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Review of *Ned Wynkoop and the Lonely Road from Sand Creek* by Louis Kraft

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This narrative opens in typical form for a biography portraying the life of a nineteenth-century frontiersman in the American West. Ned Wynkoop sought adventure on the American frontier, encountered various Native American cultures, engaged in resource speculation, attempted to enter territorial politics, and served with distinction in the Civil War. These common attributes, however, are only a small part of Wynkoop's historical significance. His worldview was completely transformed after prolonged contact with Native peoples and the events surrounding the massacre at Sand Creek, Colorado Territory, in November 1864.

Ned Wynkoop arrived in Colorado Territory by a circuitous route in the late antebellum period alongside thousands of emigrants seeking their fortunes in the newly acquired territories. He quickly became a notable figure in Denver and ingratiated himself with many powerful individuals. Like many strong personalities, he also acquired a sizeable array of detractors who appear from time to time throughout his life. Initially, he had a very stereotypical opinion of Native peoples and believed that the reservations would create more vices than virtues. With the start of the Civil War he quickly sided with the Union and served in Colorado and New Mexico territories. During the conflict he refined both his military skills and political acumen, which served him well after the conflict.

Wynkoop's transformative moment was the brutal and unprovoked attack at Sand Creek in 1864. He personally assured tribal leaders, especially Black Kettle, that they would be safe and provisioned at Sand Creek. He had, unknowingly, set the stage for the massacre. The blind prejudice of Colonel John Chivington and others resulted in a brutal annihilation of nearly 150 Native Americans, mostly women and children.

The massacre immediately changed Wynkoop from government official to a "culture broker" and vocal advocate for Native peoples. He played a major role at the peace negotiations at Medicine Creek Lodge (1867), mediated conflicts with the U.S Army, promoted Native affairs in the East, and continually revealed the subterfuge surrounding events at Sand Creek. In the end, however, he recognized that "there was no stopping the collision of cultures, and no doubt which culture would emerge victorious."

Louis Kraft provides a superb account of Ned Wynkoop's contributions to the American West. The narrative benefits from extensive research, appropriate context, and historical nuance. Ned Wynkoop and the Lonely Road from Sand Creek is essential reading for all interested in Native American history in the second half of the nineteenth century.

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