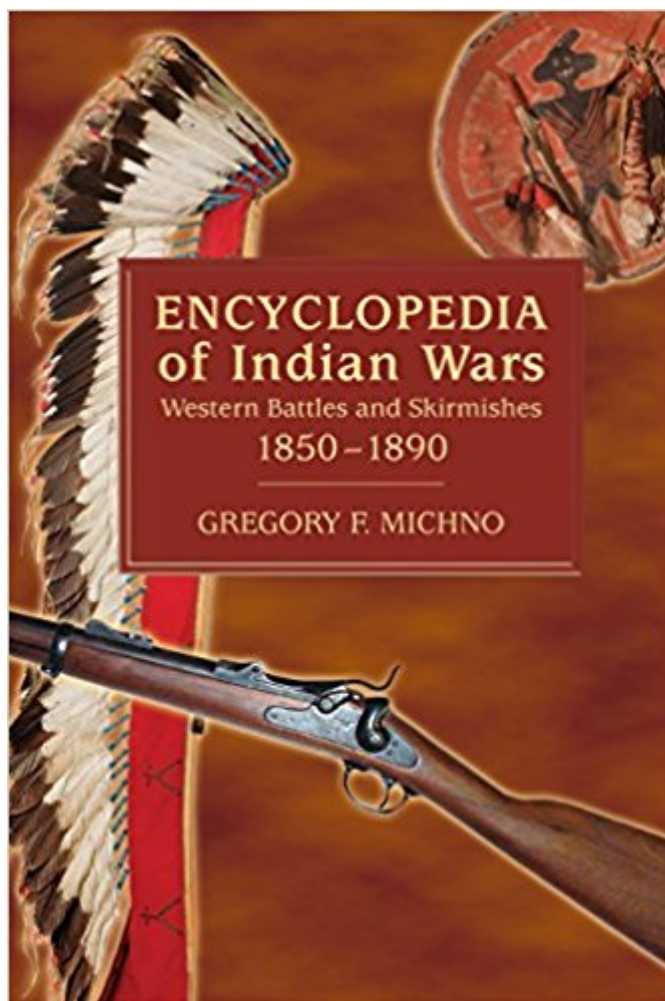


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Encyclopedia Of Indian Wars: Western Battles And Skirmishes 1850-1890



Synopsis

After years of research, independent history scholar Gregory Michno has created a chronological listing of every significant fight between Indians and the United States Army, as well as better-known Indian battles with civilians. In addition, Michno interprets the data to reveal patterns and draw conclusions, some of which challenge the current orthodoxy among historians, such as the revisionist contention that the "wild" West is a myth. Numerous maps, photographs, and tables supplement the text to enhance the reader's understanding. This detailed study is more than a reference book: it's an illuminating portrayal of a violent era and a compelling examination of the machinations of frontier warfare.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Many books call themselves an encyclopedia of this or that but turn out to be simply random collections of information on their topic. However, Gregory Michno's *Encyclopedia of Indian Wars: Western Battles and Skirmishes, 1850-1890* really is a miniature encyclopedia of the Indian Wars fought between the U.S. Army and various Native American tribes or groups during the period when Euro-Americans came to dominate the western United States. The bulk of the book (345 out of 438 numbered 5x9" pages) consists of brief descriptions of 840 major and minor battles and "firefights" that occurred in twenty Midwestern and Western states/territories and adjoining parts of Mexico. The descriptions are arranged chronologically within each year, 1850-1890. Drawing largely on Army after-action reports, Mr. Michno's narratives are heavy on facts for each event: when, where, who, casualty counts and immediate results. By providing the names of many Army officers and

NCOs as well as significant members of their Native American opposition it is possible to get a feel for some of the participants' careers over a number of years. One of the most useful features is a 32-page introductory section of state/territory maps showing the locations, tied to accompanying lists and page references, for every action described in the book. This allows readers to locate all the events in a particular locale regardless of when they took place. A conclusion and appendix section has several interesting statistical tables summarizing the intensity of the actions in terms of numbers of actions each year, the number of combatants involved and casualties incurred.

This work by author Michno clearly demonstrates that scholarship trumps polemics based in political agendas, particularly the politically correct agendas currently fashionable. Mr Michno has created both a wonderful reference work, but he is so thorough for the time covered (1850-1890) that I simply started at the front of his book and read to the last. There is much to learn here, and the author fills in many blanks in the knowledge of those who have only read various works on Custer, MacKenzie, Crook, Crazy Horse, Cohise, etc., etc. The Indian wars of the West were fought much more often by citizen volunteers and very small detachments of troops against Indians under a wide variety of circumstances than by large Army units against swirling clouds of fierce warriors. As the author concludes, the West was a very WILD place. There is something for everyone here. For example I am relatively unknowledgeable concerning Indian conflicts in California, Oregon and Washington except for the Modoc War in 1873. This volume greatly enhanced my knowledge and pointed the way to future reading. My apologies to the West Coast for overlooking the Indian conflicts there. The maps in the beginning of the book was interesting and helpful, but their most impressive feature was to demonstrate that Indian conflicts were extremely widespread throughout the West. And as the author notes, his work is only the tip of the iceberg being based primarily on military reports and newspaper accounts. Probably tens of thousands of incidents where stray Indians or small bands were killed, or prospectors, trappers, settlers, emigrants or cowboys were captured or killed went unrecorded. The total human toll will never be known, but the author's appendices are extremely useful.

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