

411 E. Washington St.,
Appleton, Wisconsin
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Editors, GUNS Magazine,
8150 N. Central Park Ave.,
Skokie, Illinois

Dear Sirs:

After an absence of thirty days I have been looking over your December issue. The article by Stanley Vestal has been read with a great deal of interest, particularly the chart on page 21 comparing Indian vs White casualties. This is quite at variance with other accounts I have read. For example take the Wagon Box Fight of August 2, 1867. Professor Vestal is a respected and recognized writer of western lore. Otherwise I would say nothing.

Naturally he doesn't state in a short magazine article such as this, his authorities. But I am anxious to know what they are. For myself, those I can quote offhand are as follows:

1. Army Sacrifices by Col. James B. Fry, Van Ostrand, 1879
2. Our Wild Indians by Gen. R.I. Dodge, Worthington, 1882
3. Sabre and Bayonet by Gen. T.F. Rodenbough, Dillingham, 1897
4. Indian Fights and Fighters by C.T. Brady, McClure, Phillips, 1905

In the fourth item above, Brady quotes also from four letters he received during the preparation of his book, some of the articles having been previously published in magazines. These people are: Mrs. Annie Powell wife of Captain Powell who commanded the detachment, Surgeon Horton who served at Fort Phil Kearney during its existence, W.R.E. Collins who with "Adirondack Murray" and J. Amory Knox, had a conversation with Red Cloud about 1884; and R.J. Smyth a participant in the wagon box fight.

In Army Sacrifices Colonel Fry states that Captain Powell officially estimated "the Indian loss at 60 killed and 100 severely wounded; but this estimate was much too low. The facts which have come to light since..... present more accurate figures showing that there were about 300 killed and as many wounded. The troops lost Lieut. Jenness and five enlisted men killed and two enlisted men wounded". Apparently only four were killed at the corral.

A wounded Sioux chief told General Dodge that the number of Indians in the fight was over 3000 and that a Sioux medicine man had said the total Indian loss in killed and wounded was 1137.

R.J. Smyth's letter to Brady says, "We thought we had killed and wounded some more than 400". W.R.E. Collins' letter to Brady states: "(Red Cloud) said he went in with over three thousand braves and lost over half. Murray asked him if he meant over fifteen hundred had been killed then, and he said, 'I lost them. They never fought again'".