

**1868** Chief Red Cloud and General William Tecumseh Sherman sign the Fort Laramie Treaty, which brings an end to war along the Bozeman Trail. Under terms of the treaty, the United States agrees to abandon its forts along the Bozeman Trail and grant enormous parts of the Wyoming, Montana and Dakota Territories, including the Black Hills area, to the Lakota people as their exclusive territory.

**1868** General Philip Sheridan sends Colonel George Armstrong Custer against the Cheyenne, with a plan to attack them during the winter when they are most vulnerable. Custer's troops locate a Cheyenne village on the Washita River in present-day Oklahoma. By a cruel coincidence, the village is home to Black Kettle and his people, the victims of the Sand Creek Massacre in 1864. Custer's cavalry attacks at dawn, killing more than 100 men, women and children, including Black Kettle.


**1875 THE LAKOTA WAR**

A Senate commission meeting with Red Cloud and other Lakota chiefs to negotiate legal access for the miners rushing to the Black Hills offers to buy the region for \$6 million. But the Lakota refuse to alter the terms of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty, and declare they will protect their lands from intruders if the government won't.

**1876** Federal authorities order the Lakota chiefs to report to their reservations by January 31. Sitting Bull, Crazy Horse and others defiant of the American government refuse. General Philip Sheridan orders General George Crook, General Alfred Terry and Colonel John Gibbon to drive Sitting Bull and the other chiefs onto the reservation through a combined assault. On June 17, Crazy Horse and 500 warriors surprise General Crook's troops on the Rosebud River, forcing them to retreat. On June 25, George Armstrong Custer, part of General Terry's force, discovers Sitting Bull's encampment on the Little Bighorn River. Terry had ordered Custer to drive the enemy down the Little Bighorn toward Gibbon's forces, who were waiting at its mouth, but when he charges the village Custer discovers that he is outnumbered four-to-one. Hundreds of Lakota warriors overwhelm his troops, killing them to the last man, in a battle later called Custer's Last Stand. News of the massacre shocks the nation, and Sheridan floods the region with troops who methodically hunt down the Lakota and force them to surrender. Sitting Bull, however, eludes capture by leading his band to safety in Canada.

**1877** Crazy Horse finally surrenders to General George Crook at Fort Robinson, Nebraska, having received assurances that he and his followers will be permitted to settle in the Powder River country of Montana. Defiant even in defeat, Crazy Horse arrives with a band of 800 warriors, all brandishing weapons and chanting songs of war. By late summer, there are rumors that Crazy Horse is planning a return to battle, and on September 5 he is arrested and brought back to Fort Robinson, where, when he resists being jailed, he is held by an Indian guard and killed by a bayonet thrust from a soldier.

**1877** Congress votes to repeal the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty and take back the Black Hills, along with 40 million more acres of Lakota land.

**1881**  Sitting Bull returns from Canada with a small band of followers to surrender to General Alfred Terry, the man who five years before had directed the campaign that ended in the Lakota Chief's victory at Little Bighorn. After insulting his old adversary and the United States, Sitting Bull has his young son hand over his rifle, saying, "I wish it to be remembered that I was the last man of my tribe to surrender my rifle. This boy has given it to you, and he now wants to know how he is going to make a living."

**1890** Sitting Bull is murdered in a confrontation at the Standing Rock Reservation when Lakota policemen attempt to arrest him as part of a federal crackdown on the Ghost Dance. Federal troops massacre the Lakota Chief Big Foot and his 350 followers at Wounded Knee Creek on the Pine Ridge Reservation in a confrontation fueled by the government's determination to stop the spread of the Ghost Dance among the tribes. The incident stands in U.S. military history as the last armed engagement of the Indian Wars.