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Review of *After Wounded Knee: Correspondence of Major and Surgeon John Vance Lauderdale while Serving with the Army Occupying the Pine Ridge Reservation, 1890-1891* Edited by Jerry Green

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After Wounded Knee: Correspondence of Major and Surgeon John Vance Lauderdale while Serving with the Army Occupying the Pine Ridge Reservation, 1890-1891. Edited by Jerry Green. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1996. Photographs, maps, notes, bibliography, index. xvi + 184 pp. \$34.95.

When scholars have covered events like the Wounded Knee Massacre comprehensively, the record of an unlikely observer or indirect participant can provide a fresh and valuable perspective. The correspondence of John Vance Lauderdale offers the views of one surgeon at the Pine Ridge Reservation whose participation in the Native American stereotypes of the time is complicated by his involvement in the aftermath of the Massacre and his personal interaction with individual Lakota.

To reconstruct Lauderdale's situation, Jerry Green offers an extensive introduction divided into three sections dealing with the surgeon's personal background, the medical department's practices, and the conditions on the

Sioux reservations in the Dakotas. Each section is informative and well-constructed; the transition from the introduction to the letters, however, is abrupt and awkward, drawing attention away from the intimate association of general and personal history that distinguishes the letters themselves.

Green wisely includes Lauderdale's complete correspondence from 1 January to 3 March 1891. The letters condemn the mismanagement of the Department of the Interior and the corruption of Indian Agents. They also address Lauderdale's difficulties understanding his Lakota patients and comment on his relations with fellow officers, missionaries, and colleagues. Yet mixed with these observations are complaints about army service, advice to his family, and gossip about his acquaintances. Although Lauderdale participates in the events of Wounded Knee, he is not absorbed by them. Consequently, his letters offer a unique perspective on how larger events are integrated into one individual's life.

The value of this perspective can be seen by comparing his general comments on Native Americans with his personal comments on the Sioux physician Charles Eastman and his fiancée, the New England missionary and school teacher Elaine Goodale. His respect for each and his easy acceptance of their relationship complicate the earlier ethnocentric observations Green provides in the introduction. Lauderdale's responses to such personal relations, preserved in the unpolished, immediate notice of his letters, testify to their value in understanding the complexities of Indian-white relations. For that reason alone, his letters contribute to our understanding of the events surrounding the Wounded Knee Massacre.

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