

Lincoln

The Man Who Killed Custer

But we came right to the point. Thunder Bull said, "We heard you are the one who killed Long Hair Custer. Is that true?"

The old man's reply was, "They tell me I killed Long Hair. I did not know Long Hair, but after the fight they said I killed him."

"Do you mind telling about it?" we asked. "We'd like to hear about it if you care to tell us."

Drawing himself up to his full height, pointing his eagle wing fan at me and looking me straight in the eyes, he answered, "I will tell you what I know. I will tell you the truth. I am not afraid. The man who lies is a weakling. We did not know until after the fight who the soldiers were. Then some of our young men, who had been around Fort Abraham Lincoln, recognized the marks of the Seventh Cavalry and told us that Long Hair was their leader.

"Most of us had never seen Long Hair before, so we did not know what he looked like. After all the soldiers were killed, Bad Soup and I went over the battlefield, talking about the honors we had won in the fight. We came to the bodies of a little group of soldiers on the hill, near the place where the monument stands now. Bad Soup had seen Long Hair at the fort. He pointed to one of the naked bodies on the ground. 'You see that man there?' he asked. 'That man was Long Hair. He thought he was the greatest man in the world, but he lies there now.'

"I told him, 'I killed that man. We had a hard fight. He was a brave man, but I wrenched his gun away from him and shot him twice with it, once through the head.'"