

Of course, in addition to the breech loading cartridge arms, Indians used many of the older "Lancaster" muzzle loading trade rifles, fuseses, shotguns etc. Marquis, A Warror Who Fought Custer contains a good deal of information on the arms in use by the Sioux and Cheyenne Hostiles - this is in the OU library - perhaps in Phillips.

I will hesitatingly also recommend one other item to your attention - humbly, as I wrote it (looked better in 1951 than it does now!) - "Firearms in the Indian Wars", Don Rickey, Jr. M.A. thesis, Oklahoma A & M College. You could get this on interlibrary loan via the weekly exchange. Some of the stuff in this is good, but have altered my views on the Wagon Box account and a couple of other items. This is a beginning study, not a definitive treatment, and covers army arms as well as Indian, 1862-91.

On Custer Battlefield, we have found several types of empty cartridge cases - of other than army usage. They are mostly .50 calibre (for the Sharps, like the carbine we have that was used here by Spotted Wolf , a Cheyenne) and for other .50 arms such as the 1866, 1869 and 1870 models of the Springfield carbine and rifle; which were retired from army service by the introduction of the 45/70 Springfield in 1873-74. I have one .50 case that has been purposely altered at the primer pocket end, to enable a hostile to re-prime the cartridge with a common percussion cap (was originally a civilian, Berdan primed cartridge). We also have found many .44 copper, rim fire cases that would have fit either the Henry rifle or the 1866 Winchester rifle or carbine. Because of their cost to the Indian, I doubt that a heavy percentage of hostiles had these arms. Speaking of costs, as near as I can determine, even an average breech loader would have cost about 20 head and tail tanned buffalo robes - which was , as you know, a lot of wealth for an Indian. Cartridges were correspondingly high, and the supply not stable.

Winchester

I have a .44/40, model 1873/carbine dug up at the sight of the Lone Deer fight - this has been purposely rendered inoperative by having bent the barrel and magazine against a rock or tree, and then having been burned in a fire - this was the usual treatment for captured arms - more's the pity. Other dug up items include: a .58 calibre mould for the Minie type bullet used in the Civil War muzzle loaders (dug up at site of Indian village, Little Bighorn valley), two percussion revolvers, an 1873 Winchester .44/40 carbine (ravine, Little Bighorn), and several bullets of undetermined origin.

The muzzle (of the cylinder) loading percussion revolvers, Colt and Remington, were great favorites with Indians. Each provided six shots without loading. The ammunition could be secured anywhere - lead , loose powder and percussion caps, and was the cheapest form of ammunition into the bargain. These arms were just as deadly as cartridge weapons.