



Living History of Illinois and Chicago®

[Living History of Illinois and Chicago®](#) – Facebook Group.

[Living History of Illinois and Chicago Digital Library](#)

[Living History of Illinois Gazette](#) - The Free Daily Illinois Newspaper.

[Illinois History Store®](#) – Vintage Illinois and Chicago logo products.

CUMMINS' INDIAN CONGRESS

A THRILLING AND EXCITING WILD WEST SHOW WITH RECKLESS PARTICIPANTS

White City Amusement Park, 63rd Street and South Parkway, Chicago, IL (1905)

The first attraction which the visitor sees after he enters the grounds is Colonel Cummins' Wild West Indian Congress. This feature is located at the extreme north end of the park; the entrance is to the right of the "Board Walk." and is within a hundred feet of the gates of White City. The entrance to the attraction is shaped like a huge wigwam, covered with all manner of hieroglyphics and Indian symbols, illustrating the manner in which the redskins used to keep records of their victories in war. In the upper part of this tepee there is the famous cowboy band, which will furnish the music for the production.

As the spectator enters the enclosure he first sees an Indian encampment — the braves sitting lazily in front of their tepees smoking; the women busying themselves about their work, and the little redskins placing among the wigwams. These Indians live here exactly as they do on their native prairie, cooking their own food and living close to nature. The spectator then passes the arena and goes on to the end of the grounds, where the grandstand is located. Here before him are enacted the great and absorbing features which compose the show. The program of events follows;



Col. Frederick T. Cummins

1. Reception by the famous Indian Chiefs of fifty-one different tribes, including many of the best known Indian leaders.
2. Grand entry; parade of all the Indians, including squaws and papposes. Aboriginal savage equestrian review.
3. Introduction of Indians, cowboys and band of lady riders.
4. Introduction of Colonel Cummins.
5. Maze.



Living History of Illinois and Chicago®

[Living History of Illinois and Chicago®](#) – Facebook Group.

[Living History of Illinois and Chicago Digital Library](#)

[Living History of Illinois Gazette](#) - The Free Daily Illinois Newspaper.

[Illinois History Store®](#) – Vintage Illinois and Chicago logo products.

6. Miss Hartzell, champion rifle shot of the world.
7. Pony Express, as seen in the days of '49; George Esler.
8. Race of Nations, Indian lady and cowboy.
9. Riding wild cattle.
10. Jim Hopkins and band of fancy ropers in feats never seen before.
11. Attack on trappers' cabin by Indians. Lacrosse—international game.
12. Stage coach hold-up.
13. Tournament.
14. Hanging a horse thief.
15. Relay race, one mile.
16. Educated cow horse.
17. Chase for a bride.
18. Attack on an emigrant train crossing the mountains, by Indians.
19. Cowboy quadrille.
20. Sports and pastimes on the plains.
21. Roping contest.
22. Champion Zouave drill team of the world.
23. Custer's last stand, "The Custer Massacre," or the battle of the Little Big Horn. A vivid reproduction of the tragedy that occurred on June 25, 1876.

The story of the death of General Custer and the death and annihilation of his little band is one which stirs the hearts of Americans every time it is told. June 26, 1876, will long be remembered as the day in history that marked the slaughter of the bravest men who ever represented the United States—a day that saw the last victory of Indians over white men.

The scene opens with General Custer at the head of his little band of men, hot upon the trail of Sitting Bull, chief of the Ogalalla Sioux, and his braves. Custer, trusting his entire force to the discretion of Reynolds, the noted Indian scout, presses on after Sitting Bull. That famous chieftain, by a series of the most clever maneuvers, inveigles Custer into the valley of the Little Big Horn. Custer's men followed Reynolds far into the valley and finally came to a place where Sitting Bull had just camped. The ground was yet warm from the camp fires. Custer halted and sent out his scouts. Sitting Bull, anticipating this move, had established a fake camp, which the scouts found and hurried back to Custer.



Living History of Illinois and Chicago®

[Living History of Illinois and Chicago®](#) – Facebook Group.

[Living History of Illinois and Chicago Digital Library](#)

[Living History of Illinois Gazette](#) - The Free Daily Illinois Newspaper.

[Illinois History Store®](#) – Vintage Illinois and Chicago logo products.

Custer, elated and believing he has the Indians trapped, orders the bugle to sound and dashes into the fake encampment, hoping to take Sitting Bull by surprise. But the Indians are prepared for him. Sitting Bull has withdrawn his men and has surrounded the camp.



Custer and his men dash into the trap and in a moment a furious battle is on. With Indians on all sides of him, Custer sees that it is hopeless to fight, but still he orders the charge, and in the midst of the losing fight he directs his men calmly. As his men were slain and fell on all sides of him, he continued the battle. Chief Shot-in-the-Eyes, who was present at the fight, declares that when Custer was left alone on the field he turned his gun on himself and died rather than fall into the hands of the Indians.



Living History of Illinois and Chicago®

[Living History of Illinois and Chicago®](#) – Facebook Group.

[Living History of Illinois and Chicago Digital Library](#)

[Living History of Illinois Gazette](#) - The Free Daily Illinois Newspaper.

[Illinois History Store®](#) – Vintage Illinois and Chicago logo products.

The conclusion of this great spectacle is shown in three tableaux. The first tableau shows the battle raging furiously on all sides. The Indians, hanging from their ponies' necks, circle swiftly about the troopers, shrilly shrieking their war cries. Custer is seen fighting desperately in the midst of the redskins, and is finally dragged from his horse, but he quickly throws off his assailants and fights his way to a high mound, where the remnants of his force gather about him.

The second tableau shows the battle nearing the end. Custer's men have nearly all been killed, yet the remaining few are struggling valiantly and keeping the Indians at bay. One by one the troopers are slain until Custer stands alone on the mound. Swinging his heavy saber aloft, his face lighted with determination and courage, his left hand clinching his smoking revolver, he fights on to the bitter end. An Indian is seen kneeling and pointing a gun at Custer when the tableaux ends.

Tableau three completes the tragedy. It shows the dreary mound, covered with the dead bodies of the troopers and those of the Indians who have fallen in the fierce battle. Custer is down — slain after a most brilliant exhibition of sublime courage and determination. His body is lying over the topmost part of the mound and the American flag is lying close beside him. Presently some scouts appear in the distance, look carefully at the mound, and then disappear. Then Reno's entire band comes rushing to the rescue. The soldiers dash on to the mound.

They seize the flag and hoist it up to the staff again amid cheers. One of the men stumbles over a body. It is that of General Custer.

The soldiers gather about the body of the courageous General and remove their hats as they gaze at their beloved leader. They turn sadly, look fondly at the flag and murmur, "Too late! Too late!" The curtain falls.