hoping to renegotiate treaties with Washington, offered their service as sharpshooters for the Union. The Pequot and Mohegan Indians of Connecticut volunteered to serve the Union for economic rather than idealist reasons. The Tonawanda Band of Seneca assisted the Union because they saw the Federal government as a necessary ally against efforts to remove them from their lands in western New York.

Between Two Fires is well researched, with extensive notes and an impressive bibliography, which includes a wide assortment of manuscript sources. The book has an excellent index. While there are some quite interesting illustrations, I believe the volume would have benefited from additional maps beyond those used in the end papers, which show Indian Land Cessions from 1850 to 1859. But that is a small complaint about an otherwise well-written work.

In his prologue, Hauptman states, "The goal of this book then is to recover a hidden chapter in

the history of the Civil War, in all its variety, with all its heroism and all its ugliness." He has succeeded admirably. *Between Two Fires* is a welcome addition to the literature of the American Civil War as well as to the literature of the American Indian.

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