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Review of *Colonel Richard Irving Dodge: The Life and Times of a Career Army Officer* By Wayne R. Kime

Charles Robinson
South Texas College

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Colonel Richard Irving Dodge: The Life and Times of a Career Army Officer. By Wayne R. Kime. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006. xvii + 646 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. \$45.00.

Richard Irving Dodge was a soldier and author whose diaries and published works on the Great Plains have served as primary sources for many years. Four of Dodge's Great Plains journals were edited for publication by Wayne R. Kime, who now caps that achievement with a long-awaited biography.

As Kime notes in his introduction, reprints of Dodge's works during the twentieth century maintained his reputation as an author, "but the facts of his military career were all but forgotten." In *Colonel Richard Irving Dodge: The Life and Times of a Career Army Officer*, he has successfully resurrected Dodge's military career.

Kime details Dodge's experiences as a young lieutenant in antebellum Texas, where he first developed the interest in Indian life and culture that ultimately led to the publication of his two most famous works, *The Plains of the Great West and Their Inhabitants* in 1877 and *Our Wild Indians* in 1882. This lays the groundwork for contrasting Dodge in the antebellum and post-Civil War eras as well as conditions on the Plains during those two periods.

As a young lieutenant fresh from the East who'd read the novels of James Fennimore Cooper, his head was filled with romantic notions that were soon dispelled by reality. The frontier itself was in a state of rapid develop-

ment, and no sooner was a line of military posts completed than it was rendered obsolete by settlement that had moved beyond it.

A more mature Dodge returned to the Plains after the war. The railroads were pushing westward. Telegraphic communication was expanding. The Indians, realizing now that their way of life was threatened with extinction, were putting up heavy resistance. Military posts were more substantial and permanent. Nevertheless, the amenities of the East were lacking, and Kime devotes the better part of a chapter to an often overlooked aspect of frontier service—the strain this put on Dodge's marriage. He also discusses in depth Dodge's relations with the famous military leaders of the era, such as Philip H. Sheridan, William T. Sherman, and George Crook.

As with all of Kime's work, the book is well researched and annotated. With his usual thoroughness, Kime has examined the key manuscript sources, and when these have been published, he compares the published versions with the originals. *Colonel Richard Irving Dodge* stands as one of the more significant recent contributions to Western history.

CHARLES M. ROBINSON III
South Texas College
McAllen, Texas