



WHO KILLED CUSTER?

This man's identity has been, for nearly a century, the Sioux tribe's most closely guarded secret. Here, for the first time, in his own words, is the story of the brave who shot down America's most famous Indian fighter

by REGINALD K. LAUBIN (*Tatanka Wanjila*)

WHO was responsible for the death of America's most renowned Indian fighter? For three-quarters of a century that question has been unanswered. There have been legends, there have been tales galore, all of them inaccurate. As an adopted member of the Sioux tribe, I am now at last in a position to reveal the true story. Here it is:

On a hot summer Sunday seventy-six years ago, General George Armstrong Custer waved his hat from the bluff above the Little Big Horn River and disappeared over the crest. What happened to him between that gesture and the discovery of his body on the far side of the hill has remained a mystery until now. Only Indians have known who killed Custer on the day that 212 troopers of the Seventh Cavalry rode with him to death, and for reasons that we shall see, they chose to keep utter silence.

The "Boy General," who wore his blond hair longer than was the custom of the time, had been a popular Civil War idol, and a great future had been predicted for him. He, who had never lost a battle or called a retreat, made his biggest bid for fame and honor and went down in the worst disaster ever suffered by American arms.

Eight years before, his victorious dash into the sleeping Cheyenne camp on the