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2 Old Army Massacres Recalled

By DOUGLAS ROBINSON

On a chill, sun-drenched December morning 1890, troopers of the United States Army's Seventh Cavalry surrounded a large band of Sioux Indians near the Badlands of South Dakota and prepared to accept their surrender.

Within a few tumultuous hours, nearly 300 Indians—men, women and children—had been shot and killed in a grim melee provoked by a young warrior who fired his rifle at the Americans.

Many of the women and children were cut down as they attempted to escape from the site.

"The butchery was the work of infuriated soldiers whose comrades had just been shot down without cause or warning," reads a contemporary account entitled "A History of the Dakota or Sioux Indians" published in 1904.

New Recruits Blamed

"In justice to a brave regiment," continues the author, Doane Robinson, "it must be said that a number of the men were new recruits fresh from Eastern recruiting stations, who had never before been under fire, were not yet imbued with military discipline, and were unable to distinguish between men and women by their dress."

The massacre on the prairie at Wounded Knee, S. D., was the first of two noteworthy massacres—before the alleged Songmy incident involving the shooting of men, women and children by soldiers of the United States Army. The second massacre occurred on Jolo Island in the Philippines in 1906.

The incident at Wounded Knee occurred during the Indian wars in the Dakotas when a band of Sioux led by Chief Big Foot agreed to an unconditional surrender to units of the Seventh Cavalry. Obeying instructions, the Sioux pitched their tepees a short distance from Wounded Knee Creek and were immediately surrounded by American troops.

"In the center of the camp the Indians had hoisted a white flag as a sign of peace and a guarantee of safety," Mr. Robinson wrote in his historical account.

"Behind them was a dry ravine running into the creek, and on a slight rise in front was posted the battery of four Hotchkiss machine guns, trained directly on the Indian camp.

"In front, behind, and on both flanks of the Indian camp were posted the various troops of cavalry, a portion of two troops, together with the Indi-

300 Indians Killed in Dakota—600 Slain in Philippines

an scouts, being dismounted and drawn up in front of the Indians at a distance of only a few yards from them."

The Indian warriors seated themselves in front of the soldiers while the women and children stayed at the tepees. The warriors, Mr. Robinson wrote, appeared reluctant to give up their arms and the troopers had to search the tepees, overturning bedding and furniture, adding to the tense situation.

A medicine man, Yellow Bird, walked among the warriors huddled in their blankets, blowing on an eagle bone whistle and urging them to resist. He spoke in Sioux and the Americans did not realize the drift of his talk.

"It is said," Mr. Robinson continued, "that one of the searchers now attempted to raise the blanket of a warrior. Suddenly Yellow Bird stooped down and threw a handful of dust into the air. As if this were the signal, a young Indian, said to have been Black Fox from Cheyenne River, drew a rifle from under his blanket and fired at the soldiers, who instantly replied with a volley directly into the crowd of warriors, and so near that their guns were almost touched."

Mr. Robinson relates that the four Hotchkiss guns opened fire and sent a hail of bullets among the woman and children at the tepees. The firing kept up as the surviving handful of Indians tried to flee the ravine pursued by hundreds of maddened soldiers.

Women and Infants

"There can be no question that the pursuit was simply a massacre," Mr. Robinson wrote, "where fleeing women, with infants in their arms, were shot down after resistance had ceased and when almost every warrior was stretched dead or dying on the ground."

In addition to the nearly 300 Sioux killed, the troopers suffered 31 dead and an equal number of wounded, one or two of whom died afterward.

The massacre on Jolo Island followed years of unrest and conflict in the Philippines between native nationalists and American troops that began in the Spanish-American War in 1898.

According to Arthur S. Pier,

author of "American Apostles to the Philippines," published in 1950 by Beacon Press, "a gang of outlaws, well armed, arrived from Borneo and established themselves on the crater of Bud Dajo, an extinct volcano."

"A number of native bandits and their families joined them." Mr. Pier went on. "They fortified the slopes with a series of breastworks and set up a brass cannon to command the main approach. Then from their fortress they made raids on the surrounding country."

The Moros, the Mohammedan Filipinos that inhabited the area appealed to General Leonard Wood for protection. The general, hesitating to attack the outlaws because of the women and children in the crater, undertook negotiations for their evacuation.

Wood Called Away

While the talks were in progress, General Wood was called to Manila, leaving Gen. Tasker H. Bliss to deal with people in Bud Dajo. The cable connection from Jolo to Manila was broken and no word of what was happening on Jolo reached General Wood.

General Wood returned to Jolo just as an assault against the crater began, an attack that utilized Moro constabulary as well as regular American troops.

"The outlaws fought to the death; not one surrendered," wrote Mr. Pier. "Although some of the women and children had been evacuated, most of those who had entered the crater remained to fight and die with the men."

According to reports, about 600 people were in the fortress at the time of the attack.

"The extermination of the Bud Dajo garrison shocked people in the United States," the author continued. "General Wood, although he had not ordered the attack and had not been present when it was begun, assumed full responsibility for it."

Later, in 1913, there was another battle on Jolo Island on the slopes of a mountain called Mount Bagsak, Mr. Pier continued. "As at Bud Dajo, seven years before, the outlaws had brought their women and children with them."

However, Gen. John J. Pershing, after writing that he was "not prepared" to attack the stronghold when so many women and children were there, managed to have noncombatants evacuated after several months of negotiations. After five days of fighting, the native forces were defeated.