

UCLA

American Indian Culture and Research Journal

Title

Indians Off Track: Cody's Wild West and the Melrose Park Train Wreck of 1904

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/0tn2g95c>

Journal

American Indian Culture and Research Journal , 18(3)

ISSN

0161-6463

Authors

Fent, Cindy
Wilson, Raymond

Publication Date

1994-06-01

DOI

10.17953

Copyright Information

This work is made available under the terms of a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial License, available at <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>

Peer reviewed

Indians Off Track: Cody's Wild West and the Melrose Park Train Wreck of 1904

CINDY FENT AND RAYMOND WILSON

"We were rounding a curve," recalled Luther Standing Bear, Sioux author, interpreter for the Indian members of Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West, and casualty of the Melrose Park train wreck of 1904, "when suddenly I saw a train behind us, coming at lightning speed. Then came a terrific crash. There was no time even to cry out. When I opened my eyes again, the seats were piled on top of us and the steam and smoke from the engine were pouring in on us in great clouds. My legs were pinned down, and I was perfectly helpless . . . Blood was everywhere."¹

Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West, a depiction of the American frontier experience, traveled and performed throughout the United States and Europe.² By 1904, it was a well-established and well-known entertainment attraction in its twenty-first year of operation.

Train wrecks were among the greatest dangers faced by the members of traveling shows around the turn of the nineteenth century. One of the most dramatic but unpublicized accidents of Cody's Wild West happened near Melrose Park, Illinois, on 7 April 1904. According to Luther Standing Bear, the Indians were

Cindy Fent earned a B.S.N. in nursing from the University of Kansas. She also received an M.A. in history and is currently working toward an M.A. in English from Fort Hays State University, Hays, Kansas. Raymond Wilson is a professor of history at Fort Hays State University.

riding in the last car of the train, which, in effect, segregated them from the other passengers, when another train traveling behind them at "lightening speed" plowed into the back of the Indians' car.³ Standing Bear was one of the more seriously injured, sustaining three bruised and two broken ribs, cuts above both eyes, a severe gash on the back of his head, dislocation of both hips, and a broken left arm, left leg, collar bone, and nose.

The Indians, approximately sixty Sioux from the Pine Ridge Reservation, had boarded the train at Rushville, Nebraska, heading east to the Jersey City docks for a Wild West tour of England. The morning fog on 7 April impeded the vision of the engineer of the express mail train on the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad from San Francisco. At 7:30 a.m., about one mile west of Melrose Park, Illinois, the mail train crashed into the rear of the stopped passenger train, killing three Indians and injuring twenty-seven.⁴

The physical injuries of the Indians became the catalyst for a long, drawn-out confrontation among the railroad, federal officials, and a group of Indian activists. This battle for justice demonstrated that it was futile for Indians to seek fair play in a society that too often turned a deaf ear to their plight.

Immediately after the train wreck, the injured Indians were taken to Phoenix Hospital and Sanitarium at nearby Maywood, where the local police force had to be called in to control the congestion caused by crowds of curious onlookers.⁵ Concerned for the well-being of the Indians, Yavapai physician and Indian reformer Dr. Carlos Montezuma requested and received permission from Commissioner of Indian Affairs W.A. Jones to be named the physician in charge of the injured Indians. Montezuma did not trust the railroad's people to treat the Indians properly.⁶ Indeed, his suspicions proved justified, for his medical notes and explanations of the Indians' tragic circumstances differed markedly from those of the railroad. This difference certainly played an important role in the intense legal battle that followed.

By 2 May, the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad had not only examined the Indians and submitted a report to the Indian commissioner, but it had also reached a monetary settlement with them. The railroad's report reflected a lack of medical expertise, or it was a deliberately played-down version of the Indians' medical status, which suggests that the railroad attempted to avoid full responsibility for the accident. In its report of Luther Standing Bear's injuries, the railroad indicated that he had a scalp wound, right dislocated hip, sprained left collar bone, bruised left side, and a dislocated

nose. According to the railroad, Luther Standing Bear would recover fully. Montezuma, on the other hand, submitted a far more detailed report of Standing Bear's condition. He outlined the injuries sustained and provided notes on the patient's prospects of recovery and the permanency of each injury suffered. Montezuma applied this procedure to the injuries sustained by each Indian.

The railroad's report of a "sprained" left collar bone was erroneous and rather odd. With x-ray available at this time, the injury should have been reported as a dislocation of the collar bone or, as Montezuma stated, a dislocation of the sternoclavicular articulation. Bones are not "sprained" when injured; usually they are cracked, broken, or dislocated. Also, the railroad reported that the injuries to Standing Bear's left side were healing and indicated that a full recovery could be expected. Montezuma challenged these conclusions.⁷

One Indian who certainly faced permanent injury was William Blue Cloud. He suffered the amputation of his right leg (just above the knee), burns on his chin and the backs of his hands, and a cut and scalded left elbow. Again, Montezuma's report of this man's condition is very detailed. Besides concurring with the railroad's report regarding the amputation and the burned hands, Montezuma also pointed out that, because of the burns, Blue Cloud's right hand would be ankylosed, which meant that it would be abnormally immobile and/or the joints would consolidate, leaving a permanent injury.⁸

The injuries of Has No Horse—age thirty-five, married, and the father of one child—presented another picture of acute trauma: broken collar bone, contusion of the right chest, dislocated left hip, and a sinus (hollow cavity) wound on the left leg leading to the bone. The railroad's report predicted a full recovery and declared that the sinus wound on the left leg was an old one. One month later, however, Montezuma still questioned this patient's prospects for recovery. Because of the contusion (injury to tissue without breakage of the skin) to the right chest, the condition of No Horse's lung remained undetermined. The fracture of the collar bone was healing well, and injuries to both of the Indian's knees were on the mend, but Montezuma did not believe that the sinus wound on the left leg was an old one. Indeed, he reported that this injury was not healing and that the prospect for complete recovery was "not good."⁹

The Indian who suffered the most injuries in the train accident was Goose Face. Once again, the medical information released by

the railroad proved inadequate and misleading. Goose Face's injuries were fractures of both the right hip joint and the left hip socket, dislocation of both hips, "bones broken," and an ankle out of joint. The railroad's report stated that Goose Face would "probably be crippled." There was no "probably" about it. Montezuma believed Goose Face's hip joints and legs had suffered too much damage to ever heal properly. His right hip was fractured, and the head of the femur (thigh bone) was pushed through the acetabulum (cavity in the coxa receiving the head of the femur). This meant that a simple reduction for dislocation would prove difficult, if not impossible. Montezuma described the left hip injury as a fracture of the hip socket. In addition, he reported that the leg was "out of the cavity" and had been reduced; this probably meant that the injury was a compound fracture. Montezuma agreed with the railroad's report that the Indian's ankle was dislocated. He emphatically insisted that all of these injuries would be permanent. Also, a month after the accident, Goose Face's physical condition revealed a "fast" heart rate and an enlarged liver. Such facts indicate that this Indian's body was still in a state of trauma and would require close medical supervision for a long period of time.¹⁰

Another Indian who experienced great physical trauma was Mrs. High Bear. According to the railroad report, she suffered both a compound fracture of the left forearm and a fracture of the lower end of the femur of the left leg. In addition, her right "limb" was sprained and bruised, her back was bruised, and she had a scalp wound. Her husband's fingers had been thrown out of joint, and he had suffered a contusion to his back. Also, he complained of pains throughout his back.

Once again, the railroad's report lacked details. First, Mrs. High Bear did not suffer a fracture of the left femur bone itself; she suffered a fracture of the outer condyle (the articular prominence of a bone) of the left femur, which meant that this particular injury occurred near the joint. Next, the right "limb" that the railroad mentioned was, in fact, the knee; she suffered both a contusion and dislocation of her right knee. The scalp wound was over an inch-and-a-half long, resulting in a complaint of "headaches continually." The most serious injury to Mrs. High Bear was the fracture of her left arm. Montezuma reported that she had suffered a double compound fracture of the left arm and that the arm would in fact be "crippled" permanently. He also indicated that the injuries to her left leg would heal but that she would be

permanently disabled by it. Her right knee would always remain weaker than normal, and her headaches would continue. A close inspection of Mrs. High Bear's physical condition reveals that both sides of her body had received some type of injury. For the rest of her life, she would never possess a "strong side" to aid her mobility.¹¹

Regarding her husband, Montezuma reported that, even though High Bear's fingers were out of joint, they were healing nicely. The contusion to his back was, more specifically, a contusion to the scapula (wide, thin bone found in the upper part of the back), which probably was the reason why High Bear was experiencing difficulty breathing. Montezuma added that High Bear's internal symptoms and physical examination were "not favorable," thus adopting a wait-and-see attitude regarding this particular patient.¹²

Besides the High Bears, another Indian family traveling with the show faced tragedy as a result of the accident. In the Comeslast family, the father was killed, and the wife and son were both injured. According to the railroad's report, Mrs. Comeslast was badly bruised, but a scalp wound had completely healed, and she had suffered no permanent injuries. Their son Tommy had suffered only a bruised right eye. However, Montezuma described physical findings the railroad failed to include in its report. Mrs. Comeslast's scalp wound had indeed healed, but she also endured constant headaches even a month after the accident, suggesting that the scalp wound was, in fact, more serious than it had first appeared. Montezuma reported that she suffered contusions to both shoulders and her spine, and these particular injuries still "gave her pain." Also, even a month after the accident, she endured stiffness of movement in her head and shoulders. Montezuma's physical examination also revealed an enlarged liver and a heart that were "undetermined." Tommy suffered both a contusion and an abrasion (a spot rubbed bare of skin or mucous membrane) to his right eye. Montezuma reported that his prospect of recovery was good but that the permanency of the injury depended on future symptoms.¹³

Many Indians were not as badly afflicted as the Comeslast family, but they still suffered the trauma of serious injuries. Two who faced such a situation were Kills First and Short Step. The railroad reported that Kills First's right leg had been fractured about "the juncture of lower and middle thirds" and further stated that the leg would heal without disability. Short Step's

injuries, however, proved more extensive than those of Kills First. Short Step suffered burns over his face and neck that the railroad claimed would heal. His right hand was badly scalded and his left ankle was bruised. The railroad's report also included a note stating that Short Step claimed to be spitting blood.

Montezuma's report concerning Kills First repeated much of what the railroad had indicated. There was indeed a simple fracture of the right leg; Montezuma added that there was extensive bruising of the left wrist and both hands. He further stated that Kills First still walked with a limp and that "permanent weakness" was a very real possibility. Montezuma's report on Short Step proved far more revealing than that of the railroad. Short Step suffered burns to his neck, ear, face, nose, forearm, and right hand. The burns to his right hand would require skin grafting, making this injury a serious one indeed. Also, Montezuma reported that Short Step's right lung was "not healthy in appearance."¹⁴

Other Indian members of Buffalo Bill's Wild West who suffered injuries were Charge-The-Enemy and Little Iron. Charge-The-Enemy suffered a contusion of the head that the railroad contended had healed. Also, this man's other injuries included a contusion of the chest, a bruised knee, and a bad sprain of the right ankle. Montezuma's report relates primarily the same information, but he added that Charge-The-Enemy complained of dizziness and pain on the left side, and that he had to walk with crutches. Montezuma expressed concern about the head injury, indicating that a complete recovery might not occur. Little Iron also suffered a great deal of bruising. In addition, he had a sprained left ankle and a contusion to the chest, and the hearing in his left ear was "slightly affected." Montezuma reported the same injuries but indicated that the hearing loss would be permanent.¹⁵

The remaining Indians mentioned in the railroad's medical report suffered injuries that primarily consisted of bruising and burns. Long Bear received burns to both hands, his back, nose, lip, and ears; he also suffered a puncture wound to his left leg. Pawnee Killer suffered burns and a contusion to the right foot, a contusion to the head, bruises on his back, abdomen, and left leg. He also experienced pain when passing urine. Likewise, Little Elk's back, right shoulder, and left side were bruised. His back and right side were both burned, and he had a puncture wound to his left leg above the ankle; he also experienced some internal pain. Appar-

ently, Martin Poor Elk's injuries were not quite as serious; he suffered only a bruised left side and some internal pain. The Indian who suffered the least damage was Turning Bear; his only complaint was a sprained ankle. Montezuma's report regarding these Indians coincided with that of the railroad.¹⁶

In a comparison between the medical reports of the Chicago and Northwestern Railway Company and Dr. Montezuma, it is easy to ascertain who provided the most details. The railroad's report was short and often lacked predictions for recovery. In fact, of the seventeen Indians included, prognosis was provided for only five. Luther Standing Bear would probably recover; Has No Horse would fully recover; Mrs. Comeslast would not face any permanent injuries; and Goose Face would probably be "crippled." Also, Short Step claimed he was spitting blood, but his burns would probably heal; Pawnee Killer had pain on passing urine (no further explanation); and Tommy Comeslast's right eye was bruised. An overview of such a report suggests that only the basic, necessary information reached Commissioner Jones, and often the facts were accompanied by qualifying and misleading statements.

Montezuma's medical report provided the balance needed for those in authority to understand the full impact of the train accident on the lives of the Indian victims. His detailed descriptions of each Indian's physical condition, as well as his predictions for recovery, offered the additional information necessary for a better picture of this tragedy. Montezuma divided his medical report into three major categories: present condition and/or statement of injuries, prospect for recovery, and permanency of injury. Under present condition, he listed and numbered each injury and then numbered the other two categories to coincide accordingly. This method enabled Montezuma to present a great deal of detail while keeping the report simple in form. It must be remembered that at least fifteen of the seventeen hospitalized victims suffered multiple problems; only Tommy Comeslast, age five and suffering a bruised eye, escaped with one injury. Montezuma's correspondence to Commissioner Jones itemized those injuries that were healing nicely as well as those that would remain permanent. Without fail, the fifteen Indians who had experienced multiple injuries faced some form of permanent affliction.¹⁷

Included with Montezuma's medical report were proposed amounts of compensation, which, in his opinion, were "properly

due" the Indians injured in the train accident. Montezuma believed that Goose Face should receive \$12,000. He recommended that Has No Horse should receive \$9,000, William Blue Cloud \$10,000, Luther Standing Bear \$7,000, and Tommy Comeslast \$1,250. In explaining the rationale for such estimates to Commissioner Jones, Montezuma wrote that he was impartial and felt that litigation should be avoided. "I stand firm," he continued, "in the position that no difference should be made between a white man's injury and an Indian's injury" ¹⁸

Besides presenting the Indian commissioner with estimates and statements of impartiality, Montezuma attempted to present the Indian viewpoint, circumstances, and mode of living to insure complete understanding of just what these Indians had endured. He pointed out that those injured were the "picked men of the reservation"; thus their loss was particularly significant. He informed Jones that, on the rural reservation, travel was more difficult than in urban areas. Therefore, any physical injury that prevented reservation dwellers from moving freely on the land also represented a great loss. He reminded the commissioner that these Indians had dependents to consider and provide for. ¹⁹

Montezuma further explained the information given by the Indians regarding their injuries. Apparently, the Indians played down their injuries when questioned by others, because their "natural pride and scorn of suffering incites them to make light of their injuries." He also indicated that the Indians were unaccustomed to the ease of their current surroundings and predicted that, when they resumed their normal lives, they would find they were less capable than they believed. Montezuma pleaded for justice and fairness and expressed hope that the railroad would harbor similar sentiments. Montezuma strongly felt that the railroad's estimates were low. He wrote,

I know that the spirit of justice and fairness displayed by you will appeal and awaken the same spirit in the representatives of the Railway Co., and will induce them to abandon that appearance of the strong throttling the weak, merely because he is strong, which seems to me to mark the company's present propositions to you. ²⁰

Indeed, compared to Montezuma's estimates, the railroad's proposal for payment of damages proved quite shocking, ranging from \$100 to \$2,500. Goose Face and William Blue Cloud each received \$2,500, Has No Horse received \$1,250, and Tommy

Comeslast received nothing. Tommy's mother, however, was awarded \$100. The families of those who died in the accident, Phillip Iron Tail, Comeslast, and Kills Ahead, received \$1,500 to \$2,000, with Phillip Iron Tail's family receiving the largest compensation. In their explanation of why Iron Tail's family received a higher settlement, the railroad maintained that he had done some work, while the other two had never done any work. After all, the railroad declared, the measure of damages in the state of Illinois was based on the "ability and willingness of the deceased person to work." Apparently, such reasoning meant that being a member of Buffalo Bill's Wild West was not work.

The railroad's attitude toward the Indians reflected the feelings of the dominant society. Indians were still referred to as "savages" and "deficient." White reformers campaigned to assimilate Indians into American society through education focusing on farming and home building. Whites thought that, by transforming Indians into "good" Americans, they would solve the "Indian problem." At the same time, elements of the dominant society realized that the last western frontier was rapidly closing and sought to preserve it by photographing Indians and putting them in Wild West shows. Because Cody's Indian employees were not learning what most Americans regarded as a good trade, the railroad claimed that these Indians were not entitled to substantial compensation. However, in an attempt to be generous, the railroad agreed to pay for the nursing care and medical bills of the Indians.²¹

When Montezuma discovered that the Indians had accepted the railroad's monetary settlement, he sprang into action. On 6 May 1904, Montezuma, along with Edward F. Dunne, judge of the circuit court, Cook County, Illinois; G. Frank Lydston, M.D.; and Honore J. Jaxon (profession unknown), wrote to A.C. Tonner, the acting Indian commissioner, protesting the amounts paid to the injured Indians. In addition, Luther Standing Bear, High Bear, Has No Horse, and Charge-The-Enemy—representing the injured and the families of the deceased—had second thoughts and protested the monetary settlement. Both groups wanted the monetary awards increased.

However, an increase in settlement was not the wish of Pine Ridge Indian agent John R. Brennan. In a letter to R.C. Richards, general claims agent for the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad, Brennan claimed he was "thoroughly disgusted with the actions of the Indians in the matter." Brennan expressed his dismay that the settlement, which he regarded as concluded, now faced strong

opposition from Dr. Montezuma and "his coterie of would-be Indian sympathizers." He advised Richards to ignore this trouble-making group. Brennan was especially upset because he had already informed Indian commissioner Jones of his own instructions to the Indians: to follow the commissioner's advice; if they did, Jones would "take care" of their interests. Although Brennan was unhappy with all of the Indian protesters, he focused most of his hostility on Luther Standing Bear. He wrote to Richards, "Standing Bear is blamed for the whole business."²²

Indeed, in late May 1904, as controversy surrounding the settlement increased, Brennan became more vehement in his condemnation of Standing Bear. He declared,

There would not be any trouble, whatever, about the Indians settling, if it was not for the advice given by one of their number, Luther Standing Bear, a Carlisle graduate, who was slightly injured . . . or in other words, Luther has the big head: he thinks he knows it all.²³

It must be noted that Brennan described Standing Bear's injuries as "slight" when, in fact, Montezuma's medical report indicated otherwise.

There is no doubt that Brennan felt somewhat pressured to conclude this matter. On 24 May, he received instructions from the new commissioner, A.C. Tonner, to "finish the matter, close it at this trip."²⁴ These orders came after Montezuma's written appeal in which he described the Indians' viewpoint and pleaded with Tonner to fight for more settlement money. Apparently, Montezuma's involvement in this matter meant that both Tonner and the U.S. attorney, S.H. Bethea, believed it necessary to reexamine the reports of those injured; they subsequently ordered another physical examination by physicians independent of the railroad. Drs. Montezuma and Fabil examined the Indians again sometime between 19 and 27 May 1904.

With examinations and reports finalized, all interested parties congregated at the U.S. attorney's office on 27 May. Several people attended: Montezuma's "self-appointed" committee, the physicians representing the railroad, lawyers, the U.S. attorney and his assistants, and Brennan. This meeting proved quite frustrating for Brennan, and his report to Tonner reflected his anger. Brennan's actions toward the Indians and his handling of their legal problems certainly came into question when challenged by Montezuma and his committee. Brennan reported that Montezuma

tried to convince the injured Indians that the contract drawn up by the U.S. attorney and signed by him as Indian agent was "an outrage, a fraud on the face of it and was entirely in the interest of the railroad company."²⁵ In this instance, Brennan's statement rang with truth, because Montezuma had, in fact, accused Brennan of trying to coerce the Indians into settling according to the original contract.

In addition, Brennan assured Tonner that physicians Montezuma and Fabil, who were independent of the railroad and appointed by the commissioner himself, submitted a report that did not differ materially from the railroad's. This statement, of course, was completely false. Montezuma's detailed report differed a great deal, and the commissioner should have realized this, because Montezuma had written him earlier describing the nature of the injuries as well as the potential impact of this tragedy on the Pine Ridge Indians.²⁶

As has been mentioned, representatives from the railroad also attended this 27 May meeting. This particular party knew beforehand that Brennan's sentiments were entirely pro-railroad. Had not Brennan advised Richards, the railroad's claim agent, to ignore Montezuma's committee? Was not Brennan arguing for the settlement as outlined by the railroad? Armed with this knowledge, the representatives of the railroad emphatically stated they would not willingly increase the settlement amount outlined in the original contract. The Indians would have to initiate a lawsuit in order to receive more compensation from the Chicago and Northwestern.²⁷

Knowing that the odds were against them, Montezuma's committee tried to stall. They informed the officials that they needed more time to complete their report. Brennan and the railroad anxiously pushed for a final agreement. The U.S. attorney, however, thought Montezuma's committee should be heard before anything definite was decided. It was at this point that Brennan became "thoroughly disgusted with the whole proceeding" and announced that he intended to leave. He departed the next day. Brennan informed Tonner that there were twelve to fourteen Indians in the hospital who were "as well, practically, as they ever were" and who wanted to settle if "Montezuma and his crowd would keep away from them."²⁸

On 28 May, Commissioner Tonner rendered his decision. He indicated that the issue had been fully investigated by him as well as the Department of Justice. To the chagrin of Montezuma and

the other Indians, the commissioner accepted the railroad's monetary settlement.²⁹ At the time of Tonner's decision, some of the injured Indians decided, on the advice of the Chicago committee, to sue the railroad.

In a letter to the U.S. attorney dated 16 June 1904, Brennan again expressed his amazement that Montezuma's committee continued with their campaign for the Indians. In an attempt to discredit the Indian supporters, he reported to Bethea that Honore J. Jaxon, a member of the committee, had been arrested for some violation of a city ordinance. After passing along this piece of information, Brennan revealed the intentions of five of the injured Indians to sue the railroad. Goose Face asked for \$75,000, Tommy Comeslast for \$10,000, Kills First for \$25,000, William Blue Cloud for \$45,000, and Mrs. High Bear, \$75,000. Their demands were not met; almost a month later, all the Indians mentioned above settled according to the wishes of the Chicago and Northwestern and Brennan.³⁰ In addition, by 12 July 1904, settlements for the heirs of those Indians killed were nearly all concluded. Throughout the entire affair, Brennan maintained that he wanted what was best for the Indians.³¹

The Melrose train wreck is a case study of the treatment and mistreatment of injured Indians who were members of Buffalo Bill's Wild West. It is also a reflection of that era known as the Gilded Age. During this time, from the death of Abraham Lincoln to the rise of Theodore Roosevelt, the growth, expansion, and development of industry became a catalyst for tremendous social and economic changes in the United States. Contributing greatly to this were the railroads. In fact, the development and expansion of the transcontinental railroads provided the foundation for the financial stability of the nation's economy. This financial foundation of great wealth and power became the means for railroad corporate leaders to enjoy uncontested power.

When these railroad barons traveled on their own trains, they then faced the same dangers of rail travel as did the common populace. Accidents occurred often and with a disastrous loss of life. Usually, the causes of such accidents meant inadequate bridges, insufficient fire precautions, and inept management. Despite such accidents, railway routes continued to expand. As early as 1866, the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad was building a railway line across Iowa, and it continued to expand across Nebraska the following year. This railroad then grew to include lines to Chicago and Minnesota. By the early twentieth century,

the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad, despite the Panic of 1893, remained a viable and productive railway.³²

Because the railroads were so powerful and wealthy, their influence on the lives of others reached into every aspect of the American experience. Train wrecks occurred frequently, but it was difficult to negotiate with the railroads concerning compensation for injuries. The case of the Melrose train wreck brought to the forefront not only a confrontation between passengers and railroads, but an implication of injustice. In addition, it also demonstrates the concern and medical expertise of Dr. Carlos Montezuma, who dedicated his life to helping his people. The railroad's monetary settlement, it can be argued, was certainly low, especially when compared to Montezuma's estimates. On 8 June 1904, a displeased Montezuma wrote to General Richard Henry Pratt, head of Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania, regarding this matter. "The Gods," declared Montezuma, "do not forget injustice . . ."³³

The Gods do not forget courage either. If courage is defined as moving forward against all odds, knowing defeat will, in all probability, be the outcome, then Dr. Carlos Montezuma and his supporters displayed remarkable courage throughout the Melrose Park affair.

NOTES

1. Luther Standing Bear, *My People the Sioux* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1975), 271.

2. See Don Russell, *The Lives and Legends of Buffalo Bill* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960); idem, *The Wild West* (Fort Worth, TX: Amon Carter Museum of Western Art, 1970); and L.G. Moses, "Wild West Shows, Reformers, and the Image of the American Indian, 1887-1914," *South Dakota History* 14 (Fall 1984): 193-221.

3. Standing Bear, *My People the Sioux*, 270-71. Standing Bear was incorrectly listed as one of the Indians killed.

4. See *Chicago Tribune*, 8 April 1904; *New York Times*, 8 April 1904; Russell, *The Wild West*, 95.

5. *Chicago Tribune*, 8 April 1904.

6. Carlos Montezuma to W.A. Jones, 21 April 1904, in *The Papers of Carlos Montezuma, M.D.*, ed. John W. Lerner, Jr. (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 1984, text-microfilm), reel 1, hereafter cited as *Montezuma Papers*; Montezuma to Jones, 19 May 1904, *Montezuma Papers*, reel 1. For information on Montezuma, see Peter Iverson, *Carlos Montezuma and the Changing World of American Indians* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982).

Although Montezuma lived and practiced in a white, urban area of Chicago, he nonetheless offered medical advice and assistance to many Indians from across the country. He heard from Indians as far away as White River, South Dakota and Harding, Montana. Usually, the Indians writing Montezuma requested medicine or medical advice. Sometimes, however, Montezuma became involved in aiding Indians who needed more than his medical services. For example, he once wrote a Charles Davis at the Rosebud agency in South Dakota to release money for a Sherman Charging Hawk who was in a desperate situation; he was sick and living off friends. Montezuma's concern for Indian equality reflected the close ties he maintained with his fellow Native Americans, and his involvement with the medical care of the Pine Ridge Indians was not surprising. See Montezuma to Charles Davis, 22 March, 1916, *Montezuma Papers*, reel 4; White Dog to Montezuma, 20 February 1914, *ibid.*, reel 3; Henry Roe Cloud to Montezuma, 3 May 1915, *ibid.*, reel 4; Montezuma to Yuma Frank, 21 November 1914, *ibid.*, reel 4.

7. J.R. Brennan to Jones, 2 May 1904, *ibid.*, reel 2; Montezuma to Jones, 19 May 1904, *ibid.*, reel 2.

8. Brennan to Jones, 2 May 1904, *ibid.*, reel 2; Montezuma to Jones, 19 May 1904, *ibid.*, reel 2; *Dorland's Pocket Medical Dictionary* (Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders Company, 1959), A-38.

9. Brennan to Jones, 2 May 1904, *Montezuma Papers*, reel 2; Montezuma to Jones, 19 May 1904, *ibid.*, reel 2; *Dorland's Pocket Medical Dictionary*, C-46.

10. Brennan to Jones, 2 May 1904, *Montezuma Papers*, reel 2; *Dorland's Pocket Medical Dictionary*, A-6; Montezuma to Jones, 19 May 1904, *ibid.*, reel 2.

11. *Dorland's Pocket Medical Dictionary*, C-43; Brennan to Jones, 2 May 1904, *Montezuma Papers*, reel 2; Montezuma to Jones, 19 May 1904, *ibid.*, reel 2.

12. *Dorland's Pocket Medical Dictionary*, B-19; Brennan to Jones, 2 May 1904, *Montezuma Papers*, reel 2; Montezuma to Jones, 19 May 1904, *ibid.*, reel 2.

13. Brennan to Jones, 2 May 1904, *ibid.*, reel 2; Montezuma to Jones, 19 May 1904, *ibid.*, reel 2; Chicago and Northwestern Railroad Co., Memorandum of Agreement, 2 May 1904, *ibid.*, reel 2; *Dorland's Pocket Medical Dictionary*, A-3.

14. Brennan to Jones, 2 May 1904, *Montezuma Papers*, reel 2; Montezuma to Jones, 19 May 1904, *ibid.*, reel 2.

15. Brennan to Jones, 2 May 1904, *ibid.*, reel 2; Montezuma to Jones, 19 May 1904, *ibid.*, reel 2.

16. Brennan to Jones, 2 May 1904, *ibid.*, reel 2; Montezuma to Jones, 19 May 1904, *ibid.*, reel 2.

17. Montezuma to Jones, 19 May 1904, *ibid.*, reel 2.

18. *Ibid.*

19. *Ibid.*

20. *Ibid.*

21. Brennan to Jones, 2 May 1904, *ibid.*, reel 2; Chicago and Northwestern Railroad Co., Memorandum of Agreement, 2 May 1904, *ibid.*, reel 2; Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr. *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978), 100, 107, 173.

As a means of comparison, in the years from 1874 to 1876, a manager for the Georgia Railroad earned \$2,000 per year. This means that, in 1904, the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad wanted to settle on those Indians who were permanently injured a judgment equal to approximately one year's salary of a railroad manager. Considering that the Indians suffering permanent disability

would, in all likelihood, never work again, one can understand why Montezuma and the Chicago Committee wanted a higher monetary settlement than the Chicago and Northwestern were willing to pay. See Sean Dennis Cashman, *America in the Gilded Age* (New York: New York University Press, 1984).

22. Brennan to R.C. Richards, 13 May 1906, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Record Group (RG) 75, Pine Ridge Agency, Miscellaneous Letters Sent (MLS), vol. 46, Federal Archives and Records Center, Kansas City, MO. The Chicago and Northwestern Railroad refused to allow the authors to examine their materials on the train wreck.

Even though Montezuma was not trained as a lawyer, he surrounded himself with those who were. One of his best friends was Joseph Latimer, an attorney who participated with Montezuma in campaigning for Indian rights. In addition, it should be noted that when Montezuma felt he needed help in assisting the injured Indians, he immediately sought the aid of a local judge. Certainly such legal input meant that others besides Montezuma believed that the Indians did indeed have a legitimate case. See John W. Lerner, ed., *The Papers of Joseph Latimer* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 1984, text-microfilm), reel 9; preface, *Montezuma Papers*, reel 1.

23. Brennan to Jones, 31 May 1904, Records of the BIA, RG 75, Pine Ridge Agency, Copies of Letters Sent to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1879–1914 (LS, CIA), vol. 34, Federal Archives and Record Center, Kansas City, MO.

24. Tonner to Brennan, 24 May 1904, telegram, BIA, RG 75, Pine Ridge Agency, LS, CIA, vol. 34; Brennan to Tonner, 31 May 1904, BIA, RG 75, Pine Ridge Agency, LS, CIA, vol. 34.

25. Brennan to Tonner, 31 May 1904, BIA, RG 75, Pine Ridge Agency, LS, CIA, vol. 34.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid.

29. Tonner to Edward F. Dunne, G. Frank Lydston, M.D., Carlos Montezuma, M.D., Honore J. Jaxon, 28 May 1904, *Montezuma Papers*, reel 2; E.O. Lauflend to Carlos Montezuma, 2 June 1904, *ibid.*, reel 2.

30. Brennan to Tonner, 22 June 1904, BIA, RG 75, Pine Ridge Agency, LS, CIA, vol. 34; Brennan to S.H. Bethea, 16 June 1904, BIA, RG 75, Pine Ridge Agency, Misc. LS, vol. 46; Brennan to Rev. W.J. Cleveland, 5 July 1904, BIA, RG 75, Pine Ridge Agency, Misc. LS, vol. 46. Cleveland was the interpreter for the injured Indians.

31. Brennan to Tonner, 12 July 1904, BIA, RG 75, Pine Ridge Agency, LS, CIA, vol. 34; Brennan to Tonner, 28 June 1904, *ibid.*

32. See Cashman, *America in the Gilded Age*, 31, 33, 34; Robert E. Riegel, *The Story of the Western Railroads* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1964), 68, 84, 98, 305, 315.

33. Montezuma to Richard Henry Pratt, 8 June 1904, *Montezuma Papers*, reel 2.