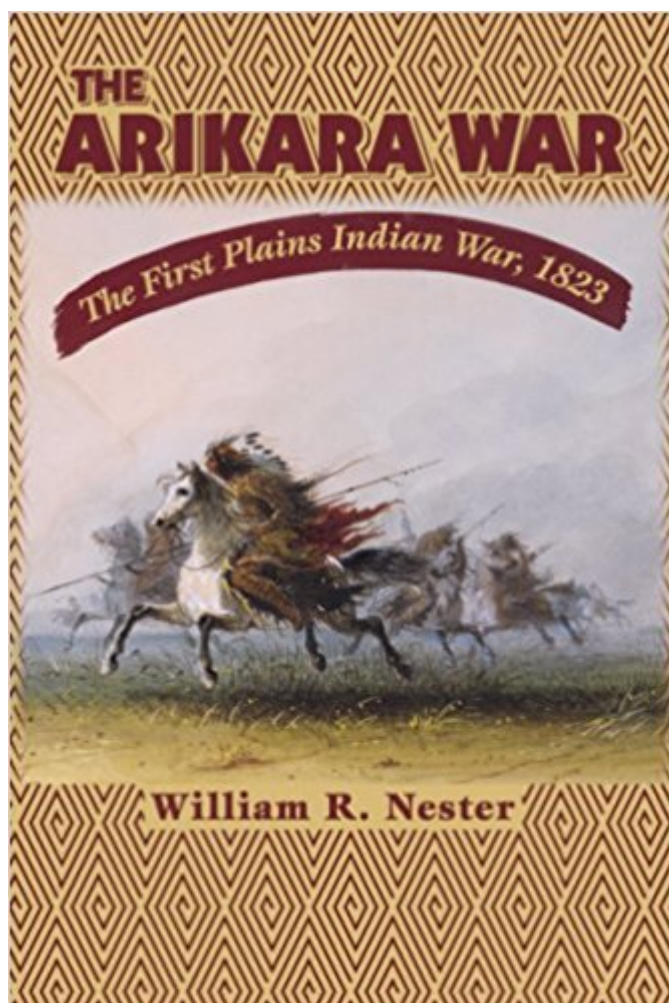


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The Arikara War: The First Plains Indian War, 1823



Synopsis

The Arikara War took place in August 1823 between the United States and the Arikara native Americans near the Missouri River, in present-day South Dakota.[1] Arikara warriors had previously attacked a trapping expedition traveling on the river. The United States responded with forces of 230 soldiers, 750 Sioux, and 50 trappers[citation needed] under the command of U.S. Army Colonel Henry Leavenworth.[1] Although brief, the conflict was noted for two reasons. First, it was the first military conflict between the United States and the western native Americans, setting the tone for future encounters between Americans and the Crow and Blackfeet. Second, Leavenworth did not completely defeat the Arikara. His leniency toward them sparked a great debate between Americans demanding subjugation of the natives and those advocating cohabitation with them. The Arikara eventually settled with the Mandan and Hidatsa on the Fort Berthold Reservation in North Dakota. Many Arikaras and Crows became Indian scouts during the height of the Sioux Wars.

Book Information

Hardcover: 258 pages

Publisher: Mountain Press First printing edition (March 2001)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 087842430X

ISBN-13: 978-0878424306

Product Dimensions: 1 x 6.2 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars See all reviews (9 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

The well known poem, starting with the line "For the Want of a Shoe, the Horse was Lost," serves to describe the talents of William R. Nester. In this information packed book we see a wide range of individual and collective actions of Native Americans, Fur Trappers, Explorers and Financiers in the development of the American West. Then Nester carries these inter-related actions to a higher plain to show how they would impact on the larger, international scene down the historical path. Many of us are all familiar with the Arikara War when there would be armed conflict against elements of Ashley's and Henry's party as they ascended the Missouri River. Nester applies more than enough

information to ground his readers in these series of episodes. But he also shows in the larger picture how the Arikara, Hidatsa and Mandan would eventually emerge as middlemen in both commerce and trade over a truly wide geographical range, such as Santa Fe, British operations and St. Louis trade. The Arikara War would become the harbinger of things to unfold in both commercial and political developments and their impact upon America's Western regions. Some would clamor that such conflicts were evidence that Hudson's Bay Company, British agents and others were out to incite Native Americans against American interests in the middle Missouri trade.. While such charges might have been unfounded, they would be useful in attempts to gain governmental support and motivate public opinion. An added dimension for this book is Nester's analysis of the evolution and shifts of power among different Native American tribes. A good example of this are the results of the 1837 small pox epidemic that would shift the balance of power on the so-called middle Missouri region.

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