

The contest was a terrific one—a hand to hand encounter. The Indian's tomahawk and spear were pitted against the white man's bayonet and breech. The conflict was deadly and decisive. Steel clashed against steel, and the woods resounded with the most terrific yell of the savages. But in the end the bayonet and the breech were triumphantly successful. The last Indian was killed and scalped, and not one left to tell old Black Hawk, their chieftain, the sad tale of their wholesale disaster.

In this contest the tide of war was turned against them. In this battle they were as badly whipped and beaten as they had been successful in whipping all with whom they had hitherto come in contact. In this flight, Col. Dodge made good his words spoken to Capt. Gratiot at the Blue Mounds. He showed the Indians that we were not of the soft-shelled breed, as they had said we were.

I have said before that this was a remarkable battle. The annals of Indian warfare furnish no parallel to it. Never before was so large a war-party of Indians completely annihilated, with so small a loss to the whites, as in this desperate contest, where the numbers were so nearly equal. Lieut. Charles Bracken, who acted as Col. Dodge's adjutant in the fight, and whose graphic pen all the old settlers in this country well remember, in writing an account of this battle for publication, said: "There were individual acts of devotion and desperate bravery, which, if done in the days of chivalry, would have immortalized the actors, and furnished themes for the song of the minstrel."

This engagement was fought under the most depressing and unfavorable circumstances. The inhabitants were scattered over a large area of country, without money or credit, and without horses or guns, to any great extent. There were not at the time of this contest one hundred horses, or guns, in all this mining region, embracing a country at least seventy-five miles square; all of which was surrounded by hostile and savage Indians, who were murdering and scalping the defenceless inhabitants, in all directions. Men were being killed at Kellogg's Grove and Apple River on the south, at Sinsinawa Mounds and Cassville on the west, at