

Wood - pp.466-475 cont'd.

"'Why?' 'I never taught my people to trust Americans. I have told them the truth - that the Americans are great liars. I never dealt with the Americans. Why should I? The land belonged to my people. I say I never dealt with them - I mean I never treated with them in a way to surrender my people's rights. I traded with them, but I always gave full value for what I got. I never asked the United States Government to make me presents of blankets or cloth, or anything of that kind. The most I did was to ask them to send me an honest trader that I could trade with, and I proposed to give him buffalo robes and elkskins, and other hides in exchange for what we wanted. I told every trader who came to our camps that I did not want any favors from him - that I wanted to trade with him fairly and equally, giving him full value for what I got, but the traders wanted me to trade with them on ^{no} such terms. They wanted to give little and get much. They told me if I did not accept what they gave me in trade they would get the Government to fight me. I told them I did not want to fight.'

"'But you fought?' 'At last, yes; but not until I had tried hard to prevent a fight. At first my young men, when they began to talk bad, stole five American horses. I did not like this and was afraid something bad would come of it. I took the horses away from them and gave them back to the Americans. It did no good. By and by we had to fight.'"

The reporter now drew from the great leader his version of the Little Big Horn fight, and the death of Custer. But, as neither party to the dialogue were in the battle, this part of the interview must of necessity be the work of imagination and will not be quoted. It is impossible for any one to give an authentic description of a battle fought in his absence.