

## PowerPoint: Stories of the Battle

### Story 1- A Cavalry Story:

You and the 7th US Cavalry have made it well into Indian Territory. On the 16th of November you rode and walked 25 miles and reached Beaver River (the North Canadian). You and the other men are exhausted, but your spirits lift two days later, when your column of soldiers passes over a fresh trail of a war party headed north, probably Cheyenne, on their way to attack other Indian villages.

Lt. Col. Custer and Lt. Col. Sully argue about whether you should follow the trail back to their village where the warriors came from and attack or keeping heading south. Lt. Col. Sully believes that the camp would be on alert and the troops would be ambushed. Since Sully is in charge, you and the men continuing riding past the Indian trail and Custer tells you that he thinks it was a “fine opportunity neglected.”

Later that same afternoon, the troops stop and begin work on building Camp Supply, your temporary home while in the field. The weather is turning bad quickly and the days are cold and snowy. On the night of November 22, you get word that reveille will be at 3:00 am the next morning and that you will leave out of Camp Supply at 6 am to find and strike the Indians, with enough supplies in the wagons to last a month.

The next day, after a very early morning, you and the other men spend hours trying to get the supply wagons across the fast running Canadian River, covered with ice chunks and slush. As Custer readies the troops to march south, a courier comes riding up with news from scouts who went ahead. Two large Indian trails, one used by as many as 150 warriors, has been discovered moving southeast and there is an abandoned Indian camp nearby. Thinking about what happened with Lt. Col. Sully, Custer turns to you for advice. Should he:

- A. Stay put and wait for the 19th Kansas Volunteer Cavalry to arrive. They were supposed to have arrived at Camp Supply before you left but got lost in Indian Territory. Maybe they'll be able to catch up before you follow the trail to fight the warriors.
- B. Send a message back to the scouts to stay on the trail and notify him if the trail changes. If the main command with Custer doesn't arrive by 8:00 pm the scouts are to halt and wait for them.

### Story 2- A Cheyenne Story:

November 20, 1868. Chief Black Kettle and other chiefs ride 80 miles south of their camps along the Washita into Fort Cobb. When they arrive, they see two other tribes receiving food from the military fort and camping there for protection.

Chief Black Kettle wants to speak with Colonel William Hazen, General Sherman's man to oversee Indian affairs. Black Kettle tells Hazen, “But we all want peace, and I would be glad to move my people down this way; I could then keep them all quietly near camp. My camp is now the Washita 40 miles east of Antelope Hills, and I have there about 180 lodges. I speak only for my own people. I cannot speak for nor control the Cheyennes north of the Arkansas [River].”

However, Hazen tells them he could not make peace with them and they cannot come to Fort Cobb because it might be dangerous for the tribes already there. Black Kettle finds out that north of the Arkansas River is General Sheridan, the Great War Chief, and controls the soldiers who are fighting the Cheyennes and Arapahoes. He is told that if the Great Father approves them as friendly Indians, then Hazen will call for them to come to Fort Cobb. Until then, they must return to their camps.

The leaders leave Fort Cobb just a blizzard is beginning. They return to the village late on November 26th. You sit down to eat a supper of buffalo meat, crackers and coffee in the chief's lodge. As the leaders discuss what should be done, Chief Black Kettle turns to you to ask for advice. What do you tell him?

- A. Once the snow clears up, send a delegation to look for the soldiers and try to explain who they are, that they met with Hazen and that they believe that you are allowed to be south of the Arkansas River.
- B. Move Black Kettle's camp to a more secure location closer to the downstream villages.

### Story 3- A Cavalry Story:

Finally, you mount your horse in the darkness and continue on the trail of the war party. Before you can begin moving, you must tie down all your equipment, so it does not make noise. Your buddies try to talk to you, but you remind them you can only whisper. The Osage Scouts smell smoke and see a dying wood fire. This is the fire of herders watching ponies! We are close to a village!

A ripple of excitement and fear runs through the troops and you too. Lt. Col. Custer's plan is to use the hours between now and daylight to surround the village. As soon as it is barely light enough to see, you will attack the village from all sides. You are one of 800 men being divided into four attachments. Whose command will you go with?

- A. Go with Captain Thompson. His command will move west and south of the village. You will have to cross the icy Washita, but you will be well hidden behind the hills. Your position will be exactly opposite of Custer. You will wait for the bugle to sound "Charge!" to attack.
- B. Go with Major Elliot. His command will move east of the main force, keeping behind the rocky hills in front you as protection and cover. You will settle into a tree line near a stream for the night before you attack. Elliot was part of the scouting party that found the trail into the village so he must know where he is going, right?
- C. Go with Lt. Col. Custer. Custer was a brave leader and always led a column of men into battle. With Custer would be two officers, sharpshooters and the Osage scouts. You will have to cross the Washita River as you make your way into the Cheyenne village directly from the north.

### Story 4- A Cheyenne Story:

The air is full of smoke from gunfire and it is almost impossible to run anywhere because bullets are flying all around you. Many of your people run towards the ice-covered stream where the water runs

red from the blood, from those whose legs are cut from the ice and from those who have already been killed. You and your aunt Cornstalk Woman have found a good hiding place in the tall red grass that the horses have not eaten yet on a hillside southwest of the village. You lay still and quiet in the grass, but your heart is beating fast and you can hardly catch your breath from the running. The sun is out now, and the day is bright. You can hear the noises of your people being killed in the village. Since you are south of the main village, soldiers are passing through this area more slowly, looking for any women or children who have escaped. You shift in the grass to catch a glimpse of the soldiers and you make eye contact with one of them! He rides towards you and your aunt. What do you do?

- A. Jump up from your hiding spot and try to outrun the soldier on horseback.
- B. Don't move. If you remain still and quiet, he might believe he made a mistake.

#### Story 5- A Cavalry Story:

Suddenly, the trouble of Captain Thompson's command becoming lost in the red hills south of the camp becomes obvious to you. There is a gap between you and where Major Elliot's command rode in where Captain Thompson should have been! Cheyenne are running quickly through the gap and escaping downstream. You remember the pony trail north of the river heading in the same direction that all the fleeing women and children are running now. What could they possibly be running towards? Major Elliot and Sergeant Major Kennedy ride on top of hill and look through their field glasses. They see men and boys hiding in the woods below you. Major Elliot calls for volunteers to join him in this fight. He yells "Here goes for a brevet or a coffin!" Do you volunteer to join him?

- A. No. You are so cold and so tired from fighting even though it is only 9:00 in the morning. You decide to go back towards the main village.
- B. Yes! This is your chance to show your bravery, impress your superiors and earn a high rank. You step up and tell Major Elliot that you will go and chase these Indians downstream, no matter the cost.

#### Story 6- A Cheyenne Story:

The battle is over, you see a wagon arrive and it is full of bullets to supply the soldiers' guns. How many more of your people are they going to kill? Suddenly you realize that they are gathering up the ponies and mules near a high bluff south of the village. The animals are difficult to corral and recoil at the soldiers' presence. The horses are like a member of your family and you cannot bear to think what the soldiers might do next. They are asking you to help to round up the ponies. What do you do?

- A. You no longer have your weapons, you are tired, cold and scared. Even though it is very painful to watch the ponies get killed, you are afraid you will be shot and killed on the spot if you do not help.
- B. Refuse to help round up the ponies despite the consequences.