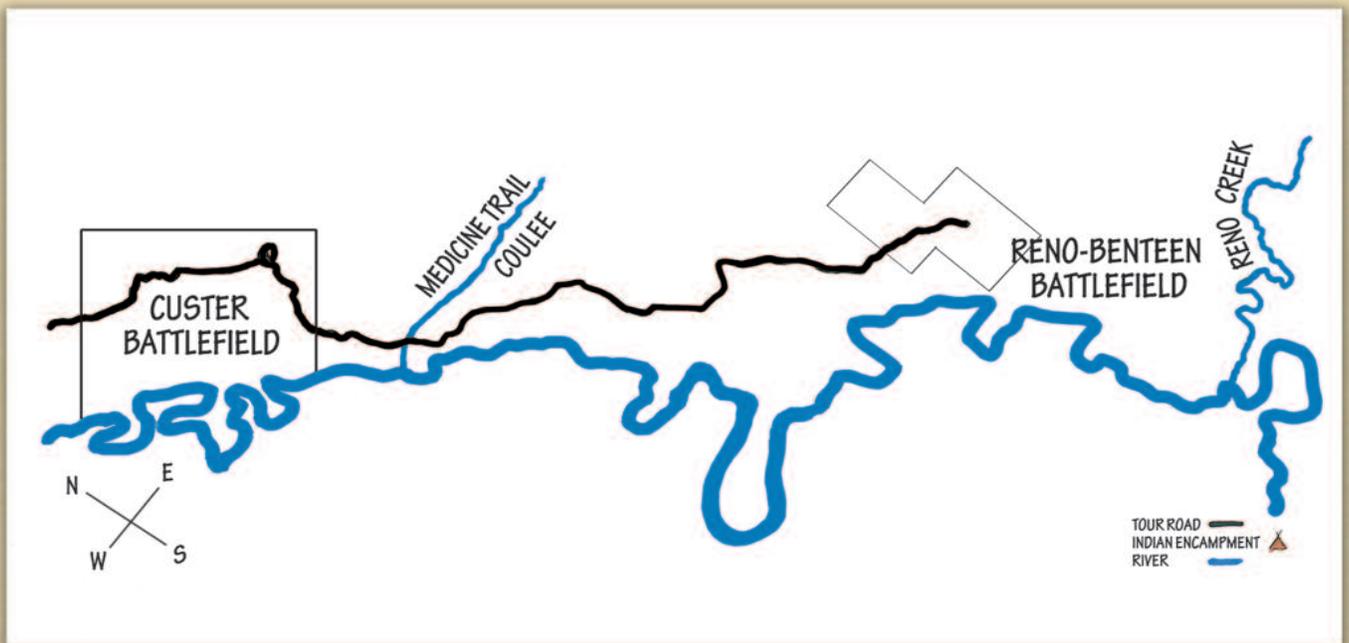




LITTLE BIGHORN NATIONAL MONUMENT



TEACHER'S GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Teacher's Guide is to provide teachers grades K-12 information and activities concerning Plains Indian Life-ways, the events surrounding the Battle of the Little Bighorn, the Personalities involved and the Impact of the Battle. The information provided can be modified to fit most ages.

- Unit One: PERSONALITIES**
- Unit Two: PLAINS INDIAN LIFE-WAYS**
- Unit Three: CLASH OF CULTURES**
- Unit Four: THE CAMPAIGN OF 1876**
- Unit Five: BATTLE OF THE LITTLE BIGHORN**
- Unit Six: IMPACT OF THE BATTLE**

In 1879 the land where The Battle of the Little Bighorn occurred was designated Custer Battlefield National Cemetery in order to protect the bodies of the men buried on the field of battle. With this designation, the land fell under the control of the United States War Department. It would remain under their control until 1940, when the land was turned over to the National Park Service.

Custer Battlefield National Monument was established by Congress in 1946. The name was changed to Little Bighorn National Monument in 1991. This area was once the homeland of the Crow Indians who by the 1870s had been displaced by the Lakota and Cheyenne. The park consists of 765 acres on the east boundary of the Little Bighorn River: the larger northern section is known as Custer Battlefield, the smaller Reno-Benteen Battlefield is located on the bluffs over-looking the river five miles to the south. The park lies within the Crow Indian Reservation in southeastern Montana, one mile east of I-90. Billings, MT, is 60 miles north-west and Sheridan, WY, is 70 miles south.

The Battle of the Little Bighorn on June 25-26, 1876 was the climax of Lakota/Cheyenne resistance to white American culture moving in from the east. Though the battle was the Indians greatest martial triumph, it hastened their defeat and subjugation on to reservations.

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UNIT ONE

PERSONALITIES

Objectives

- The student will be able to identify the Lakota/Cheyenne leaders at the Battle of the Little Bighorn.
- The student will be able to identify the 7th Cavalry leaders at the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

Lakota/Cheyenne Leaders

Sitting Bull



Sitting Bull was born into a prominent Hunkpapa Lakota family in about 1831, near the confluence of the Grand and Missouri Rivers in present day South Dakota. As he grew to manhood, Sitting Bull emerged as a leader of the Strong Heart Society, an elite group of warriors of demonstrated bravery and prowess against their enemies. In addition, through prophetic visions he became respected as a spiritual leader of his people.

With the Treaty of 1868, Red Cloud and Spotted Tail led a large portion of the Lakota to live the reservation way of life. The Great Sioux reservation included the western half of modern-day South Dakota. Sitting Bull refused to live on the reservation, occupying the Powder River country south of the Yellowstone River in southeastern Montana.

In December 1875, all non-treaty Sioux were notified to come into the reservation or they would be considered hostile and the army would be sent out to force them to comply. Sitting Bull and his followers ignored the government ultimatum.

As always in the spring of 1876, reservation Lakota and Cheyenne left the reservation to hunt. Many of these people used Sitting Bull's village of non-treaty Sioux as a refuge. By June 25 Sitting Bull's village had swelled to 8,000 people with up to 2,000 warriors.

In mid-June Sitting Bull participated in a Sundance where he had a vision that was interpreted as the Lakota/Cheyenne having a great victory over the soldiers. The vision was of soldiers falling upside down into a village. Sitting Bull was told by The Great Spirit that these soldiers were being given because they had no ears to hear with. This vision proved prophetic with the great victory at the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

As a result of the Little Bighorn, the army renewed its efforts to force the Indians to accept the reservation way of life. Under constant harassment by troops, Sitting Bull led the northern Lakota across the international boundary to Canada in the spring of 1877.

With the gradual decline of the buffalo and encouragement from the Canadian government, Sitting Bull's people began to break away and return to reservation life in the United States. Finally, Sitting Bull himself surrendered on July 19, 1881, at Fort Buford in Dakota Territory.

Sitting Bull was eventually sent to the Standing Rock Agency. At Standing Rock, Sitting Bull led resistance, representing traditionalist values, to Agent James McLaughlin's administration.

With the Ghost Dance movement in 1890, McLaughlin recommended that Sitting Bull be arrested. On December 15, 1889, Lakota Indian Police were sent to arrest Sitting Bull. Sitting

Sitting Bull *(continued)*

Bull's followers resisted and Sitting Bull was shot and killed by the police.

As the leader of the coalition that fought the U. S. Government in 1876 and wiped out Custer, Sitting Bull suffered the fate of Indian leaders who resisted the reservation way of life.

Crazy Horse

Crazy Horse was born in 1840 near the Black Hills of South Dakota. He was a member of the Oglala band of Lakota. At the age of 16 or 17 Crazy Horse took his name from his father as a result of war exploits against the Atsina, an enemy Indian tribe.

As a result of a vision in his teens, Crazy Horse never wore elaborate clothing. Instead of wearing a headdress he attached a single Eagle feather to his hair. When going into battle he painted a lightning symbol on his face and also carried a small stone tied to his body.

As Crazy Horse matured his stature as a warrior grew among the Lakota. His reputation was gained in battle with enemy tribes such as the Crow and Shoshone as well as battles with the U.S. Army. He participated in the Powder River Campaign of 1865, the Red Cloud War of 1866-1867, and the Sioux War of 1876-1877. He assumed a leading role in the Fetterman Fight (1866), The Battle of the Rosebud (1876), The Battle of the Little Bighorn (1876), and the Wolf Mountain Fight (1877).

Against the whites Crazy Horse encouraged a new mode of fighting. He eschewed display and fighting for war honors. Instead he dismounted to fire his rifle for greater accuracy and effect; he fought to kill and do damage to the enemy rather than for personal recognition.

After the Battle of the Little Bighorn the Great Sioux camp was forced to split up to sustain them. The winter of 1876-1877 was especially harsh, the Sioux being constantly harassed by the army, and food turning scarce. On May 7, 1877, Crazy Horse led 900 followers into Fort Robinson to surrender.

Crazy Horse was initially well received by the Army at Fort Robinson and the Red Cloud Agency, but his presence threatened the control of Red Cloud and Spotted Tail and feelings drifted toward animosity. In addition, Crazy Horse resented the Government's failure to grant his people a reservation in the Powder River country.

After one of Red Cloud's followers treacherously told General Crook that Crazy Horse planned to kill him, Crook ordered Crazy Horse jailed with the intention of removing him to Florida. When the army attempted to put Crazy Horse in the Fort Robinson guardhouse, Crazy Horse broke free but was bayoneted in the back by one of the soldiers on guard. He died later that night.

In hindsight, Crazy Horse's reputation was such in battles with Crook and Custer that the Government could ill afford to give him the freedom he craved.

No authenticated photo of Crazy Horse has ever been found and it is likely none exists. First hand observations of him describe a man of light complexion and light hair for a Lakota, of medium height, a narrow face, and a lean build. He had a prominent scar where he had been shot in the face.

Gall



Gall was born in 1840 along the Moreau River west of the Missouri River in present day South Dakota. He was a member of the Hunkpapa Lakota, the same as Sitting Bull. Physically powerful, Gall proved himself early in battle and in the hunt. He gradually became the favorite protégé of Sitting Bull.

Gall initially fought the whites at the Battle of Killdeer Mountain (1864) in present day North Dakota. Later, near Fort Berthold in late 1865 Gall was surrounded, bayoneted and left for dead by soldiers led to his camp by Arikara scout, Bloody Knife. Bloody Knife was kept from shooting Gall's prostate body by the commanding officer. Gall survived.

In the summer of 1872 Gall and Sitting Bull led attacks against the military escort of Northern Pacific Railroad survey parties across southeastern Montana. The next summer in 1873 Gall again led resistance to a second Northern Pacific survey. This time Custer's 7th Cavalry served as escort. Custer's initial fights with northern Plains Indians took place during the 1873 railroad survey.

As a result of the Government ultimatum in December 1875 to come into the reservation or else, Gall led his band from Standing Rock Agency to join Sitting Bull's non-treaty Lakota.

At the Battle of the Little Bighorn, a number of Gall's family, two wives and three children, were killed in Reno's assault on the south end of the village. Gall apparently did not participate in the attack on Reno's retreating troops, but did cross with warriors at Medicine Tail Coulee to first stop and then assault Custer's battalion. He actively participated in the final demise of Custer's battalion.

During the fall and winter of 1876-1877 Sitting Bull's people were constantly harassed by General Miles 5th Infantry. In the spring of 1877, Gall joined Sitting Bull in crossing over to the Wood Mountain area of Canada in what is today southern Alberta.

As the exiled Lakota began to starve, Gall broke with Sitting Bull and returned with a large number of his people to Fort Buford in January 1881. After more defections, Sitting Bull brought the rest of his people into Fort Buford to surrender July 19, 1881.

Gall sided with Standing Rock Indian Agent James McLaughlin in his attempts to get the Sioux to adopt an agrarian life style. He became a leader of the progressive element of the tribe versus the traditionalists who resisted the new ways led by Sitting Bull.

Gall died in present day South Dakota on the Standing Rock Indian Reservation, December 5, 1894.

Lame White Man



Lame White Man was born a Southern Cheyenne, but in 1876 he was living with the Northern Cheyenne on the northern plains. First person sources disagree about his status, one source states that he was a tribal chief and another that he was a warrior chief. The sources agree that Lame White Man assumed a leading role in the fighting at the Battle of the Little Bighorn and was killed in the combat that took place around the Custer / Last Stand area of the Battle.

Before the Battle started, Lame White Man was reported to have been taking a sweat bath in the village. When Reno's assault struck the village, Lame White Man didn't have the time to put on his proper war clothing and grabbed his weapons, mounted his horse and rushed into battle. When his body was found after the battle, he had been scalped and it is thought that his body was discovered by Lakota Warriors. Because he was not wearing distinctive Cheyenne Warrior regalia he may have been mistaken for an enemy army scout and scalped.

Wooden Leg, a young Cheyenne warrior reported on the portion of the battle that Lame White Man was involved in and about his death in the battle. "After the long time of the slow fighting, about forty of the soldiers came galloping from the east part of the ridge down toward the river, toward where most of the Cheyennes and Ogallalas were hidden. The Indians ran back to a deep gulch. The soldiers got off their horses ~ Lame White Man, the Southern Cheyenne chief, came on his horse and called us to come back and fight. Then Lame White Man called out: Come. We can kill all of them."

Later Wooden Leg recounted seeing the body of Lame White Man in the vicinity of where he earlier described Lame White Man leading the fighting.

Kate Bighead, also recalled seeing Lame White Man fighting in the area where he was reportedly killed. She describes the event; "the Indians were gradually creeping closer to the soldiers, by following the gullies or dodging from knoll to knoll ~ there was a long time - the old men now say they think it must have been about an hour and a half - of this kind of fighting slowly, with not much harm to either side. Then a band of the soldiers on the ridge mounted their horses and came riding in a gallop down the broad coulee toward the river ~ the Indians hidden there got back quickly into the deepest parts of the gulch ~ Lame White Man the bravest Cheyenne warrior chief, stayed in hiding close to where the small band of soldiers got off their horses. From there he called to the young men, and they began creeping and dodging back to him." Kate concluded her description of this part of the battle by stating that this band of soldiers was defeated, but she did not see Lame White Man killed and only later learned of his death.

Today a Granite marker has been erected near the site of Lame White Man's death that commemorates his participation in the battle.

7th Cavalry Officers

Lt. Colonel George Armstrong Custer



George Armstrong Custer was born in New Rumley, Ohio on December 5, 1839. He entered the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in the fall of 1857. He graduated last in a class of 34 in June of 1861. His standing reflected more a lack of discipline than academic capacity.

Custer emerged from the academy as the Civil War broke out. He chose the cavalry as the branch he wished to serve in. He soon distinguished himself as a man quick to volunteer and aggressive in executing his duties.

In November of 1862, Custer was introduced to Elizabeth “Libbie” Bacon. He courted her as aggressively as he pursued his military activities. In February 1864, the two were married in Monroe, Michigan.

As a result of his aggressiveness and his capacity, Custer was steadily promoted and by the Civil War’s end in 1865, Custer commanded an entire Cavalry Division with the rank of major general. His regular army rank reverted to captain at the end of the war.

In 1866, Custer was promoted to lieutenant colonel of the newly formed 7th Cavalry Regiment. In 1867, during the Hancock Campaign in Kansas, he would see his first real experience in dealing with Plains Indian warriors. During the campaign, Custer was accused of conduct to the prejudice of good order and military discipline. He was found guilty by court martial and sentenced to one year of suspension from rank without pay.

In 1868, Custer was reinstated to participate in a winter campaign against the southern plains tribes. The ensuing campaign resulted in the Battle of the Washita on November 27. In the battle, Custer destroyed a village of Southern Cheyennes led by Chief Black Kettle.

In 1873, the 7th Cavalry was moved to the Dakota plains with headquarters at Fort Abraham Lincoln. During the summer of 1873, it was charged with protecting the Northern Pacific Railroad survey party. Custer fought two engagements with Lakota warriors who actively harassed the survey parties.

The following summer in 1874, the 7th was sent to explore the Black Hills. Gold was discovered and advertised. The subsequent gold rush, in violation of the 1868 Treaty with the

Custer *(continued)*

Sioux, proved too much for the army to handle. In 1875 the U.S. Government attempted to buy the Black Hills but was refused by the Sioux.

In December 1875, the Government gave the non-treaty Sioux an ultimatum to come into the reservation or be treated as hostile by the army. When the Sioux failed to respond the army was sent after them.

In the meantime after making accusations against high ranking officials in Washington, including Secretary of War Belknap, Custer was called back east to testify before a Congressional committee. This alienated President Grant who removed Custer from command of the planned Dakota column. Custer was eventually reinstated as commander of the 7th Cavalry but made subordinate to Department Commander General Alfred Terry on the expedition.

On June 25 Custer led an attack on a large Lakota/Cheyenne village under Sitting Bull and was defeated in detail. His immediate battalion of five companies was wiped out to a man, approximately 210 men.

Major Marcus Reno



Born November 15, 1834, in Carrollton, Illinois. Reno graduated from West Point Military Academy in June 1857. Reno was assigned to the 1st Dragoons as a second lieutenant, his first duty station being in the Northwest of Oregon and Washington Territory. In the fall of 1861, Reno was transferred east to participate in the Civil War.

Reno rose in the ranks and was brevetted twice for “gallant and meritorious service” during the war. At the end of the war, Reno was brevetted brigadier general, Volunteers, and colonel, U.S. Army. During the war, Reno met and eventually married Mary Hanna Ross on July 1, 1863, at Harrisburg, PA. On June 16, his regiment was mustered out of service and his rank reverted to captain.

Reno was appointed major, Seventh Cavalry, on December 26, 1868, scouting in Kansas and Colorado in the summer of 1870. His wife died on July 10, 1874. Major Reno was second in command of the 7th Cavalry which left Fort Abraham Lincoln on May 17, 1876 as part of the Dakota Column headed by General Alfred Terry.

Reno *(continued from page 11)*

As the 7th Cavalry approached the Little Bighorn, Reno, with three companies, was directed to cross the river and attack the village from the south. At that time Custer told Reno he would support him with the "whole outfit." As Reno approached the village numbers of warriors responded to meet him. Reno called a halt, had his men dismount and form into a skirmish line. After a short time Reno's skirmish line was flanked and he fell back to the woods along the river. When Sioux warriors began to infiltrate the woods Reno decided his defensive position was untenable. Reno mounted his troops and led them in a headlong charge that became a retreat and then a mad run for life to the bluffs across the river.

Soon the Sioux warriors left Reno's front to respond to Custer's threat further down river. When Captain Benteen's battalion arrived, Reno rushed out to Benteen and said, "For God's sake, Benteen, halt your command and help me! I've lost half my men!" In the meantime firing was heard down river and Captain Weir sought Reno's permission to move Company D towards the sound of the firing. Eventually the pack train came up and Reno attempted to move the command to follow Weir.

The Sioux and Cheyenne warriors responded to the soldiers' appearance on the high ground to the south and forced Reno back to his original position on the bluffs. Into the next day, June 26, Reno's command held out under heavy fire from the Indian warriors. With the approach of General Terry's column, the warriors broke off the siege and the great village moved off to the southwest. Reno's men learned of Custer's fate from Terry's column on June 27.

Though the men under Reno's command were grateful for their survival, especially after learning the fate of Custer's battalion, in a short time following the battle Reno came under considerable criticism from various sources both within and outside the army. Reno was accused of not pursuing the attack on the village as ordered and of not coming to Custer's support.

Though Reno's actions at the Little Big Horn were never officially criticized by the army command, he called for a Court of Inquiry to officially exonerate his name. On February 10, 1879, after extensive interrogation of the officers and civilians present at the battle, the court concluded that there was nothing in Reno's conduct that required adverse criticism from the Court.

Little Bighorn criticism was only one element which conspired against Reno. The loss of his wife was critical. Reno began drinking more resulting in altercations with fellow officers off duty. His loneliness for female company resulted in unwanted advances which resulted in a two year suspension from the army, 1877-79, and eventually to his dismissal from the army, effective April 1, 1880.

Major Reno spent the rest of his life in an effort to be reinstated in the army. He died as a result of cancer in the mouth, March 30, 1889.

Captain Frederick Benteen



Born August 24, 1834. Entered military service from Missouri as first lieutenant, Company C, Missouri Volunteer Cavalry, on September 1, 1861. Benteen was actively engaged in fighting throughout the Civil War primarily in the western theatre. He rose to the rank of lieutenant colonel during the war.

After the war he was appointed captain, 7th Cavalry, effective July 28, 1866. Benteen received a brevet of colonel for gallant service in the engagement with hostiles on the Saline River in Kansas on August 13, 1868.

Almost immediately on joining the 7th Cavalry Benteen developed a dislike for his commanding officer, Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer. Benteen disliked Custer's showy self display.

Benteen was involved in the attack on the Southern Cheyenne village at Washita in November 1868. As a result of the battle his dislike of Custer intensified when he blamed Custer for not making a more thorough effort to locate Major Joel Elliot. Elliot had led a small force of troops down the valley chasing Cheyenne refugees from the attacked village and had never returned to the command. It was discovered later that Elliot's small force had been cut off and slain by warriors responding from villages further down the valley.

Benteen participated in the Black Hills expedition in 1874 and the Sioux campaign in 1876. His part in the Battle of the Little Bighorn elicited mixed reviews. His failure to promptly come to Custer's aid as ordered was strongly criticized. However, his aid to Reno, at Reno's request, and his active leadership at the Reno-Benteen defense site mitigated such criticism.

Benteen served in the Nez Perce campaign in 1877 including the Canyon Creek fight on September 13. He testified at the Reno Court of Inquiry in 1879 in Chicago. At the Inquiry he interestingly stated that he did not hear the firing of Custer's battalion four miles to the north.

Benteen was generally highly respected as a company commander by his men. He had a relaxed manner but brooked no insubordination. His manner and competence gained the respect of his men. He was appointed major, 9th Cavalry, effective December 17, 1882.

In later years Benteen began to drink more. He was suspended from rank for one year at half pay for drunken and disorderly conduct on April 20, 1887 and was retired for disability on July 7, 1888.

Unlike Reno, Benteen seemed impervious to criticism of his role at the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

Questions

- Which Lakota leader became the political and spiritual rallying point for the traditional Lakota/Cheyenne way of life?
- What colorful personality commanded the 7th Cavalry at the Battle of the Little Bighorn?
- What Hunkpapa Lakota warrior was Sitting Bull's chief lieutenant in his resistance to the encroaching white world? He later broke with Sitting Bull on the Standing Rock Reservation and acclimated to the new agrarian life style.
- Who was the officer at the Little Bighorn who led the attack on the south end of the village and the subsequent retreat to the bluffs across the river?
- What charismatic Oglala warrior is credited with leading the Lakota/Cheyenne in battle at the Rosebud and the Little Bighorn?
- What officer was called to support Custer's battalion with, "Come On-Big Village-Be Quick-Bring Packs-P.S. Bring Packs"?

Activities

- Watch "The Immigrants" podcast on the Little Bighorn website (www.nps.gov/libi).
- Go to "The Soldiers and Warriors" section of the Friends of the Little Bighorn Battlefield website (www.friendslittlebighorn.com/Soldiers-Warriors.htm) to find more information about the people in the battle.
- Listen to the Cell Phone Tour (406-214-3148) #1 (Two Moon, Warrior), 2 (George Custer's Rank), 7 (Mark Kellogg, Reporter), 10 (Closed Hand/Limber Bones), 11 (Crazy Horse), 12 (Myles Keogh), 13 (Curley), 14 (Reno Grave Site), 20 (Bloody Knife), 24 (Giovanni Martini), 25 (Sergeant Butler), and 26 (Pretty White Buffalo at Deep Coulee).
- Watch the "Who Was Custer" podcast on the Little Bighorn website.
- Matching:

Sitting Bull

Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer

Crazy Horse

Major Marcus Reno

Gall

Captain Frederick Benteen

Oglala Lakota war leader

led charge on the village in the valley

Lakota spiritual leader

7th Cavalry commander

led defense of hilltop position

Hunkpapa Lakota war leader

UNIT TWO

PLAINS INDIAN LIFE-WAYS

Objectives

- The student will be able to understand the life-style of 19th century northern plains Indians.
- The student will be able to identify and compare the Lakota (western Sioux) and Cheyenne tribal people.
- The student will be able to understand why the Crow and Arikara scouted for the army against the Lakota and Cheyenne.

The Plains Indians

The Buffalo/Horse Culture

By 1750 the northern plains tribes had acquired the horse through trades with tribes to the south and guns through trades from the east. These acquisitions, especially the horse, allowed them to better control their environment and expand their control and population out onto the plains. More sedentary peoples became nomadic buffalo hunters. Whereas before it would take the cooperation of the entire village to corral or run buffalo off a cliff, now an individual hunter could ride down an animal on horseback.

The plains people were nomadic in that they followed the buffalo during the warm months moving camp sites every two weeks or so. They would stock up dried meat and other provisions for the harsh plains winters ahead. During the winters they would camp in the trees along the river bottoms which provided shelter as well as water and forage (tree bark from saplings) for their horses.

Even though they had acquired guns for hunting game and for combat with other tribes, buffalo hunting was still done on horseback with the bow and arrow. This was done until breech loading (as opposed to muzzle loading) firearms became available in the 1860s.

Horses and guns brought increased mobility and firepower which brought tribes into greater contact and conflict over control of hunting territory.

Uses of the Buffalo

The buffalo provided much of what the plains Indians needed to survive: meat for food, tanned hides for tipi covers and liners, brain-tanned robes for bedding and clothing, sinew for thread, etc. See the diagram for the “Traditional Uses for the American Bison.”



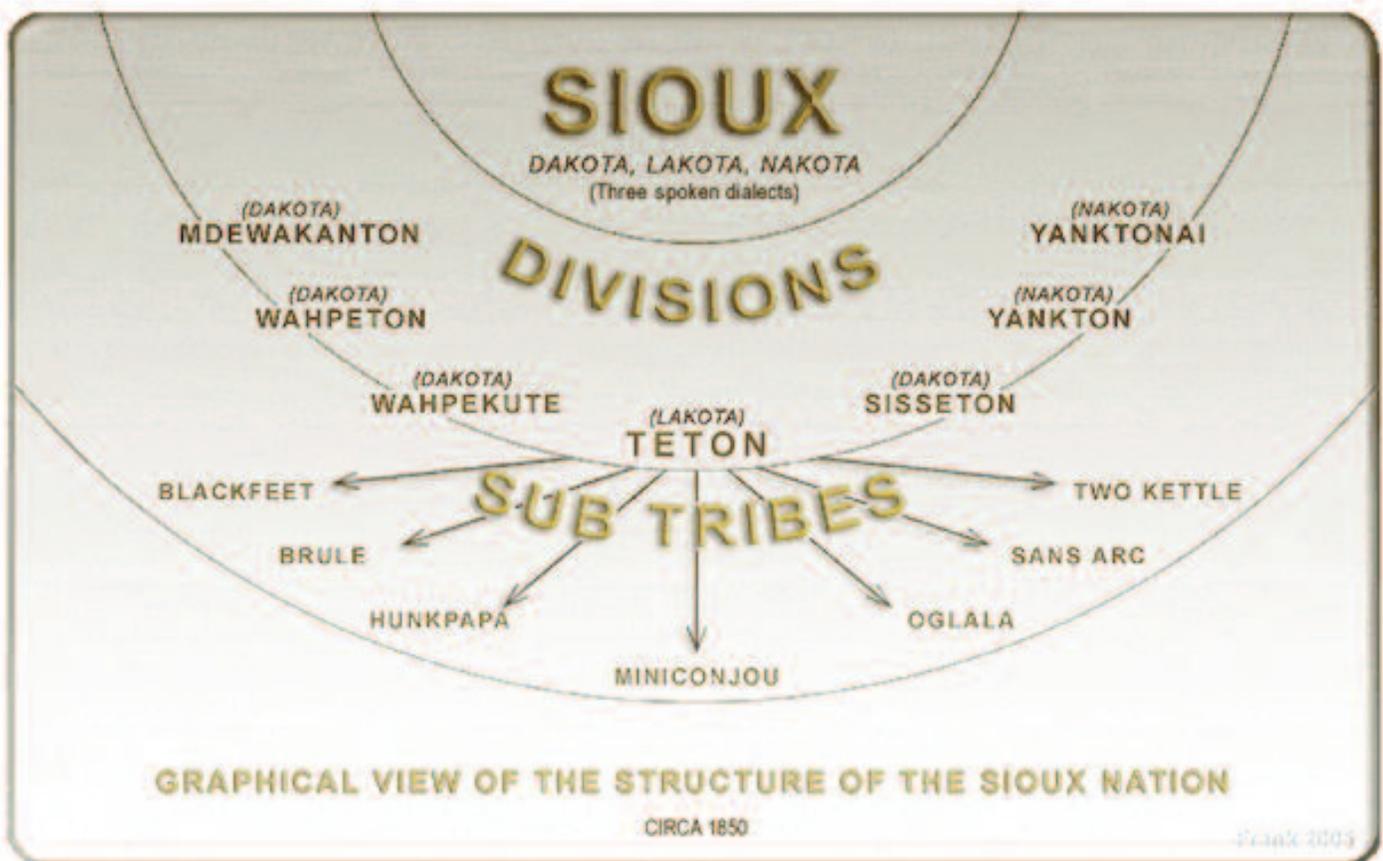
TRADITIONAL USES FOR THE AMERICAN BISON

- TENDONS & MUSCLES**
 - ARROW TIPS
 - BOWSTINGS
 - CINCHED SINOW
- TAIL**
 - DECORATIONS
 - FLY SWATTER
 - KNIFE SHEATHS
 - MEDICINE
 - SWITCH
 - WHIPS
- DUNG**
 - DIAPER
 - POWDER (LAYERED BETWEEN 2 HIDES)
 - FUEL
- TANNED HIDE**
 - BACKRESTS
 - BAGS
 - BEDS
 - BELTS
 - BRIDLES
 - CAPS
 - CRADLES
 - LEGGINGS
 - MOCCASIN TOPS
 - PILLOWS
 - POUCHES
 - ROPES
 - SWEAT LODGE COVER
 - TIP LINERS
 - TIP COVERS
 - WINTER ROBE
- HOOF SHEATH**
 - CONTAINERS
 - GLUE
 - RATTLES
 - WIND CHIMES
- SCROTUM**
 - CONTAINERS
 - RATTLES
- LIVER**
 - FOOD
 - INGREDIENT OF TANNING AGENT
- BLOOD**
 - PAINT
 - PUDDING
 - SOUP
- GALL**
 - YELLOW PAINT
- BLADDER**
 - FOOD POUCHES
 - MEDICINE BAGS
 - WATER CONTAINER
 - PORCUPINE
 - QUILL HOLDER
- STOMACH**
 - COOKING VESSEL
 - WATER CONTAINER
 - FOOD
- STOMACH CONTENTS**
 - MEDICINE
 - PAINTS
- MEAT**
 - IMMEDIATE USE
 - JERKY
 - PEMMICAN
 - SAUSAGES
- HORNS**
 - ARROW POINTS
 - CUPS
 - FIRE CARGER
 - HEADDRESS ORNAMENTS
 - LADLES
 - POWDER HORN
 - SPOONS
 - TOYS
- SKULL**
 - ALTAR
 - SUN DANCE
- TEETH**
 - ORNAMENTS
- BRAINS**
 - FOOD
 - INGREDIENT OF TANNING AGENT
- TONGUE**
 - CHOICE MEAT
- DEW CLAWS**
 - GLUE
 - KATTLES
 - WIND CHIMES
- BONES**
 - ARROWHEADS
 - AWLS
 - EATING UTENSILS
 - FLESHING TOOLS
 - GAME DICE
 - JEWELRY
 - KNIVES
 - PAINTING TOOLS
 - PIPES
 - QUIRTS
 - SADDLE TREES
 - SCRAPERS
 - SHOVELS
 - SLEDS
 - SPLINTS
 - TOYS
 - WAK CLUBS
- BEARD**
 - ORNAMENTS
- RAW HIDE ("PAR FLECHE")**
 - MASKS
 - CINCHES
 - ORNAMENTS
 - KATTLES
 - SHEATHS
 - RAWHIDE SNOWSHOES
 - TRUNKS
 - HORSE WATER TROUGH
 - MOCCASIN SOLES
 - CONTAINERS
 - QUIVERS
 - ROPES
 - SHIELDS
 - SPLINTS
 - SUNGLASSES
 - LABRATS
 - BUCKETS
 - CAPS
 - DRUMS
 - KAPTS
 - SADDLES
 - SHROUDS
 - STRAPS
- HAIR**
 - BRAIDED ROPES
 - DOLL STUFFING
 - HAIR PIECES
 - HEADDRESSES
 - HORSE HALTERS
 - MEDICINE BALLS
 - MOCCASIN LINING
 - ORNAMENTS
 - PAD FILLERS
 - PILLOW FILLERS

The Lakota Sioux

The Lakota (Teton or western Sioux) were the largest tribal group to move out onto the northern plains. From 1750 they steadily moved from southern Minnesota and the eastern Dakotas out onto the plains becoming full-time nomads. Their population increased several fold to almost 20,000 people by 1850. This was a large population when compared to the Cheyenne or Crow which numbered 3-4,000 people each. By 1850 the Lakota had divided into seven tribal groups: Hunkpapa, Blackfoot, Sans Arc, Two Kettle, Miniconjou, Oglala, and Brule.

The northern tribal groups, including the Hunkpapa, Blackfoot Sioux, Sans Arc, Two Kettle and Miniconjou, were collectively known as Saones. They generally ranged north of the Black Hills. The larger southern groups, the Oglala and the Brule, generally ranged south of the Black Hills: the Oglala ranged to the North Platte River in southeast Wyoming and the Brule to the east along the White and Niobrara rivers.



Northern Cheyenne

The Cheyenne were one of the western most tribes of the great Algonquian family. They came from a group that had a different language base than the Lakota. The whole Cheyenne population numbered around 3,000 people. In the 1830s the Cheyenne divided into two groups: the Northern Cheyenne used trading posts along the North Platte in Wyoming territory and the Southern Cheyenne used trading posts along the Arkansas River in what became southeastern Colorado. From the 1830s the Cheyenne became friendly with the Lakota Sioux and from the 1850s allied with them to resist white encroachment. Like the Lakota, the Crow and Shoshone were their traditional enemies.

The Plains Warriors

For Sioux and Cheyenne warriors, war was both sport and ceremony. It was a way to acquire horses and to win glory in combat. Warriors went to war to capture horses from their enemies and to protect and defend their hunting grounds. Horse raids might consist of a dozen warriors. War parties were larger, perhaps as many as a hundred warriors. Before the coming of the white man on the plains in the 1830s, fighting between the tribes was relatively small and sporadic.

A warrior won honor in combat by “counting coup.” A coup was an act of daring: striking an enemy, victory in hand-to-hand combat, saving a fellow warrior in battle, stealing a horse.

A warrior went into battle with a bow and arrows, a knife, a shield, a war club or hatchet, and sometimes a lance. Some warriors at the Little Bighorn carried pistols and rifles, including the latest repeaters, and cartridge belts draped over their shoulders.

Tribal Enemies: The Crow and Arikara

The Powder River country south of the Yellowstone River was originally Crow country. During the 1840s and 1850s that ground was contested by the Lakota Sioux. By the 1860s the Crow had been pushed west, north of the Bighorn Mountains. In 1800 the Arikara occupied the land along the Missouri River in present day northern South Dakota; by 1850 they had been pushed north by the Lakota into the center of present day North Dakota.

There, the Arikara allied with the Mandan-Hidatsa for self defense. During the Campaign of 1876, Crow and Arikara scouts worked for the army. This allowed the warriors to confront their long time enemies on the field of battle during the reservation period.

Plains Indians



Questions

- What factors made the life of a 19th century Plains Indian unique? How does that differ from your life today?
- Why was the horse so important to the life of Plains Indians?
- How did the buffalo affect the way Plains Indians lived? Name some items obtained from the buffalo by Plains Indians?
- Why did the Lakota Sioux present a major barrier to white culture expansion?
- What were the major differences between the Lakota and the Cheyenne?
- What were the Plains Indian man's two principle responsibilities? What were the Plains Indian warrior's two principle functions?
- Name the weapons used by the plains warriors in battle? How did this change at the Battle of the Little Bighorn?
- Why did the Crow and Arikara side with the white soldiers against the Sioux and Cheyenne?

Activities

- Match parts of buffalo to Plains Indian uses. Use “Traditional Uses for the American Bison” diagram as a guide.

Tail	Fuel
Tendons	Spoons
Stomach	Blankets
Meat	Fly Swatter
Horns	Soups
Dung	Rattles
Tanned Hide	Sinew
Blood	Fleshing Tools
Fat	Water Containers
Dew Claws	Containers (Par Fleche)
Bones	Pemmican
Raw Hide	Tanning Agent
Brains	Braided Rope
Hair	Soaps

- Watch “The Buffalo” podcast on the Little Bighorn website (www.nps.gov/libi).
- Erect a tipi.
- Research and play Indian games. Ex: Hoop and Spear, Shiny Ball, Double Ball, Ring and Pin, “Turtles and Bears” Dice Game, or Hand Games.

UNIT THREE

CLASH OF CULTURES

Objectives

- The student will be able to identify the differences between the two cultures of the mid-19th century: that of the Lakota/Cheyenne and that of the Euro-American white culture.
- The student will be able to recognize what made the Lakota/Cheyenne alliance unique among Plains Indians from the 1830s - 1870s.
- The student will be able to understand why conflict took place between the Plains Indian and white cultures.

Clash of Cultures

Land Ethic

The Lakota/Cheyenne saw land and the resources it contained (i.e. the buffalo) under communal or tribal control. The Euro-American land doctrine was one of individual ownership.

Resource Use

Overland immigrants stripped streams of trees and vegetation which provided shelter for the buffalo during the winter; without shelter provided by the vegetation the buffalo died. Steamboats used an immense amount of wood to power the boats, stripping the streams as well. When gold was discovered in the Black Hills miners rushed in to get in on a get rich quick bonanza without any thought to how they were impacting the land and game the Indians relied on for subsistence. The gold rush brought other people who supplied the miner's needs establishing communities which competed with the tribes for resources. The Lakota and Cheyenne naturally resisted.

Numbers

The Euro-American life style allowed for greater numbers to subsist off of the land. Railroads and Steamboats brought food produced by agriculture and supplies from great distances. The Plains Indian nomadic lifestyle of following the buffalo by its very nature did not allow for large concentrations of people.

Technology

Euro-Americans used steamboats and railroads for transportation. The Plains Indians relied on horses for transportation. Guns, breech loading firearms and ammunition were manufactured back east giving Euro-Americans weapon superiority. Plains Indians made bows and arrows, spears, knives and hatchets, but the metal blades for arrows, knives, and hatchets came from trading with the whites.

Competition

Despite differences in land use, there would have been competition anyway with two different groups vying for the land. The Plains Indian life-style did not allow for large concentrations of people; the tribes themselves fought for control of land that provided the resources they needed. The Lakota/Cheyenne alliance was the dominant tribal force on the Northern Plains. The clash with the Euro-Americans was two expanding groups competing for control.

Questions

- Identify the differences in Lakota/Cheyenne and Euro-American cultures.
- Would there have been conflict without those differences? Why?
- Was conflict inevitable?

Activities

- Have Teacher Read to Students: ‘A Clash of Cultures’ section of Little Bighorn Battlefield site brochure.
- Have class make a list of differences and similarities in Sioux/Cheyenne and white cultures of the mid-19th century. Identify which would lead to conflict.
- Watch “The Indians of the Battle” podcast on the Little Bighorn website (www.nps.gov/libi).
- Go to the “Road to Little Bighorn” section on the Friends of Little Bighorn site (www.friendslittlebighorn.com/Roadtolittlebighorn.htm) to discover what led to the battle.
- Go to the “Life in America 1876” section on the Friends of Little Bighorn site (www.friendslittlebighorn.com/america1876.htm) to find out what the European Americans were experiencing in 1876.

UNIT FOUR

THE CAMPAIGN OF 1876

Objectives

- The student will be able to understand why the Sioux and Cheyenne chose to concentrate under the leadership of Sitting Bull during the summer of 1876.
- The student will be able to identify the three army columns which converged on the Lakota/Cheyenne village.
- The student will be able to understand the importance of the Battle of the Rosebud as it relates to the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

The Campaign of 1876

The Lakota/Cheyenne Village

Sitting Bull was the political and spiritual leader of the Lakota who stayed away from the Indian agencies and continued to use the Powder River country south of the Yellowstone River as their homeland. It is believed that the Indians who stayed away from the agencies during the winter of 1875-76 totaled as many as 800 warriors. When the government failed in their attempt to buy the Black Hills from the Sioux, the commissioner of Indian Affairs ordered the tribes to return before January 31, 1876, or be treated as hostile. When the Indians did not comply, the army was called upon to enforce the order.

That spring and summer large numbers of Sioux and Cheyenne left the agencies, many of which gathered with Sitting Bull in southeastern Montana. Eventually, it is believed that the number of Indians warriors that gathered at the Little Bighorn on June 25, 1876, numbered 1,800-2,000.

The Summer Campaign of 1876

Three columns were to move against the Lakota/Cheyenne in southeastern Montana. One under General George Crook was to come up from the south out of Fort Fetterman in Wyoming Territory, another under Colonel John Gibbon from Fort Ellis in western Montana Territory, and a third under General Alfred Terry from Fort Abraham Lincoln in Dakota Territory. It was thought that each column could act independently, if necessary.

The Battle of the Rosebud

On June 17, 1876, about 1,000 warriors traveled more than 20 miles from their great village in the Little Bighorn Valley and attacked Crook's force of 1300 men, which included 260 Crow and Shoshone allies. In a six hour fight of charges and counter charges, Crook never got his bearings in the battle until the end. At the height of the battle Crook sent over half of his cavalry in search of a phantom Indian village up the Rosebud Creek. The Lakota and Cheyenne took advantage and almost overwhelmed a portion of his remaining force. It was only when he recalled his cavalry from their village search that the Sioux and Cheyenne broke off the fight.

Casualties in the battle were relatively light primarily because neither side got the upper hand. Though Crook remained on the battlefield after the fight, the Lakota and Cheyenne won the battle because they forced Crook to return to his base camp (near present day Sheridan, WY). There, Crook waited for reinforcements and didn't move north again for six weeks.

The Terry-Gibbon Columns

The Terry-Gibbon columns met at the mouth of the Rosebud on the Yellowstone River on June 21. On June 22 Custer's 7th Cavalry was sent to approach from the east and the remainder of the Terry-Gibbon column was to come down the Bighorn from the north in a pincers movement to corral and attack the Indian village believed to be somewhere in the Bighorn Valley. Since Custer's force was all cavalry and Terry-Gibbon's force was primarily infantry, it was believed that Custer's 7th would make the initial attack on the village. The Terry-Gibbon column was to serve as a blocking force to the north.



Questions

- Why did the Lakota and Cheyenne leave the Indian agencies in northwest Nebraska during the spring of 1876?
- Why was the army sent to force the Lakota/Cheyenne back to the agencies?
- Name the three columns of soldiers sent to force the Lakota/Cheyenne back to the Indian agencies. Where did each start from?
- What impact did Crook's retreat from the Battle of the Rosebud have on the army's summer campaign of 1876?
- Why was Custer 7th Cavalry expected to make the initial attack on the Lakota/Cheyenne village?

Activities

- Have Teacher Read to Students: 'The Campaign of 1876' section of the Little Bighorn Battlefield site brochure.
- Watch the Little Bighorn podcast Number One about what led to the battle.
- On map sheet draw and identify movements of Lakota/Cheyenne village during the last half of June 1876.
- On map sheet draw and identify army columns approaching Lakota/Cheyenne village in June 1876.
- Go to "The Montana Column" article at the Friends of Little Bighorn site (www.friendslittlebighorn.com/littlebighornmontanacolumn.htm) to find out about Gibbon's column in the Campaign of 1876.

UNIT FIVE

BATTLE OF THE LITTLE BIGHORN

Objectives

- The student will understand why Custer attacked the Lakota/Cheyenne village on June 25 with a divided command.
- The student will understand why Reno chose not to carry the attack into the village and subsequently retreat across the Little Bighorn River to the bluffs on the other side.
- The student will understand why Benteen chose not to support Custer's battalion as ordered.
- The student will be able to list the reasons why the Lakota/Cheyenne won the battle.

The Battle of Little Bighorn

Approach to Battle

Custer force marched the evening of June 24 in an attempt to come close to the Indian village without being detected. His biggest concern was that the village would scatter before he was able to bring the Sioux/Cheyenne to battle. The morning of June 25 Custer's Crow scouts identified the general location of the village. Indians were then seen in the area and Custer felt his command had been observed. He chose to attack immediately though he knew Terry's column would not be in position until June 26.

As Custer approached the village he chose to divide his command. He sent Captain Benteen with three companies to the south along the Little Bighorn to make sure there were no villages extending upstream. He sent Major Reno with three companies across the river to attack the village from the south. Custer, with five companies, then turned north along the bluffs overlooking the river in an effort to flank the village. Custer first viewed the size of the village from the bluffs overlooking the river; he was still more than a mile from where he could cross the river to attack the village. Custer then sent his famous message (written by his adjutant) "Benteen-Come On-Big Village-Be Quick-Bring Packs-P.S. Bring Packs-W.W. Cooke."

Reno in the Valley

Reno's battalion attacked the south end of the village. As warriors streamed from the village in response, Reno called for his command to halt, dismount and form a skirmish line. The Sioux warriors flanked Reno's line and he fell back into the woods. As warriors infiltrated the woods threatening his defensive position, Reno attempted to break out of the encircling warriors and led a retreat that turned into a rout across the river to the bluffs. Reno lost about 40 soldiers in the valley.

Benteen's Response

As Benteen responded to Custer's call to come quick, he came across Reno's men who had just gained the bluffs. Reno called for Benteen to stop and help him. The Indians left Reno's front and shortly, firing was heard down river. As Captain Weir and then Benteen attempted to move in the direction of the firing, the pack train finally arrived at Reno's position. Warriors viewed soldiers on the high ground that became known as Weir Point and rushed forward to force the soldiers back to Reno's original defensive position.

Custer's Last Stand

Custer apparently split his command and sent two companies down Medicine Tail Coulee toward the river, while three more companies remained on the high ground. Lakota/Cheyenne warriors responded and forced the companies moving toward Medicine Tail Ford back toward battle ridge to join the three companies moving north along the high ground. Coming under heavy attack from warriors crossing the river and moving toward the troops through the coulees and ravines, Custer's battalion was forced on the defensive and to make its stand along Battle Ridge. The battle culminated at Last Stand Hill where the bodies of George Armstrong Custer and those of several of his officers (including three company commanders) were later found.



Reno-Benteen Defense

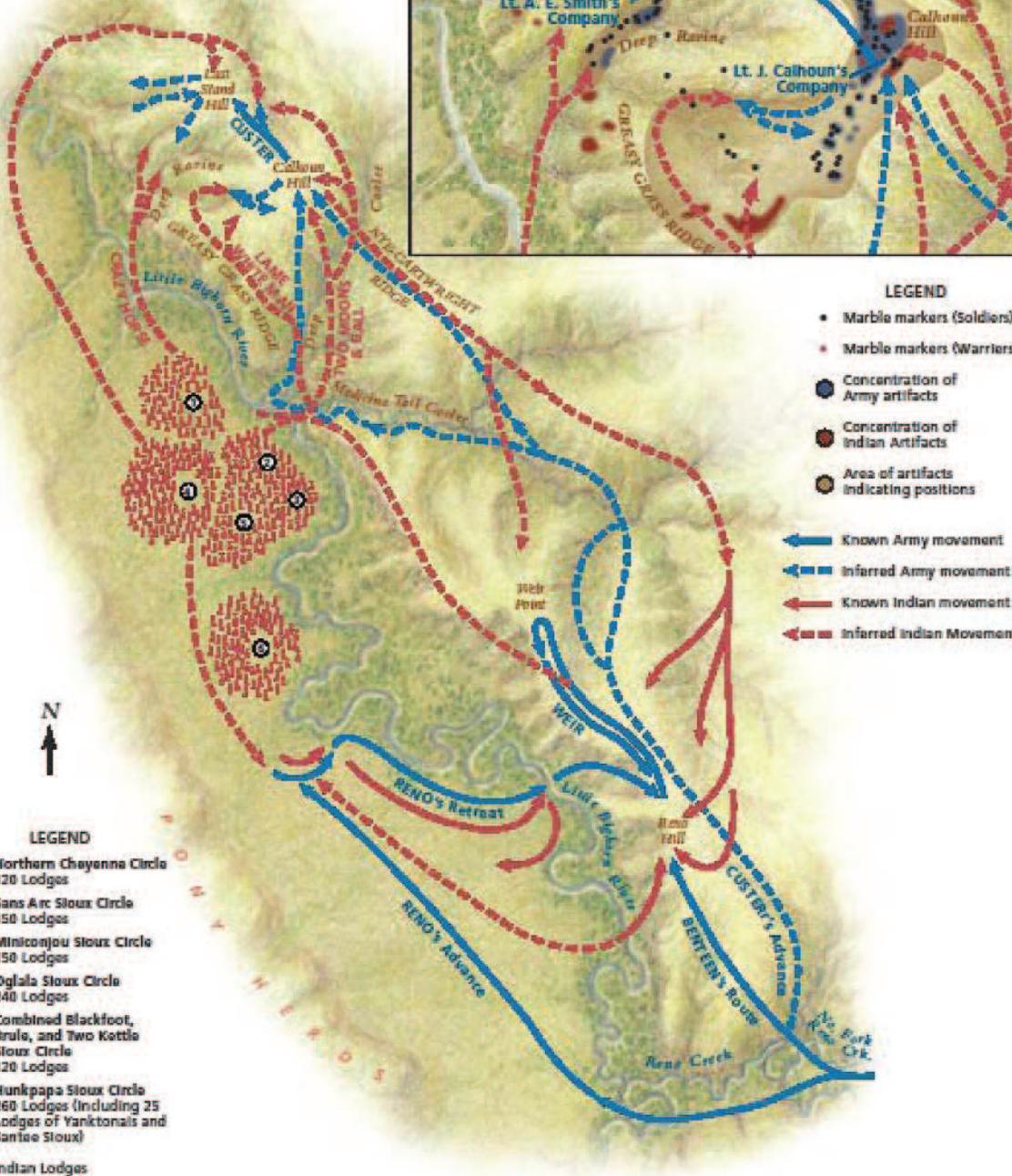
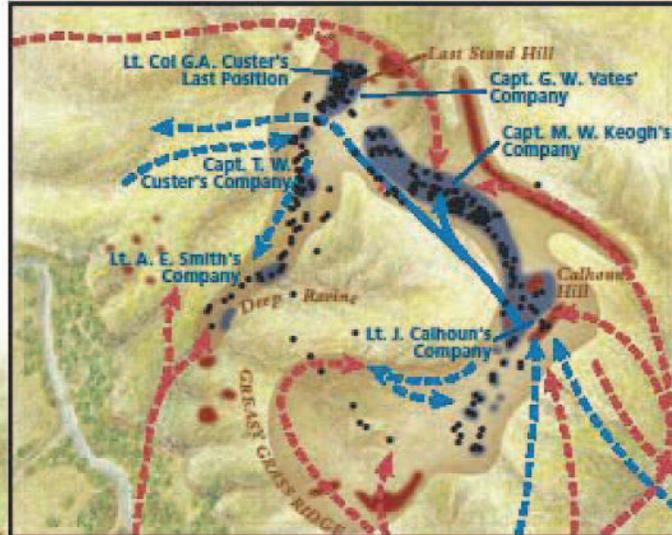
After the demise of Custer's battalion, the remainder of the 7th Cavalry under Major Reno and Captain Benteen dug in along the bluffs approximately five miles south of Last Stand Hill. They were surrounded by Lakota/Cheyenne warriors who fired into the troops inflicting a number of casualties. After initiating intensive fire at daybreak on June 26, the warrior's fire gradually lessened throughout the day. In the evening an immense procession of villagers moved off to the southwest.

Terry-Gibbon to the Rescue

Terry's column arrived from the north on June 27 relieving Reno's troops of their ordeal. It was Gibbon's chief of scouts, Lieutenant Bradley, who discovered the dead of Custer's battalion.

Battle of Little Bighorn

0 0.5 1 Kilometer
0 0.5 1 Mile
Course of the Little Bighorn
as it may have been in 1876



- LEGEND**
- Marble markers (Soldiers)
 - Marble markers (Warriors)
 - Concentration of Army artifacts
 - Concentration of Indian Artifacts
 - Area of artifacts indicating positions
 - ← Known Army movement
 - ← Inferred Army movement
 - ← Known Indian movement
 - ← Inferred Indian Movement

- LEGEND**
- ① Northern Cheyenne Circle
120 Lodges
 - ② Sans Arc Sioux Circle
150 Lodges
 - ③ Miniconjou Sioux Circle
150 Lodges
 - ④ Oglala Sioux Circle
240 Lodges
 - ⑤ Combined Blackfoot, Brule, and Two Kettle Sioux Circle
120 Lodges
 - ⑥ Hunkpapa Sioux Circle
260 Lodges (including 25 Lodges of Yanktonais and Santee Sioux)
 - Indian Lodges

Questions

- Why did Custer decide to attack the Lakota/Cheyenne village on June 25?
- Why did Custer divide the 7th Cavalry into four separate units?
- Why did Reno first halt his attack on the village and then leave the woods to retreat to the bluffs across the Little Bighorn River? Was he justified?
- Why did Benteen fail to go to Custer's aid as ordered? Was he justified?
- Why was Custer's battalion completely destroyed and Reno-Benteen's force able to survive?
- How did the Lakota/Cheyenne win the Battle of the Little Bighorn?

Activities

- Watch "The Battle" podcast on the Little Bighorn website (www.nps.gov/libi).
- Read "The Battle of the Little Bighorn" overview on the opening page of the Little Bighorn website (www.nps.gov/libi).
- Go to "The Battle" section of the Friends of the Little Bighorn Battlefield web site (www.friendslittlebighorn.com/The-battle.htm) to find more information about the battle.
- Listen to Cell Phone tour # 4 (Warriors on Last Stand Hill), 8 (Wooden Leg Hill), 17 (Sitting Bull and the Village), 18 (Reno Fight and Retreat), 21 (Sharp Shooter Ridge), 22 (Hill Top Fight), 23 (Weir Point), 27 (Greasy Grass Ridge), 28 (Finley and Finkle Ridge), and 29 (Calhoun Ridge). The phone number for the cell phone tour is (406) 214-3148.
- List advantages of both warriors and troops at the Battle of the Little Bighorn.
- Draw movements of warriors and troops on battlefield map.



UNIT SIX

IMPACT OF THE BATTLE

Objectives

- The student will be able to understand what happened to the Lakota/Cheyenne village after the battle of the Little Bighorn and why?
- The student will be able to understand why the army was generally unsuccessful through the summer after the Little Bighorn.
- The student will be able to understand why the army was successful in forcing the Lakota/Cheyenne back to the reservations during the late winter and spring of 1877.
- The student will be able to identify the different responses of Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse to army pressure during the winter of 1877.
- The student will come to understand why Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull were killed for very similar reasons, though they were killed at separate times and places.

Impact of the Battle

Lakota/Cheyenne after the Battle

The great Lakota/Cheyenne village moved off to the southwest towards the Bighorn Mountains after the Battle of the Little Bighorn. Given their lifestyle as nomadic people following the buffalo they could not maintain that large concentration of people, even in summer. The village split into three major groups. The northern bands of Lakota led by Sitting Bull stayed north along the Yellowstone River drainage in southeastern Montana. The southern bands of Lakota led by Crazy Horse moved east, north of the Black Hills in present day South Dakota. The Northern Cheyenne led by Dull Knife moved south into the Bighorn Mountains in present day Wyoming. Smaller villages splintered off from these larger villages as well.

U.S. Army after the Battle

In response to the Battle of the Rosebud and the Battle of the Little Bighorn, the army poured troops into the field to force the Indians back to the reservation. Both Crook and Terry's forces were reinforced and the two commands combined, but even separately the armies became too big and unwieldy. The Lakota/Cheyenne easily avoided them during the summer. Terry eventually called an end to the field campaign by establishing garrisons along the Yellowstone River. Crook's force came close to starvation before they discovered a small village of Lakota at Slim Buttes, September 9, 1876, north of the Black Hills. Crook's troops destroyed the small village but had little to show for the summer campaign.

Winter 1876-1877

With the coming of winter, army campaigns against the Lakota/Cheyenne became more effective. Constant harassment by the troops reduced the Indians ability to stock up supplies and food for the winter. Colonel Nelson Miles, the very able and active commander of the 5th Infantry Regiment that now garrisoned the Yellowstone river posts, kept his troops in constant motion engaging the warriors wherever found. He skirmished and fought both the Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse bands. Crook mounted a new campaign that destroyed the Northern Cheyenne village at the base of the Bighorn Mountains on November 25, 1876. Though the majority of Cheyenne escaped, they lost their homes and their winter supplies of robes and food.

Spring 1877

Small bands of Lakota began to slip back to the reservation in late January. In the spring more Lakota/Cheyenne came in to surrender. On May 6 Crazy Horse surrendered at Red Cloud Agency. Sometime in the spring Sitting Bull slipped across the border to Canada. He was to remain there five years until hunger from depleted buffalo herds and pressure from the Canadian government forced his surrender at Fort Buford, Dakota Territory, on July 19, 1881.

The Deaths of Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull

The deaths of these two Lakota men who led the resistance to the U.S. Army in 1876 had the same fundamental cause. Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull were the two most famous leaders to defeat Custer and the Seventh Cavalry at the Little Bighorn. In addition, even though both were forced to surrender to the reservation way of life, neither was able to totally embrace the change. Even passive resistance represented a threat to the white government. Though their deaths were thirteen years apart, Crazy Horse in 1877 and Sitting Bull in 1890, both men were killed while resisting arrest. In each case, though initiated by the white government, Lakota who had accepted the reservation system had a part in each man's death.

Impact of the Battle

The Battle of the Little Bighorn on June 25-26, 1876, was not only the Plains Indians greatest victory over United States troops, but it was the high water mark of their resistance to white culture encroachment. The battle proved to be the beginning of the end to their free buffalo hunting way of life.

Questions

- Why did the large Indian village break up after the battle?
- Why did the army fail to force the Lakota/Cheyenne back to the reservation during the summer of 1876? Why were they more successful during the winter?
- Where did Sitting Bull's people go during the spring of 1877?
- Why did Crazy Horse come into the reservation in May 1877?
- Why and when did Sitting Bull come back to surrender?
- Why were Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull killed after they came into the reservation?

Activities

- Watch "The Aftermath" podcast on the Little Bighorn website (www.nps.gov/libi).
- Listen to Cell Phone Tour (406-214-3148) # 3 (The White Markers), 6 (Burials on Last Stand Hill), and 9 (Horses at Little Bighorn).
- Read about the Indian Memorial on the Little Bighorn website. It can be found in the history section under places.
- Visit the Friends of the Little Bighorn Battlefield website (www.friendslittlebighorn.com/Memorials.htm and www.friendslittlebighorn.com/Archaeology.htm) to find articles on the Indian Memorial, the Granite Indian markers on the Battlefield and the archaeology of the area.
- Visit the Web Rangers website (www.webrangers.us) to find more fun National Park activities and to learn more about our National Parks.

VOCABULARY

7th Cavalry: Regiment commanded by Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer at the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

Adjutant: military staff officer who assists the commanding officer. He relays orders and instructions from the commanding officer.

Arikara: Earth lodge tribe in present day North Dakota. Lived along the Missouri River and its tributaries. Enemies of the Lakota.

Battalion: a division of the regiment made up of two or more companies.

VOCABULARY *(continued)*

Battle of the Rosebud: Battle fought between Lakota/Cheyenne and troops led by General George Crook eight days before the Little Bighorn battle. Located approximately 35 miles southeast of Custer Battlefield.

Black Hills: dark forested hills that rise out of the plains of western South Dakota. Area revered by Lakota for both spiritual meaning and game and timber resources. Gold rush precipitated Sioux War of 1876.

Buffalo Robe: a buffalo hide that has gone through the brain tanning process to make it more soft and flexible. Used for bedding and clothing.

Cantonment: temporary quarters for troops.

Captain Weir: officer who initiated search to locate Custer's battalion during the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

Colonel John Gibbon: commanding officer who led army column from Fort Ellis in western Montana Territory during campaign of 1876.

Colonel Nelson Miles: Officer who led pursuit of Lakota during winter of 1876-1877. He used the Yellowstone River cantonments as a base for his 5th Infantry Regiment.

Company: Basic division of troops in the 19th century army. At full strength a company consisted of 60 enlisted men plus officers in the cavalry and 40 men plus officers in the infantry.

Court of Inquiry: generally a military court of law judging the conduct of an officer.

Counting Coup: the touching of an enemy warrior or soldier either alive or dead in battle.

Crow: tribe who occupied the Powder River country south of the Yellowstone River until 1850. After 1850 the tribe was pushed westward by the expanding Lakota.

Custer's Last Stand: hilltop at the end of Battle Ridge in which the remainder of Custer's 7th Cavalry made their final stand. More than 50 stones mark where troopers fell in the area including that of Custer and a number of his officers.

Fort Buford: military post at the confluence of the Yellowstone and Missouri Rivers.

Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868: established Great Sioux Reservation in what became the western half of South Dakota.

Fort Robinson: military post used to police the Red Cloud Agency. Located in northwest Nebraska just south of the Great Sioux Reservation.

General Alfred Terry: commander of the Department of Dakota. Led eastern column out of Fort Abraham Lincoln near Bismarck, North Dakota during summer campaign of 1876.

General George Crook: commander of Department of the Platte. Led southern column out of Fort Fetterman in Wyoming Territory during summer campaign of 1876.

Great Sioux Reservation: essentially the western half of present South Dakota. Identified by the Treaty of 1868, it established the boundaries of the Lakota homeland.

Hunkpapa: the most prominent northern Lakota tribe during the Sioux War of 1876. Sitting Bull and Gall were Hunkpapa.

James McLaughlin: agent of the Standing Rock Indian Agency on the border of present North Dakota and South Dakota. Clashed with Sitting Bull over changing from traditional way of life. His order to arrest Sitting Bull in 1890 resulted in the death of the Lakota leader.

Lakota: western or Teton Sioux eventually consisting of seven divisions.

Lame White Man: Northern Cheyenne war leader killed at the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

Little Bighorn: name of the river where Lakota/Cheyenne were camped when attacked by the 7th Cavalry. Gave battle its name.

Oglala: southwestern most Lakota tribe located along western Cheyenne River and North Platte River (south of the Black Hills) in 1850.

Red Cloud Agency: administration and food distribution point for the Oglala Lakota and Northern Cheyenne in northwest Nebraska.

Regiment: army unit consisting of 12 companies of cavalry and 10 companies of infantry. On paper Custer's 7th Cavalry would have totaled 700 men but the units were seldom full strength. Custer also left his new recruits behind on the Yellowstone River before separating from General Terry. His total manpower at the Little Bighorn was about 600.

Sinew: a fibrous tissue which runs next to the spine and down the legs of four-footed animals. A strong substance used for tying materials together.

Spotted Tail Agency: administrative unit and food distribution point for the Brule Lakota located east of Red Cloud Agency in northwest Nebraska.

Standing Rock Agency: administrative unit and food distribution point for the northern Lakota including Sitting Bull's and Gall's Hunkpapa Lakota. Located today on the North Dakota/South Dakota line.

Sundance Ceremony: sacred ceremony where those who had taken vows endured terrible pain to purify themselves, seek visions, and dedicate themselves to the Great Spirit. Sitting Bull undertook the ceremony in early June 1876 in which he foresaw a great victory over the soldiers, predicting the Lakota/Cheyenne success at the Little Bighorn.

Tipi: buffalo hide home of the Plains Indians.

Troop: name for company unit in the cavalry.

Two Moons: Northern Cheyenne leader at the Battle of the Little Bighorn. Later gave an account of the battle.

Recommended Reading

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Stewart, Edgar I. *Custer's Luck*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1955.

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For Younger Readers:

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Goble, Paul. *The Gift of the Sacred Dog*. New York: Aladdin Paperbacks, 1987.

Nelson, S. D. *Gift Horse: A Lakota Story*. New York: Abrams Books, 1999.