

a decided place and time to get Custer and his command, and avenge Custer's annihilation of Black Kettle and his village several years before on the Washita . . . where the land had been secured by treaty and the Indians were within their rights at the time and not on the war path.

Every move of Custer and his command had been watched for several days and smoke signals had been made throughout the country, summoning the Indians to congregate at the agreed place. His location was well known and his every move signaled back to the big village where the council was in progress for the next morning's reception and annihilation of their foe.

They mentioned two other outfits, evidently Reno and Benteen, as being held back by superior numbers of Indians so they could get Custer.

It must have been about 10 o'clock in the a.m. when Custer came along the ridge you and I were on, and sighted the big village with the smoke coming out of the teepees and no Indians in sight, but they were concealed in the gulches, waiting.

The signal was given and the Indians in front rose up and attacked, Custer's men advancing. Then the Indians concealed around and in the rear rose up and practically enveloped the whole command.

The whole engagement lasted scarcely one hour. It was a complete victory. Not one soldier or officer escaped, and the Indian who killed Custer, well, his name was given me with the solemn promise that I would never divulge it. I have never broken my word with an Indian or made a promise I could not keep.

Custer was not killed where he was supposed to have fallen but was last seen alive, walking along the ridge you and I were on, above where the little band made its last stand. He was leading his horse afoot, with his white hat in his hand. The next instant a small band of Indians surrounded him and it was all over.

He was not mutilated or scalped and was the only one of his command who was not. The reason given me that night was they considered Custer insane and they never mutilate an insane person, and they wanted soldiers to know it was Custer. He was left as he fell.

After the annihilation of Custer and his men, the Indians were all for cleaning up the other soldiers they had previously attacked and held back. Sitting Bull protested and finally prevailed upon them to leave well enough alone. They had accomplished their purpose, lost few Indians in comparison to their victory, and should they fight the remaining soldiers of the other outfits, they would suffer a heavy loss and gain nothing.

So they accepted his counsel and advice. They moved off the battle field, carrying their dead, chanting as they went to the village where they danced and counted their coups and told over their deeds that night.

The following day, they broke up the village, moved on down the river, and scattered to the four winds.

Participants in the free-for-all which followed these talks included JAMES R. SHARP, ARTHUR A. DAILEY and DR. IRVING S. CUTTER. Sharp repeated some of the incidents connected with the Custer battle which he had heard from old-timers when he was a cowpuncher in South Dakota and Wyoming. Dailey contributed reminiscences of his acquaintance with Gen. Charles Francis Roe (who as a second lieutenant with the Second cavalry, was with the first detachment of Gibbon's force to reach the battlefield after the Custer fight) and Curley, the Crow scout, whom he met and photographed while he (Dailey) worked on Eaton's ranch in northern Wyoming.

Dr. Cutter, who is not only familiar with most of the literature on the Custer battle but has also visited the battlefield and surrounding country, presented evi-