

THOMAS W. CUSTER—VALOR PERSONIFIED by Erving E. Beauregard

Thomas Ward Custer was born on March 15, 1845, at New Rumley, Harrison County, Ohio. His parents, Emmanuel Henry Custer and Maria Ward Kirkpatrick Custer, named him after Thomas Ward of Washington County, Pennsylvania, his maternal great-grandfather. He was five years younger than his renowned elder brother, George Armstrong Custer, nicknamed "Autie."

In 1851, Tom matriculated at the nearest district school, Creal's, located about a mile and a half from the Custers' farmhouse. At this time "Autie" was beginning his final year at Creal's. A lusty, good-natured boy, Tom proved a born leader, his classmates attested. However, he always bowed to "Autie" in all things; indeed, he proudly imitated "Autie." The two boys had much in common—indifference to study, frolicking, and love of horses.

As a gangling youth, Tom joined "Autie" in some escapades. On August 2, 1856, they appeared at the Democratic rally for presidential nominee James Buchanan held at Hopedale, Ohio. The rally occurred at McNeely Normal School where "Autie" had been a student. The local Republican newspaper noted the presence of noisy young persons posing as "border ruffians." Tom and "Autie" also attended a mass Republican rally for presidential nominee John C. Fremont in Cadiz, Ohio, on September 15, 1856. A reporter wrote of the Custers and their friends:

A motley crew of vagabonds dressed in fantastic style . . . rode the streets, and paraded on the

ground where the meeting assembled, to the great annoyance of all their decent Republican brethren. It was said that they intended to represent the "ruffians of Missouri." They played one part naturally—the "ruffian," and that they will play all their lives. If they represented anything, it was Jim Lane and his ruffians, now engaged in murdering the peaceable settlers in Kansas. They distracted the meeting very much while the speaking was going on, by the firing of pistols, and hideous yelling.¹

Ever close to "Autie," Tom rejoiced when his elder brother received a coveted appointment to the United States Military Academy. Tom accompanied "Autie" to the railroad station in Scio, Ohio, in the early summer of 1857 when the elder brother departed for enrollment at West Point. Tom seriously thought of following in his beloved friend's footsteps.²

In 1857, veritably, the problem of Tom's future arose. At Creal's School he had completed the six-year course of common schooling that was then considered customary for the children of Harrison County. His mother favored enrolling him at the secondary school at Cadiz, the county seat. This would prepare him, she felt, for entrance to Franklin College at New Athens in Harrison County. That, in turn, would qualify him for a seminary because she preferred a ministerial career for him. However, father Emmanuel vetoed his wife's plan. He

thought ill of Tom's scholarly acumen. Moreover, Emmanuel, a staunch Methodist, regarded Franklin College as a stronghold of the Associate Presbyterian Church. Furthermore, Justice of the Peace Emmanuel Custer, a diehard Democrat, considered Franklin a bastion of the Republicans, horrid abolitionists who had gone over to the Devil. So Tom remained at the Custer farmhouse in New Rumley. When the family moved to a farm in Washington Township, Wood County, Ohio, in April 1860, Tom went along.³

Upon the outbreak of the Civil War sixteen-year-old Tom immediately sought enlistment in the Union Army; however, his age prevented this. Repeatedly he volunteered, finally being accepted as a private by Company H, Twenty-first Regiment, Ohio Volunteer Infantry, on September 2, 1861. Service in the Western Theater--Stone River, Chickamauga, Resaca, Missionary Ridge, and Kennesaw Mountain--led to promotion to corporal and orderly to Brigadier General James Scott Negley. At this time a comrade described the young Custer as a "blue-eyed, flaxen-haired beanpole" who "played a mean jew's-harp and sowed wild oats with camp followers." Smoking and occasional alcohol also appealed to him. After serving his three years' term of enlistment, Tom was mustered out on October 10, 1864. Soon he would return to combat, for it vastly more appealed to him than an appointment to West Point which brother George wished to obtain for him.⁴

On November 8, 1864, Brevet Major General George Armstrong Custer obtained for Tom a second lieutenant's commission in Company D, Sixth Regiment, Michigan Volunteer Cavalry. Now Tom served under George whose Third Cavalry Division included Tom's regiment. Indeed, Tom was immediately assigned to General Custer's staff as aide-de-camp. For distinguished and gallant

combat Tom received several promotions, becoming, by brevet, major of volunteers in March 1865.

George gave no favors to Tom. Actually the former sometimes went out of his way to give his sibling extra assignments. "If anyone thinks it is a soft thing to be a commanding officer's brother," George's other officers said, "he misses his guess." However, when alone, George and Tom would unbuckle their sword belts and scuffle around the general's officer quarters as they did at their father's farm at New Rumley.⁵

Glory first came to Tom Custer on April 3, 1865. At Namozine Church, Virginia, a part of George Custer's division, of which Tom was a member, pounced on the combined mounted divisions of Major Generals Fitzhugh Lee and Rooney Lee, cousin and son respectively of Robert E. Lee. Although outnumbered, the Union troops prevailed and the Confederates retreated. Leading in the pursuit, Tom had his mount shot out from under him. Nevertheless, undaunted Tom still remained in combat and single-handedly captured a Confederate flag, and took three officers and eleven enlisted men. For this action he received his first Medal of Honor.

On April 6, 1865, at Saylor's Creek, Virginia, Tom Custer again rode to glory. Here George Custer's division encountered Lieutenant General Richard S. Ewell's wagon train. A recognized expert provides a captivating description:

Accompanying Colonel Capehart, Lieutenant Tom Custer spurred ahead into the midst of the enemy and clawed at a flag. The Reb color bearer fired his pistol pointblank at Tom's head. The blast burned the boy's face and speckled it with powder, and the ball plowed through his cheek and passed out behind his ear, throwing him flat on his horse's

rump; but reeling back instantly in his saddle and drawing his revolver with his left hand, he killed his assailant and caught the tottering banner with his right. Waving his prize in triumph, he wheeled his mount around and dashed through the melee, blood streaming down his face, to show the standard to the division commander. As he made his way to the rear, an officer in the 3rd New Jersey yelled after him, "For God's sake, Tom, furl that flag or they'll fire on you."⁶

Tom shouted to his brother, "Armstrong, the damned rebels have shot me, but I've got my flag!" General Custer ordered him to leave the battlefield for the dressing of his wound. However, the courageous Tom waived aside the order. He asked someone to hold his captured flag so he could return to the combat. Thereupon General Custer put Tom under arrest and had him escorted to a surgeon. Tom's wounded cheek would ever sport a scarlet spot. For his heroism Tom received his second Medal of Honor, the singular award that eluded elder brother George throughout his Civil War and Indian War career.⁷

The conclusion of the Civil War still saw the joining of George and Tom Custer. George received an assignment in Texas and Tom served on his staff. The younger brother capably performed his duties. However, the activity was boring, he felt. He wrote, "Life is commonplace. The fury of battle is lacking."⁸

On November 24, 1865, Tom was honorably mustered out of the volunteers. Further recognition of his splendid service came later in the regular army: brevet captain, March 2, 1867, for gallant and distinguished conduct in the Battle of Waynesboro, March 2, 1865; brevet major, March 2, 1867, for distinguished courage and service at the Battle of Saylor's

Creek.⁹

In February 1866, Tom Custer entered the regular army as a second lieutenant of infantry. Soon, July 1866, he transferred to his beloved cavalry. He became a first lieutenant in brother George's newly formed Seventh Regiment. George exalted over the appointment. Jubilantly he noted that the "Custer luck" had again prevailed. George urged Tom to study "Tactics."¹⁰

Tom received hearty welcome into George's household. He became one of the family. Tom's sister-in-law, George's wife, Elizabeth ("Libbie"), thought highly of him.

... he was in all the campaigns and engagements of the regiment. It was an immense change to come down from the position of aide-de-camp on the staff of the commander of a division of thousands of cavalry, to the simple humdrum of a lieutenant of a company. It was a great test of the true mettle of a man to adapt himself to the position of a subaltern, after the independent and important duties with which he had so long been entrusted in the exciting scenes of the war. Tom's character bore this test. He was as conscientious and simplehearted in the discharge of his company duty as if he had never known any other than that life. His brother, though never relaxing the strictness of discipline, continued to place more and more important trust in Tom's hands, and proved, as years advanced, that his judgement and soldierly abilities stood uppermost in his mind, even among the tried and true of the Seventh Cavalry.¹¹

Tom, ever a bachelor, "honored and liked women extremely," according to

sister-in-law "Libbie." He paid long visits to ladies of the garrison. His brother George would then play a joke. "Libbie" wrote: "He [Tom] never knew, when he started to go home from these visits, but that he would find on the young lady's door-mat his trunk, portmanteau, and satchel--this as a little hint from the general that he was overtaxing the lady's patience."¹²

Tom sought no favors from his brother. The latter bestowed none. George's wife has written:

I used to think my husband too severe with his brother, for in his anxiety not to show favoritism he noticed the smallest misdemeanor. If, in visiting with the young ladies in our parlor, he overstayed the hour he was due at the stables or drill, the general's eye noticed it, and perhaps overlooked others in the room who were erring in the same manner. I knew that a reprimand would be sent from the adjutant's office in the morning if I did not invent some way to warn the offender, so I learned the bugle-call for stables, and hovering around Colonel Tom, hummed it in his ear, which the voice of the charmer had dulled to the trumpet-call. When the sound penetrated, he would make a plunge for his hat and belt, and tear out of the house, thus escaping reproof.¹³

Tom always remained loyal to George. In September 1867, the latter faced a courtmartial. He stood accused of leaving Fort Wallace without permission, of excessive cruelty and illegal conduct when he ordered his officers to shoot deserters; of abandoning the two soldiers who were killed by Indians near Downer's Station; and of marching men excessively." George's best friends, including Tom, testified for him. Nevertheless, George was convicted on all counts. The sentence was

suspension from rank and command plus forfeiture of all "proper pay."¹⁴

In May 1868, Major General Philip H. Sheridan recalled George to duty. Sheridan needed him to crush the valiant Plains Indians. Upon George's return to Kansas a welcome greeted him.

Most of the officers in the 7th Cavalry seemed glad to see their old commander. Major Elliott, Captains Yates, Keogh, and Weir, Lieutenants Moyland, Cooke, and Tom Custer welcomed a renewal of the old hilarious days of horseplay and practical jokes. Tom could hardly wait to tell his brother about a skunk which had tangled with his dog "Brandy." To be comforted, the unfortunate canine had jumped on him and Captain Hamilton. After that they both amused themselves the rest of the night by visiting other officers' tents, stinking them out of their cots. [George] Armstrong wrote Libbie all about it. He also described the good hunting. Blucher killed a wolf. Maida caught a jack rabbit alone. Together they took hold of a buffalo.¹⁵

The newly restored General Custer did not disappoint Sheridan. Almost immediately he campaigned against the Indians. On November 27, 1868, Tom served under him at the Battle of the Washita in Indian Territory. Tom received minor wounds. In that encounter, according to an authority, the commander "in fact dealt the Cheyennes a severe blow in blood and treasure."¹⁶

In the spring of 1873 the War Department assigned George and Tom Custer to Fort Abraham Lincoln in Dakota Territory, just across the Missouri River from Bismarck. During the following

two summers their activities exhibited diversity. One was a punitive expedition against the Indians in the Yellowstone Valley. Another undertaking contained an exploration of the Black Hills.

On August 4, 1873, battle-scarred Tom Custer faced the Sioux. Those warriors surprised George Custer's column on the Yellowstone River in Montana Territory. The U.S. force staunchly resisted. Tom, as well as George, fought bravely. Outnumbered three to one, George Custer's regiment prevailed in three hours of hard fighting. The Sioux were driven from the field.

Then on August 11, 1873, George Custer's Seventh Cavalry won another battle on the Yellowstone River. Again the formidable Sioux attacked Custer. Leading 450 cavalrymen, Custer vanquished the enemy who numbered between 500 and 1000. Once more Tom gave his usual sterling performance.

In 1874, First Lieutenant Tom Custer took part in the famous Black Hills Expedition. Lieutenant General Philip H. Sheridan, commander of the Division of Missouri which included the Department of Dakota, determined "to establish a military post in the country known as the Black Hills . . . so that by holding an interior point in the heart of the Indian country we could threaten the villages and stock of the Indians, if they made raids on our settlements." There was another purpose, never officially acknowledged, for the Black Hills Expedition. "That purpose was gold." An authority has written, "In view of the clamor about gold in the Black Hills, no military expedition could have entered the hills for any purpose without also looking for gold."¹⁷

Sheridan ordered George Custer to lead his Seventh Cavalry into the Black Hills. The expedition began its march on July 2, 1874. Tom Custer went along on special duty as commander of Company L. Present also was a third Custer brother,

twenty-five-year-old Boston, listed on the quartermaster rolls as "guide." The expedition, which ended on August 30, 1874, has been characterized as a "frolicsome picnic." Significantly, two "practical miners" taken along by George Custer, discovered gold. Moreover, George Custer "publicly announced upon his return that the Black Hills ought to be taken over by white men."¹⁸

When not campaigning Tom liked to frequent the theater. His taste was eclectic. One of his loves was "Julius Caesar." Tom became involved with the stage's actions. Once upon viewing the sad farewell scene in the military play "Our," Tom burst into tears.¹⁹

Ironically, Tom, the entranced spectator of fiction, himself would be connected with a romantic poem. The episode had roots in an event of December 1874. At that time U.S. Army Scout Charles Reynolds visited the Standing Rock Indian Agency in Dakota Territory. There he overheard Rain-in-the-Face, a prominent Hunkpapa Sioux warrior, boast that he had killed three white men on the Yellowstone River two summers earlier. This referred to the slaying of John Honsinger, the veterinary surgeon of the Seventh Cavalry, Augustus Bailran, the regimental sutler, and Trooper John H. Ball, after their capture by the Sioux in the latter's engagement with Custer's column on August 4, 1873. Reynolds reported what he had heard to George Custer. The latter decided that Rain-in-the-Face must be brought to a civil court for trial for murder.

General Custer dispatched Captain George Yates and Lieutenant Tom Custer with a company of cavalry to capture Rain-in-the-Face. They rode fifty miles in deep snow in temperatures reaching fifty degrees below zero. At Standing Rock Tom took Charles Reynolds and five picked troopers into a trader's store. There Tom found a bunch of heavily

blanketed Indians. When one of them lowered his blanket, Reynolds pointed to him as Rain-in-the-Face. Thereupon Tom pounced on him and after a brief scuffle overpowered him. Tom then brought the prisoner to Fort Lincoln. Rain-in-the-Face confessed to George Custer that he had led the party that killed the three whites. However, in April 1875, Rain-in-the-Face escaped from the guardhouse. According to legend, he swore that someday he would cut Tom's heart out. Allegedly this vow would bear fruit when Rain-in-the-Face killed Tom in the Battle of the Little Bighorn, and then mutilated his body. This story inspired Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's "The Revenge of Rain-in-the-Face." However, Longfellow invoked poetic license and transferred Rain-in-the-Face's wrath from Tom to brother George. Longfellow lamented:

And Rain-in-the-Face, in his flight,
 Uplifted high in air
 As a ghastly trophy, bore
 The brave heart, that beat no more,
 Of the White Chief with yellow hair.²⁰

Tom Custer's courage shone on many occasions. In March 1876, he proved himself an intrepid plainsman. His brother and sister-in-law, George and "Libbie" Custer, were on a train caught in a blizzard outside Fargo. Luckily, a fellow traveler improvised a telegraph immediately: "Shall I come for you? You say nothing about the old lady ["Libbie"]; is she with you?" "The 'old lady' begged the privilege of framing the reply. I regretted that the telegram could not be underscored--a woman's only way of emphasizing--for I emphatically forbade him to come. On this occasion I dared to assume a show of authority." Nevertheless, Tom went to Bismarck and hired the best stage-driver in Dakota territory. Then with the mule-drawn sleigh Tom drove through the blizzard, saved George and "Libbie" and brought them to regimental

headquarters at Fort Lincoln.²¹

Tom Custer was also a person sensitive to slights to his honor. This related to his one vice. His craving for liquor would lead to remorse and to pledges of abstinence. An observer, "Libbie," Tom's admiring sister-in-law, noted:

... in one of his times of pledge, when the noble fellow [Tom] had given his word not to taste a drop for a certain season if a man he loved, and about whom he was anxious, would do the same, he was sneered at by a brother officer, with jibes of his supposed or attempted superiority. Tom leaped across the table in the tent where they sat at dinner, and shook up his assailant in a very emphatic way.²²

Notwithstanding heroism, promotion in the post-Civil War army was slow. Officers who had held medium or high rank in the once large Federal force now had to be content with lower rank. On December 2, 1875, Tom received advancement to captain. This would be his last advance because tragedy soon came.

On June 25, 1876--at the Little Bighorn--Tom Custer, the usual daredevil, played a conspicuous role. About 9:00 a.m. he informed his brother George "that a sergeant had taken a detail on the back trail to retrieve a box of hardtack dropped from a pack mule during the night march. The troopers had come upon several Sioux opening the box and had exchanged fire with them." General Custer now decided to find the Indian village and strike at it as soon as possible. Tom also communicated orders from brother George to Captain Thomas M. McDougall. Furthermore, Tom commanded his Company C in an advance on the Indians in a ravine. However, the

Cheyenne, Lame White Man, responded with an attack that overran the company and scattered the survivors back to Calhoun Hill. Curley, a Crow scout with the Seventh Cavalry, claimed that Tom Custer suggested that the regiment's scouts had better save themselves if they could. On Custer Hill, at the north end of Battle Ridge, the three Custer brothers—George, Tom and Boston, a forage master—fought until they were killed, along with their brother-in-law, First Lieutenant James Calhoun, and their nephew, eighteen-year-old, Henry Armstrong ("Autie") Reed, a herder with the Seventh Cavalry.²³

Tom's body was found behind a breastwork of dead horses on Custer Hill. It was twenty feet back from George Custer's corpse. Tom's body lay face down. "Tom Custer was mutilated, horribly mutilated." Lieutenant (later General) Edward S. Godfrey wrote:

When I went to Tom Custer's body it had not been disturbed from its original position. It was lying face downward, all the scalp was removed, leaving only tufts of his fair hair on the nape of his neck. The skull was smashed in and a number of arrows had been shot into the back of the head and body. I remarked that I believed it was Tom, and he and I had often gone swimming together and the form seemed familiar. We rolled the body over; the features where they had touched the ground were pressed out of shape and were somewhat decomposed. In turning the body, one arm which had been shot and broken, remained under the body; this was pulled out and on it we saw "T.W.C." and the goddess of liberty and flag. This, of course, completed our identification. His belly had been

cut open and his entrails protruded. . . .¹⁹

Upon viewing Tom's remains, Captain Frederick W. Benteen and Dr. Henry R. Porter concluded that Tom's heart had not been removed. All who viewed Tom's body agreed that it was extensively mutilated. A scholar has written:

. . . the mutilations were so extensive that they led to the story that Rain-in-the-Face had not only carried out his vow to cut the Captain's heart out but had eaten a part of it in the belief that to eat the heart of a brave man imparted some of its virtues to the eater.²⁴

"Libbie" Custer wrote passionately of the vow of Rain-in-the-Face. "The vengeance of that incarnate fiend was concentrated on the man who had effected his capture. It was found on the battlefield that he had cut out the brave heart of the gallant, loyal, and loveable man, our brother Tom."²⁵

Mrs. Custer's story once received confirmation from Rain-in-the-Face. In 1894, at Coney Island where he was on exhibition, he "confessed," according to two journalists who had primed him with firewater:

The long sword's blood and brains splashed in my face. It fell hot, and blood ran in my mouth. I could taste it. I was mad. . . . I saw Little Hair [Tom Custer]. I remembered my vow. I was crazy; I feared nothing. . . . I don't know how many I killed trying to get at him. I saw his mouth move, but there was so much noise I couldn't hear his voice. He was afraid. When I got near enough I shot him with my revolver. My gun [rifle] was gone,

I don't know where. I leaped from my pony and cut out his heart and bit a piece out of it and spit it in his face.²⁶

However, in 1904, a sober Rain-in-the-Face told a reporter another story:

Many lies have been told of me. Some say that I killed the chief, and others say that I cut the heart out of his brother, Tom Custer, because he caused me to be imprisoned. Why in that fight the excitement was so great that we scarcely recognized our nearest friends. Everything was done like lightning. After the battle we young men were chasing horses all over the prairie; and if any mutilating was done, it was by the old men.²⁷

Did Rain-in-the-Face's first story stem from his alcoholic fog? Did his second story, in his sober condition, rise from fear that his life might be in jeopardy from those who would avenge the Custers? Perhaps an observer may conclude that

discretion is the better side of life when one lives among one's conquerors.

Tom's remains eventually were interred in the Fort Leavenworth National Cemetery, Leavenworth, Kansas. Perhaps he would have preferred burial near his longtime beloved commander. Had he graduated at West Point his mutilated corpse might have been placed beside his brother George and sister-in-law "Libbie."

Captain Thomas Ward Custer exemplified valor throughout his voluntary service in the Civil War and Indian Wars. Twice winner of the Medal of Honor in the Civil War, he was the first person in history and one of only three persons during the Civil War to receive two Medals of Honor; the other two recipients had hailed from the Navy. He and one other person have been the only soldiers to win two army Medals of Honor; the other ten double winners were from the Navy.

Major General George Armstrong Custer pronounced the intriguing judgment on brother Tom: "To prove to you how I value and admire my brother as a soldier, I think that he should be the general and I the captain."²⁸

ENDNOTES

1. Charles B. Wallace, *Custer's Ohio Boyhood*, 2nd ed. (Cadiz, Ohio: Harrison County Historical Society, 1987), pp. 30-31.
2. Thomas Ward Custer, letter to Joseph B. Campbell, Monroe, Michigan, December 14, 1865, John A. Campbell Collection, Cadiz, Ohio.
3. *Ibid.*
4. Major John A. Reichley, "The 'Unknown' Custer," *Military Review*, Vol. LXIV, No. 5 (May 1984), p. 73.
5. Elizabeth B. Custer, "A Beau Sabreur," in Theo. F. Rodenbough, ed., *Uncle Sam's Medal of Honor* (New York and London: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1886), p. 226.
6. Gregory J.W. Urwin, *Custer Victorious: The Civil War Battles of General George Armstrong Custer* (Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1983) pp. 246-48.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 248; Robert M. Utley, *Cavalier in Buckskin: George Armstrong Custer and the Western Military Frontier* (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988), p. 32; Jay Monaghan, *Custer: The Life of General George Armstrong Custer* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1959), p. 238.

8. Thomas Ward Custer, letter to Joseph B. Campbell, Austin, Texas, January 11, 1866, Campbell Collection.
9. These recognitions were supervised by Brevet Brigadier General Thomas M. Vincent who, like the Custers, was a native of Harrison County, Ohio.
10. Edgar I. Stewart, *Custer's Luck* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1971), p. 171; Monaghan, *Custer*, pp. 267-68.
11. Custer, "A Beau Sabreur," pp. 230-31.
12. Elizabeth B. Custer, *"Boots and Saddles" or Life in Dakota with General Custer* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1885), p. 233.
13. Ibid.
14. Monaghan, *Custer*, pp. 300-03.
15. Ibid., p. 307.
16. Utley, *Cavalier in Buckskin*, p. 70.
17. Donald Jackson, *Custer's Gold: The United States Cavalry Expedition of 1874* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1966), p. 14; Utley, *Cavalier in Buckskin*, pp. 133, 135.
18. Jackson, *Custer's Gold*, p. 120; Utley, *Cavalier in Buckskin*, p. 137.
19. Custer, *Boots and Saddles*, p. 250.
20. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, "The Revenge of Rain-in-the-Face," *The Complete Poetical Works of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1920), p. 337.
21. Custer, *Boots and Saddles*, p. 257.
22. Elizabeth B. Custer, *Tenting on the Plains or General Custer in Kansas and Texas* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1895), p. 252.
23. Utley, *Cavalier in Buckskin*, p. 181; Kenneth Hammer, ed., *Custer in '76: Walter Comp's Notes on the Custer Fight* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1976), pp. 159, 165.
24. Richard G. Hardorff, *The Custer Battle Casualties: Burials, Exhumations and Reinterments* (El Segundo, California: Upton and Sons, 1989), pp. 23-24, 33, 98, 103, 104; Hammer, ed., *Custer in '76: Walter Comp's Notes on the Custer Fight*, p. 77; Douglas D. Scott, Richard A. Fox, Jr., Melissa A. Connor, and Diek Harmon, *Archaeological Perspectives on the Battle of the Little Bighorn* (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989), p. 247; Stewart, *Custer's Luck*, p. 472; Lawrence A. Frost, *Custer Legends* (Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1981), p. 221.
25. Custer, *Boots and Saddles*, p. 215.
26. Robert M. Utley, "The Enduring Custer Legend," *American History Illustrated*, Vol. XI, No. 3 (June 1976), p. 9.
27. Ibid.
28. Custer, *Boots and Saddles*, p. 233.