

Horse stealing was one of the great difficulties on the reservation. For generations the Indian had believed the stealing of a horse from an unfriendly tribe was a highly creditable action. Even today, in Dakota, horse stealing between Indians goes on to some extent, a hangover from the days of old. This has often hampered me in my research. After travelling miles to see some old chief, I would find that he had been called to the witness on a horse stealing case at the state capitol or the county seat. The horse involved was probably worth ten dollars. After going on the reservations, Indians commonly made no protest against restoring horses taken from white men, but offered loud objection to giving up animals taken from a formerly hostile tribe, pointing out that those Indians had robbed them repeatedly and might be expected to do this again. Horse stealing went on long after Indian wars were over. The Indian policeman had to work against public opinion in restoring these animals to their owners.