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MARGUERITE LAFLESCHÉ DIDDOCK

OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS FIELD MATRON

LISA E. EMMERICH

"I am an Indian girl fifteen years old. . . . Sometimes I am sorry that the white people ever came to America. What nice times we used to have before we were old enough to go to school, for then father used to take us on the buffalo hunt."¹

Three lines. Three lines from a letter published in *St. Nicholas Magazine*, the preeminent American children's periodical, in 1880. Three lines that reveal a bitterness sharply at odds with the author's youth. Three lines that, for all their brevity, speak with poignant intensity of the collision of Euro-American and American Indian cultures. Three lines that open a window

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into the world of Marguerite LaFlesche, a young Omaha woman witnessing the disappearance of a familiar tribal past and participating in the unfolding of a new and uncertain future.

This voice, so passionately articulate in its defense of Indian traditionalism, was transformed by the passage of time and the exigencies of a rapidly changing world. Sixteen years after castigating Euro-Americans for their assault on a way of life she knew and loved, Marguerite LaFlesche became an advocate for that same foreign culture. As a field matron for the Office of Indian Affairs (OIA) from 1896 to 1900, she led Omaha women in the reconstruction of their private and public lives according to Euro-American standards of womanhood and domesticity. Under the auspices of a federal policy designed to hasten Indian assimilation, LaFlesche taught her female tribal counterparts about the perils and rewards of "walking the white woman's [sic] road."² It was a route she knew well.

INDIAN REFORMERS AND ASSIMILATION

Marguerite LaFlesche symbolized the "new" Indian of the assimilation era when she assumed

the highly visible community leadership role of field matron. Like the powerful nineteenth-century photographs that seem to document the transformation of Indians into "citizens," her professional career appears to validate the efforts to crush tribalism that dominated American Indian affairs after the Civil War. Yet as a woman of the Omaha world, LaFlesche knew how difficult cultural exchange could be. Her career as an Office of Indian Affairs field matron tested her ties to both worlds and illustrated some of the personal and professional challenges American Indian women faced when they became partners in the federal assimilation campaign.

To post-Civil War American reformers and policy makers, the definitive and humane settlement of the "Indian problem" could be reached only through "civilization." If the surviving native populations could be assimilated, they would no longer impede Euro-Americans eager to complete their settlement of the continent. Of course, this process required individual and corporate Indian acquiescence. To achieve assimilation the United States government instituted a number of programs designed to encourage, or coerce (depending on which side of the process you stood), "Americanization." Land allotment, vocational programs for men, domestic education for women, and the Indian school system for children worked together to obliterate traditions.³ Farms, schools, and homes became the new battlegrounds in this supposedly humanitarian war to, in the words of Richard H. Pratt, "kill the Indian and save the Man."

In the years following the Civil War, the OIA devoted money and personnel to these ambitious ventures. Resources could not, however, guarantee acceptance or success. Instead of assimilation, adaptation and accommodation often occurred. Tribal peoples regularly stymied federal attempts at cultural re-engineering by staunchly defending tribalism. While privately acknowledging these setbacks, few involved in the creation and implementation of Indian policy chose to parade them publicly. Instead, they emphasized those instances where native men, women, and children seemed to

commit themselves to the new way of life promoted by the OIA. Their choices offered observers compelling evidence of the power of de-Indianization.

THE LAFLESCHÉ FAMILY AND THE OMAHAS

Among those who provided convincing public testimony to the benefits of this process for American Indians was Marguerite LaFlesche's father, Joseph "Iron Eye" LaFlesche. Of mixed French, Omaha, and Ponca ancestry, he ascended to the Omaha chieftainship in 1853. "Iron Eye" tried to persuade his people to reshape their native identities in the years following his assumption of principal tribal leadership.⁴ Recognizing that Omaha resistance to Euro-American control would be futile, he encouraged other members of the tribe to preserve the community, its identity, and its sovereignty by accepting and adapting to the new circumstances facing them.

Joseph LaFlesche promoted this solution because he understood how profoundly, and irrevocably, the Omaha world had changed and was changing. This process had begun long before he became chief. The oral traditions of his people relate that a series of migrations led the Omaha nation from originally somewhere near the present-day Ohio Valley to land along the Missouri River in present-day Iowa, Nebraska, and Missouri.⁵ There the Omahas lived in a seasonal subsistence pattern, cultivating their fields in the spring, hunting the buffalo in the summer, harvesting in fall, and spending winter in small family groups except when they reunited for the traditional winter hunt. The fabric of Omaha life began to unravel during the first decades of the nineteenth century. Lewis and Clark arrived in Omaha territory on their way up the Missouri River in 1802. Smallpox soon became a fact of life, and death, as the disease made inroads into the tribal population base.⁶ And Lakota raiding parties began to harass Omaha hunting expeditions.

In 1830 the tribe signed its first treaty with the United States, ceding territory in Iowa. A

second treaty in 1836 ceded Omaha lands in Missouri. The nation still retained its primary homeland, six million acres in what would become Nebraska, but the Omahas could not protect themselves from frequent forays by Lakota bands, recurring waves of smallpox, and the increasing scarcity of game.⁷

By 1854 Euro-Americans eager to settle in the newly organized Nebraska Territory and Lakota raiders forced the Omahas to negotiate yet another treaty. Encouraged by Joseph LaFlesche, the nation ceded all but three hundred thousand acres of land along the Missouri in eastern Nebraska. In exchange, the United States government promised protection from Lakota depredations and a payment of \$25,000 (approximately 17.8 cents per acre of land ceded).⁸ This treaty also provided for the future allotment of tribal lands.

The "permanent" reservation in Nebraska was ultimately reduced three more times. The refugee Winnebago nation purchased half the Omaha territory for their own reservation in 1865 and purchased more Omaha land in 1874. In 1882 the nation became the pre-Dawes Act test case for allotment. In accordance with the treaties of 1854 and 1865, as well as the Omaha Severalty Act of 1882, and under the administration of Alice Cunningham Fletcher, reservation lands were divided into individual plots where Indian families could farm and live in Euro-American style single family dwellings.⁹ In the span of a lifetime, the tribe witnessed one world end and another begin.

Joseph LaFlesche's dedication to a new Omaha world order profoundly influenced his seven surviving children, several of whom played significant roles in their community's new life. Three developed national reputations. Sulette, the oldest daughter, became a charismatic activist and speaker known to the non-Indian world as "Bright Eyes." Her half-brother Francis, the ethnologist, worked with Alice Cunningham Fletcher recording Omaha culture.¹⁰ Susan, the youngest daughter, was the first American Indian woman to receive the M.D. degree. Individually and collectively, these three most prominent siblings epitomized the "civilized"

Indian of the late nineteenth century. But, like their father, all proudly held to their Omaha identities.

THE FIELD MATRON PROGRAM

Marguerite LaFlesche also combined Omaha and Euro-American values in her work on behalf of her tribal community. Her vehicle was the field matron program, created in 1890 to promote the assimilation of American Indian women. OIA policy makers founded the program because they had concluded that the persistent traditionalism of most native women impeded general Indian advancement. Reformers encouraged a full-scale educational assault on those who seemed determined to resist change and perpetuate tribalism. They joined forces with federal officials to develop a domestic education course that featured a heavy overlay of Victorian gender ideology and Americanization, guaranteed to stimulate "a contagion of home-making on the reservations."¹¹

The program's central strategy was simple: field matrons would assist American Indian women in moving away from a past that had relegated them to a state perceived by non-Indians as subservient and degraded.¹² Program supporters anticipated that as tribal women adopted new gender roles, they would influence their husbands, children, and communities to relinquish ties to the past. According to one advocate, "the children start from the plane of the mother rather than from that of the father. Therefore the great work of the present is to reach and lift the women and the home."¹³ Field matrons would perform, symbolically and literally, this reaching and lifting.

During the first decade of the program (1890-1900), the period of Marguerite LaFlesche's service, most field matrons were single, middle-class Euro-American women associated with missionary or Indian reform groups. Because conventional wisdom held that "any good woman could teach every good woman what all good women should know," prospective field matrons were not expected to demonstrate any familiarity with the complexities of tribal

cultures or languages.¹⁴ Instead, evidence of impeccable personal conduct, a Protestant religious affiliation, and the domestic expertise commonly acquired through late nineteenth-century life experience were their primary, and sometimes only, qualifications. Armed with these attributes and their good intentions, these women went forth to reservations throughout the American West.

In retrospect, it hardly seems surprising that many field matrons faced both passive and active resistance. Because many lacked even the most rudimentary knowledge of the Indian cultures they were sent to subvert, these emissaries of Euro-American domesticity often found it difficult to establish working relationships with native women. Other factors complicated the field matrons' civilization efforts. Poverty, isolation, the pervasive sense of cultural displacement, the threat of land allotment, and the OIA's use of military force as a coercive tool shaped life in many reservation communities. Tribal women contended with these forces as they worked to protect and provide for their families as had countless generations before them. If the policy makers and reformers behind the program expected the Indians to desert familiar practices and flock to the sides of the field matrons, hailing the Euro-American women as liberators, they were sadly mistaken.

With an eye toward responding to this apathy and employing some of those individuals who *had* abandoned tribalism, the OIA began hiring Indian women for the field matron program after 1895. Their participation seemed to suggest an awareness that the process of cultural exchange central to the success of this work might occur more easily if those encouraging the tribal women had been through the experience themselves. Though this experiment with Indian role models was destined to be short-lived, women like Marguerite LaFlesche did find within it rare, albeit brief, opportunities for employment "right in the midst of my own people."¹⁵

Determining with any degree of certainty, a century later, the perceptions and motivations of the Indian women who became OIA field

matrons is difficult at best. There is evidence to suggest that many of these women regarded themselves as "civilized," that they believed in both the message and the medium of the field matron program, and that they were willing to risk community censure for their involvement in it.¹⁶ Yet, tantalizing questions about the "civilized-turned-civilizers" still (and may always) remain. Did "civilized" mean assimilated? Or, had these women, instead, adapted to the new realities facing native peoples by adopting some aspects of Euro-American culture? Did their service as field matrons represent a sharp break with tradition? Or, did it serve as a bridge between vulnerable tribal communities and an uncertain future dominated by Euro-Americans? What led these women to claim as their own province the treacherous middle ground between two diametrical cultures?

EDUCATION

Marguerite LaFlesche came to her work as a field matron after a journey shaped by her father's ambitions, her tribe's recent history, and her own sense of identity as a woman with deep and enduring connections to two very different worlds. Born in 1862, Marguerite was the third daughter of Joseph and Mary Gale LaFlesche.¹⁷ She spent her first years not in a traditional Omaha earthen lodge but in the frame house her father, a member of the progressive "Young Men's Party," built in the "Make Believe White Man's Village," close by the Omaha Presbyterian Mission.¹⁸ Growing up in a "citizen's" house, all sharp angles and confined spaces, the frail young girl became quite familiar with one path open to her, that of Americanization. Visiting her beloved grandmother Nicomi, whose earthen lodge stood as an eloquent and comforting testimonial to the vitality of tribal customs, she could also ponder an alternative route for her life as a more traditional Omaha woman.

Because of her father's abiding belief in the importance of education for both worlds, Marguerite LaFlesche learned the traditions of her people but ultimately participated fully in

the Euro-American educational system. After attending school at the Omaha Mission, she and her younger sister Susan entered the Elizabeth Institute for Young Ladies in Elizabeth, New Jersey, in 1879. In 1882, both young women returned home to Nebraska, where Marguerite taught at the Omaha Mission School. In 1884, the two sisters again traveled east, this time to join other American Indian and African-American students at the Hampton Normal and Agricultural School in Hampton, Virginia.

At Hampton, both young women absorbed the self-help doctrine and manual training promoted by founder General Samuel Chapman Armstrong. Armstrong's message of self-sufficiency through assimilation complimented many of Joseph LaFlesche's ideas about the importance of cultural transformation for Indian survival. It was designed to influence students like the LaFlesche sisters to take up the burden of promoting Americanization among their own people. Hampton's doctrine had a significant impact on both young women. Susan LaFlesche decided, during her years there, to become a physician to serve her people. Marguerite pondered a career of her own as a missionary after graduation.¹⁹ In this way she, too, could participate in the process her Indian school friends called the "lighting up of our people. . . in the new good way."²⁰

MARRIAGE

Between 1887 and 1896, when she entered the field matron corps to lead Omaha women in the "new good way," Marguerite LaFlesche passed a number of dramatic personal milestones. While at Hampton she met and was courted by fellow student Charles Picotte. A handsome mixed-blood Yankton man, Picotte seemed to be the perfect match for Marguerite, who by then had become quite a lovely young woman. Sister Susan reported to her family that "Mag [a family nickname for Marguerite] and her Felix [Picotte] have their own mutual admiration society. He says 'Daisy [Marguerite] is so good to me; life could not be without her.' . . ."²¹ Before they left Virginia, Picotte and LaFlesche be-

came engaged. In 1888, a year after their respective graduations, the two married, but less than four years later Picotte succumbed to tuberculosis.

Three years after this tragedy, Marguerite LaFlesche Picotte remarried Walter Diddock, a long-time Euro-American resident of Nebraska who had a special understanding of the continuing Omaha struggle to preserve their tribal autonomy and territorial integrity. He worked at the Omaha Reservation as an industrial teacher and farmer, helping Indian men to become full-time farmers. By all accounts, the Diddocks' was a remarkably successful marriage. Together Walter and Marguerite LaFlesche Diddock raised four children—a fifth died in infancy—and became pillars of the reservation and Euro-American communities.²²

During her first marriage, Marguerite had resumed work at the Omaha Mission school.²³ Her family's history, her continuing involvement in the Indian school system, and her intimate understanding of the twists and turns of the assimilation process all helped inspire her participation in the field matron program. Certainly, her marriage would have encouraged this involvement as well. Diddock's experiences with Omaha men probably reinforced his wife's determination to see her people adopt the bicultural stance promoted by her father. LaFlesche Diddock was, in sum, enough of a Euro-American to promote that culture in her community while still enough of an Omaha to recognize the problems Euro-American culture raised for her people.

CAREER AS FIELD MATRON

In 1896 Marguerite LaFlesche Diddock received her appointment as field matron to the Omaha community at an annual salary of \$720.²⁴ She was the first field matron assigned to work with Omaha women and one of two American Indian women to participate on an equal footing with ten Euro-American women in the service in 1896. Her term of service among her people proved to be interesting, arduous, and sometimes controversial.

The primary duty of every field matron, American Indian or Euro-American, was to teach Indian women to “respect and love and seek the ways of White women,”²⁵ which LaFlesché Diddock accomplished by teaching other Omaha women cooking, sewing, cleaning, basic carpentry, animal husbandry, and health care. She also led religious activities and sponsored social events to further tribal progress toward assimilation. Though the OIA specified a work-week of six and one half days, field matrons usually found that their duties expanded to fill whatever time they chose to devote to them.²⁶ Any activity that might help Americanize a tribal community was within their purview, especially for those Indian women working with tribal peers. The intersection of their personal and professional identities created especially heavy demands.

Most field matrons produced tidal waves of paper work—daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annual reports plus official and personal correspondence. Marguerite LaFlesché Diddock’s documentary record, unfortunately, is fragmentary. Only fourteen reports survive from four years of service among the Omahas. Apparently the bulk of her records were either destroyed by the OIA as “unnecessary” or lost in the field.²⁷ The records remaining offer a clear picture of an American Indian field matron at work and suggest how the experiences of women like her paralleled and sometimes diverged from those of their Euro-American counterparts.

LaFlesché Diddock, like all field matrons, found that the community largely determined the scope and nature of her work. Because many Omahas had made some progress along the path toward Americanization by 1896, she dealt less with introducing women to Euro-American domesticity than with supporting their efforts to sharpen existing skills. Omaha reservation economic conditions hampered her from the outset. Her first quarterly report, filed in September 1896, revealed that about half of the fifty-eight families she visited lived in houses. The remainder lived in “other Indian habitations” or log cabins with dirt floors. She subsequently noted that, while there was considerable interest in



FIG. 1. Marguerite LaFlesché Diddock. Courtesy of Nebraska State Historical Society.

the organization of a sewing circle, “the women are too poor just now, that they have no material to sew.” A year later, she complimented some tribal women on their neatly kept homes but added that “it is hard to keep such places clean where so many are crowded together.”²⁸ No lessons in home-making could eliminate structural poverty in reservation communities where traditional economies had been destroyed.

Another source of anxiety for LaFlesché Diddock was what she perceived as the persistence of traditional patterns of marriage. Her second report from the field, filed in late 1896, described her counseling young girls “in their trouble. [And] Explaining marriage laws. . . .” The latter enterprise expanded into a constant feature of her work, involving her in the marital plans of many couples. She complained that

weddings entailed "days of work, often keeping the license and keeping track of both parties until they have left the missionary's house."²⁹ Even then, she found, Omaha couples sometimes failed to abide by Euro-American marriage conventions.

LaFlesche Diddock's 1898-99 annual report suggested that tribal social conditions had continued to deteriorate. She lamented that "the young men are becoming lawless and as some of the women say, a girl is hardly safe under her father and mother's care. I have had four girls in my home, giving them instruction as well as protection."³⁰ While other members of the community may have disagreed with her observations, the situation was quite clear to LaFlesche Diddock: something had to be done to stem what she regarded as a rising tide of immorality. The agent at the Omaha Reservation concurred and, in response to LaFlesche Diddock's complaints, suspended entitlement payments to those who resisted this new code.³¹

FRICITION WITH THE COMMUNITY

A readiness to intervene when tribal custom seemed to hinder individual and community progress was common among Indians working in assimilation programs among their own people. LaFlesche Diddock's own move away from most Omaha social conventions left her scant tolerance for those who chose not to conform to Euro-American standards of conduct.³² In her responses she more than fulfilled the OIA's hope that American Indian field matrons would prove themselves strong opponents of tradition.

Her constant preoccupation with moral standards certainly gave Marguerite LaFlesche Diddock a high profile among the Omahas, and the agent's coercive use of financial power on her behalf could not have won her many admirers among those unwilling to accept the imposition of Euro-American standards. While her reports never specify any tribal reactions to these efforts, activities like this routinely placed other Indian field matrons in untenable political positions on the reservations. Overly aggres-

sive challenges to their home community's status quo on behalf of alien cultural precepts and practices could, and often did, backfire on them.

This might explain events that occurred in 1899. After she had filed the searing annual report in which she threatened legal action to protect young tribal women, some Omahas apparently began to complain about LaFlesche Diddock. Charles P. Mathewson, agent for the Omaha Reservation, informed the OIA that some in the tribal community were dissatisfied with her. She was generally ineffective, they claimed, and the needs of her two young children interfered with her duties. Mathewson easily dismissed the incident in his report to Washington; LaFlesche Diddock may have found it a bit more difficult to counter her critics in the field.³³

Marguerite LaFlesche Diddock's official reports also suggest two other areas where her personal visibility as a bicultural Indian woman may have proven a professional liability. Her first report in 1896 discussed her increasingly important, and problematic, role as scribe and interpreter. Fluent in both English and Omaha, LaFlesche Diddock noted spending "a great deal of time in writing letters for the people. They come to me for advice and to interpret for them."³⁴ Her efforts in this area expanded rapidly as more members of the community came to her for help. She reported that letter writing and advisory efforts accounted for a considerable portion of her community work in 1897, 1898, and 1899.³⁵

These activities hardly seem sinister, but one of the greatest problems Indian field matrons and other OIA tribal employees encountered was a deep and abiding suspicion of their language skills and their resultant ability to interact easily with other Indians. OIA policy makers and reform activists never considered fluency in a native language a valuable tool for assimilation. Instead, they regarded any use of tribal languages in the conduct of official business as a potential challenge to federal authority and evidence of an embarrassing "return to the blanket."³⁶ When she spoke the Omaha

language while acting in an official capacity, LaFlesché Diddock implicitly called into question her devotion to the field matron program and the Euro-American culture at its core.

That LaFlesché Diddock's translation and transcription work centered on tribal landholdings and property law did not help matters. Although her reports never directly specified the contents of the letters she translated or her recommendations to those seeking advice, the subject matter of much of this correspondence clearly was land allotments and rentals. She reported that her first six months' advising work and letter writing dealt mainly with settling quarrels and providing legal counsel.³⁷ LaFlesché Diddock noted a year later that her "miscellaneous" field matron duties included "business letters written and trouble between themselves [the Omaha] and renters explained. This work takes up a great deal of my time."³⁸ This work, of course, had nothing to do with women, domesticity, or Americanization and may have even placed her in opposition to OIA land policies pertaining to the Omaha.

Official concerns over her dependability as an advocate for assimilation may have paralleled community uneasiness with LaFlesché Diddock as an impartial advisor. Marguerite LaFlesché Diddock was, after all, the daughter of the man who had persuaded the nation to surrender land in an attempt to preserve tribal autonomy. Some in the community could never forgive Joseph LaFlesché for this perceived betrayal of sovereignty or his persistent biculturalism. Their resentment strained the relationship between members of the tribe and some of the family.

Some of the LaFlesché children inadvertently added to these tensions. After the Omaha allotment in 1882, second daughter Rosalie LaFlesché Farley and her husband Edward Farley became the title holders for a large tract of tribal land. Held as a common grazing area for cattle, "the pasture" quickly became a source of contention among the Omahas. Questions about the Farleys' management ultimately resulted in a lawsuit brought over accusations of financial improprieties. These incidents may have cast

long and troubling shadows over Marguerite LaFlesché Diddock's subsequent work on land issues.³⁹

Marguerite LaFlesché Diddock clearly expanded her position as field matron well beyond the boundaries of domesticity. OIA policy makers had told prospective field matrons that their duties would be limited only by their own tact, skills, and interests, but their activism was supposed to enhance, not impede, their work.⁴⁰ American Indian field matrons, in particular, discovered that a high degree of visibility and autonomy made their tribal communities as well as the OIA bureaucracy suspicious of their integrity, motives, and dedication. Such distrust was devastating for women who especially needed the confidence and respect of both groups as they worked in the middle ground between them.

By 1900 LaFlesché Diddock may have proven herself to be too much a Euro-American for the Omahas and too much an Omaha for the OIA. The surviving records for the reservation offer no real clues for her resignation. The demands of an expanding family undoubtedly complicated her duties, and rising community tensions made her work more problematic. Far beyond the Omaha Reservation boundaries, the federal government itself was growing increasingly reluctant to assign Indian employees of the OIA to their own tribes. Any of these factors alone was sufficient to derail a field matron's career; working in concert, they would have been almost impossible to overcome.

As a field matron, Marguerite LaFlesché Diddock provided the women of her community with an accessible Euro-American domestic role model who still maintained ties to the tribal past. Her personal commitment to helping the Omahas surmount the challenges facing them as a community led her to participation in an innovative federal assimilation program. Like her Euro-American peers, LaFlesché Diddock worked tirelessly to promote Americanization among her people. Like other Indian field matrons, she experienced problems and frustrations growing out of their dual—Indian and Euro-American—perspectives on this process.

Balancing the demands and expectations of two totally different cultures from 1896 to 1900, Marguerite LaFlesche Diddock exemplified the "new" American Indian shaped by the crucible of assimilation.

NOTES

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1. "Letter-Box," *St. Nicholas Magazine* (September 1880): 916. See also Douglas Street, "LaFlesche Sisters Write to *St. Nicholas Magazine*," *Nebraska History* 62 (1981): 515-23.

2. Throughout this paper, I use certain words and phrases like "citizens" and "walk the white man's road" to reflect the late nineteenth-century Euro-American assimilationist mindset. Though unattributed, these words and phrases appear in quotation marks to differentiate them from the rest of the text.

3. The following sources represent only a fraction of the voluminous scholarship on assimilation. See Frederick Hoxie, *A Final Promise* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984); Janet A. McDonnell, *The Dispossession of the American Indian, 1887-1934* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991); Francis Paul Prucha, *American Indian Policy in Crisis* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1975); Prucha, "Americanizing the American Indian": *Writings by the Friends of the Indians* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973); Prucha, *The Great Father*, 2 vols. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984); and Robert A. Trennert, *Alternative to Extinction* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1975).

4. See John M. O'Shea and John Ludwickson, "Omaha Chieftainship in the Nineteenth Century," *Ethnohistory* 39 (1992): 316-52 for a detailed discussion of Omaha leadership during this period.

5. A variety of sources detail the migration of the Omaha. See Alice Fletcher and Francis LaFlesche, *The Omaha Tribe* (rpt. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1972) and James Dorsey, *Omaha Sociology*, Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, 3rd Annual Report (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1884). A nineteenth century Omaha account of this oral tradition

can be found in Henry Fontenelle, "History of the Omaha Indians," in *Transactions and Reports of the Nebraska State Historical Society* 1 (Lincoln: State Journal Company, 1885): 76-83.

6. John M. O'Shea and John Ludwickson, *Archaeology and Ethnohistory of the Omaha* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), pp.30-31, 292-93.

7. G. Hubert Smith, *Ethnohistorical Report on the Omaha People* (New York: Garland Press, 1974), p. 21.

8. For Omaha land cessions, see David J. Wishart, "Compensation for Dispossession: Payments to the Indians for Their Lands on the Central and Northern Plains in the 19th Century," *National Geographic Research* 6 (1990): 94-109.

9. For the Omaha allotment, see Addison E. Sheldon, *Land Systems and Land Policies in Nebraska in Publications of the Nebraska State Historical Society* 22 (Lincoln: Nebraska State Historical Society, 1936), Chapters 1 and 10, and Smith, *Ethnohistorical Report* (note 7 above).

10. See Joan Mark, *A Stranger in Her Native Land: Alice Fletcher and the American Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988).

11. Emily S. Cook, "The Field Matron," in *Proceedings of the Thirteenth Annual Meeting of the Lake Mohonk Conference of the Friends of the Indian* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1894), pp. 58-59.

12. See David Smits, "The 'Squaw Drudge': A Prime Index of Savagism," *Ethnohistory* 29 (1982): 281-306.

13. Merial A. Dorchester, "Suggestions from the Field," in U.S. Department of the Interior, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1892), p. 542.

14. Eleanor Gregg, *The Indians and the Nurse* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965), p. 19.

15. Anna R. Dawson to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, January 1895, Letters Received 1895/8170, Record Group 75, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Archives, Washington D. C. (Hereafter cited as LR, RG 75, BIA, NA.)

16. See Lisa E. Emmerich, "'Right in the Midst of My Own People': Native American Women and the Field Matron Program," *American Indian Quarterly* 15 (1991): 201-16.

17. Mary Gale was the mixed-blood daughter of Nicomi, an Omaha woman, and Dr. John Gale, a Euro-American surgeon in the United States Army stationed at Fort Atkinson, Nebraska. Nicomi and her daughter remained in Nebraska when Gale was posted to another military installation. Though the physician apparently hoped that his family would be reunited, this never took place. Mary Gale probably

met Joseph LaFlesche at the trading post of Peter Sarpy, Nicomi's second husband. See Norma Kidd Green, "Statement on the Families of Joseph and Mary LaFlesche," 2 September 1970, Folder 1, Series 6, Box 2, LaFlesche Family Papers, Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, Nebraska (LFP, NSHS).

18. See Norma Kidd Green, "The Make Believe White Man's Village," *Nebraska History* 56 (1975): 242-47.

19. Norma Kidd Green, *Iron Eye's Family* (Lincoln: Johnsen Publishing Company, 1969), pp. 122-62. See also Jerry E. Clark and Martha Ellen Webb, "Susette and Susan LaFlesche: Reformer and Missionary," in James Clifton, ed., *Being and Becoming Indian* (Chicago: Dorsey Press, 1986), pp. 137-59; Anne P. Diffendal, "The LaFlesche Sisters: Susette, Rosalie, Marguerite, Lucy, Susan," in Susan Pierce, ed., *Perspectives: Women in Nebraska History* (Lincoln: Department of Education and Nebraska State Council for the Social Studies, 1984), pp. 215-25; Norma Kidd Green, "Four Sisters: Daughters of Joseph LaFlesche," *Nebraska History* 45 (1964): 165-76; and Valerie Sherer Mathes, "Susan LaFlesche Picotte: Nebraska's Indian Physician, 1865-1915," *Nebraska History* 63 (1982): 502-30.

20. Autograph book of Marguerite LaFlesche, Folder 2, Series 13, Box 3, LFP, NSHS.

21. Green, *Iron Eye's Family* (note 19 above), p. 131.

22. See Green, "Four Sisters: Daughters of Joseph LaFlesche" (note 19 above), pp. 171-73; Green, *Iron Eye's Family* (note 19 above), p. 144; and *Walthill Golden Jubilee, 1906-1956* (Walthill, Nebraska: *Walthill Citizen*, 1956), p. 26.

23. See "An Indian Teacher," *Southern Workman* 17 (1888): 12; "Letter from Marguerite LaFlesche," *Southern Workman* 17 (1888): 48; "Letter," in *Ten Year's Work for Indians at Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute* (Hampton, Virginia: Hampton Institute, 1888), pp. 51-55; and "Letter," *Southern Workman* 24 (1895): 10.

24. D. M. Browning to Joseph J. Janney, 29 July 1896, Letters Sent 1896/M, RG 75, BIA, NA. Field matrons began work at the adjacent Winnebago Reservation in 1895.

25. W. N. Hailmann to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 28 April 1894, LR 1894/16126, RG 75, BIA, NA.

26. Cook, "The Field Matron" (note 11 above), pp. 58-59.

27. The Department of Interior routinely authorized the destruction of "unnecessary" OIA materials, including many documents from the field matron program. The OIA field service was also far from a model of clerical efficiency.

28. Quarterly reports of Marguerite LaFlesche Diddock, July-September 1896, LR 1896/38407,

and October-December 1897, LR 1898/1009, RG 75, BIA, NA.

29. Quarterly report of Marguerite LaFlesche Diddock, October-December 1896, LR 1897/1717, RG 75, BIA, NA.

30. Annual report of Marguerite LaFlesche Diddock, 15 August 1898-15 August 1899, LR 1899/47804 (52966), RG 75, BIA, NA.

31. W. A. Galt, "From Omaha Agency," *Word Carrier* 26 (1897): 31.

32. Joseph LaFlesche had not been ready to abandon tribal customs and had married a second wife. Ta-in-ne, also known as Elizabeth Esau or Lizzie LaFlesche, was the mother of Francis, Lucy, and Carey LaFlesche. After his conversion to Christianity, Joseph LaFlesche set aside his second wife but continued to provide for her and the children. See Green, *Iron Eye's Family* (note 19 above), p. xi.

33. Charles P. Mathewson to Honorable Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 8 November 1899, LR 1899/54251, RG 75, BIA, NA.

34. Quarterly report of Marguerite LaFlesche Diddock, July-September 1896, LR 1896/38407, RG 75, BIA, NA.

35. Quarterly reports of Marguerite LaFlesche Diddock, October-December 1896, LR 1897/1717; July-September 1897, LR 1897/42084; October-December 1897, LR 1898/1009; October-December 1898, LR 1898/2251; April-June 1899, LR 1899/32746; July-September 1899, LR 1899/50297; October-December 1899, LR 1899/3852; Annual report of Marguerite LaFlesche Diddock, 15 August 1898-15 August 1899, LR 1899/47804 (52966), all RG 75, BIA, NA.

36. See Wilbert Ahern, "An Experiment Aborted: Returned Students in the Indian Service," (Paper delivered at the "New Directions in Native American History," National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Seminar, University of Arizona, 1988. Copy in author's possession.) See also Emmerich, "Right in the Midst," (note 16 above).

37. Quarterly report of Marguerite LaFlesche Diddock, October-December 1896, LR 1897/1717, RG 75, BIA, NA.

38. Quarterly report of Marguerite LaFlesche Diddock, July-September, 1897, LR 1897/42084, RG 75, BIA, NA.

39. For information on "the pasture," see Dorothy Clarke Wilson, *Bright Eyes: The Story of Susette LaFlesche, an Omaha Indian*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974), pp. 312-13, and Green, *Iron Eye's Family* (note 19 above), pp. 56-97. The LaFlesche Family Papers at the Nebraska State Historical Society contain numerous references to this controversy.

40. Circular 1269, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 17, Records of the White Earth Agency, National Archives area branch—Chicago.