

The Last Stand at the Little Bighorn River

Introduction

The Battle of the Little Bighorn, also known as Custer's Last Stand, was a pivotal event in the history of the American West. On June 25, 1876, Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer and his 7th Cavalry Regiment were annihilated by a combined force of Lakota Sioux and Northern Cheyenne warriors. The battle was a stunning defeat for the United States Army and marked a turning point in the Indian Wars.

Custer's defeat was the result of several factors, including his own arrogance and underestimation of his enemy. He also made several tactical mistakes, such as dividing his battalion into three separate columns and attacking the Native American village without

waiting for reinforcements. The Native Americans, on the other hand, fought with great skill and determination. They used their superior knowledge of the terrain to their advantage and were able to outmaneuver and outfight Custer's troops.

The Battle of the Little Bighorn was a tragedy for both sides. Hundreds of lives were lost, and the battle left a lasting legacy of bitterness and resentment. However, the battle also had a profound impact on American history. It helped to galvanize public support for the Indian Wars and led to a reassessment of the government's Indian policy.

In the years since the battle, the Little Bighorn has become a symbol of both American triumph and tragedy. It is a reminder of the violence and brutality that characterized the settlement of the American West. It is also a reminder of the resilience and courage of the Native American people.

Today, the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument preserves the site of the battle. Visitors can walk the same ground where Custer and his men fought and died. The battlefield is a powerful reminder of the events of that fateful day and offers a unique opportunity to learn about the history of the American West.

Book Description

The Battle of the Little Bighorn was a pivotal event in the history of the American West. On June 25, 1876, Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer and his 7th Cavalry Regiment were annihilated by a combined force of Lakota Sioux and Northern Cheyenne warriors. The battle was a stunning defeat for the United States Army and marked a turning point in the Indian Wars.

This book provides a comprehensive overview of the Battle of the Little Bighorn, from its historical context to its aftermath. It examines the causes of the battle, the military strategies of both sides, and the events of the battle itself. The book also explores the legacy of the battle, including its impact on American history and culture.

The book is based on extensive research, including primary sources such as letters, diaries, and military reports. It also draws on the latest scholarship on the

Battle of the Little Bighorn. The book is written in a clear and engaging style, making it accessible to a wide audience.

This book is essential reading for anyone interested in the history of the American West, the Indian Wars, or military history. It is also a valuable resource for students, teachers, and researchers.

In addition to the main narrative, the book includes a number of special features, such as:

- Detailed maps of the battlefield
- Photographs of key figures and events
- Excerpts from primary sources
- A timeline of the battle
- A glossary of terms

These features help to bring the Battle of the Little Bighorn to life and make it more accessible to readers.

Chapter 1: Prelude to the Battle

1. The Growing Tensions between Settlers and Natives

The growing tensions between settlers and Natives in the American West were the result of a number of factors, including the influx of settlers onto Native American land, the destruction of the buffalo herds, and the government's policies of assimilation and removal.

The influx of settlers onto Native American land began in the early 19th century, as the United States expanded westward. Settlers were drawn to the West by the promise of land, gold, and other resources. As settlers moved into Native American territory, they often displaced the Native Americans who had lived there for generations.

The destruction of the buffalo herds was another major factor in the growing tensions between settlers and

Natives. The buffalo was a vital resource for Native Americans, providing them with food, clothing, and shelter. However, as settlers moved into the West, they began to hunt the buffalo for their meat and hides. The destruction of the buffalo herds had a devastating impact on Native American communities, as it deprived them of their primary source of sustenance.

The government's policies of assimilation and removal also contributed to the growing tensions between settlers and Natives. The government's goal was to assimilate Native Americans into white society, and to remove them from their traditional lands and way of life. These policies were often coercive and resulted in the loss of Native American land and culture.

The growing tensions between settlers and Natives eventually led to a number of conflicts, including the Battle of the Little Bighorn. The Battle of the Little Bighorn was a watershed moment in the history of the

American West, and it marked the beginning of a new era of conflict between settlers and Natives.

Chapter 1: Prelude to the Battle

2. The US Government's Response: Military Intervention

In the years leading up to the Battle of the Little Bighorn, the United States government had been pursuing a policy of military intervention against the Native American tribes of the Great Plains. This policy was motivated by a number of factors, including the desire to expand American territory, the need to protect white settlers, and the belief that the Native Americans were a savage and inferior race.

One of the most important factors driving the government's military intervention was the desire to expand American territory. In the 1860s and 1870s, the United States was rapidly expanding westward, and the Native American tribes of the Great Plains were seen as a barrier to this expansion. The government believed that the Native Americans could not be assimilated into

white society and that they must be removed from their lands in order to make way for white settlement.

Another factor driving the government's military intervention was the need to protect white settlers. In the 1860s and 1870s, there were a number of conflicts between white settlers and Native American tribes on the Great Plains. These conflicts often resulted in the deaths of white settlers, and the government felt that it had a responsibility to protect its citizens from these attacks.

Finally, the government's military intervention was also motivated by the belief that the Native Americans were a savage and inferior race. Many white Americans believed that the Native Americans were incapable of living in peace with white people and that they must be either removed from their lands or exterminated. This belief was reinforced by the fact that the Native Americans had a different culture and way of life than white Americans.

The government's military intervention against the Native American tribes of the Great Plains was a brutal and bloody affair. The army used a variety of tactics to defeat the Native Americans, including massacres, forced relocations, and starvation. By the end of the 1870s, the Native American tribes of the Great Plains had been defeated and their lands had been taken over by white settlers.

Chapter 1: Prelude to the Battle

3. General Custer's Ambitious Plan

Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer was a brilliant and ambitious officer. He had a distinguished record in the Civil War, and he was eager to make a name for himself in the Indian Wars.

In 1876, Custer was assigned to lead the 7th Cavalry Regiment in a campaign against the Sioux and Cheyenne tribes. Custer's orders were to find and destroy the Native American villages in the Black Hills of South Dakota.

Custer was confident that he could defeat the Native Americans. He believed that his troops were superior in training and equipment. He also underestimated the number of Native Americans he would be facing.

Custer's plan was to divide his regiment into three columns and attack the Native American village from

three different directions. He believed that this would confuse and overwhelm the Native Americans.

However, Custer's plan was flawed. He did not take into account the terrain of the battlefield. The Little Bighorn River valley was full of ravines and hills, which gave the Native Americans cover.

Custer also did not take into account the fighting ability of the Native Americans. The Sioux and Cheyenne were skilled warriors, and they were determined to defend their homeland.

Custer's plan failed disastrously. His troops were surrounded and annihilated by the Native Americans. Custer himself was killed in the battle.

Custer's defeat was a major setback for the United States Army. It also marked a turning point in the Indian Wars. The Native Americans had shown that they were capable of defeating the United States Army in battle.

This extract presents the opening three sections of the first chapter.

Discover the complete 10 chapters and 50 sections by purchasing the book, now available in various formats.

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