

CUSTER'S SCOUTS at LITTLE BIG HORN

In many wars against the plains indians and in the campaigns against the sioux people, the US Army used scouts from other tribes to track the enemies. Here's some fact about the six Crow scouts that Custer used in the battle of Little Big Horn. Their names were: Curley, Whiteman Runs Him, Hairy Moccasin, Goes Ahead, Half Yellow Face, White Swan. In the fight was also Bloody Knife, Custer's favourite scout, and one of 39 Arikara scouts.



Custer's scouts at Little Big Horn battlefield 1908

Accompanying Custer and his forces after their separation from Benteen and Reno were four Crow Scouts: Curley, Goes Ahead, Hairy Moccasin and White Man Runs Him. Two Crow Scouts remained with Reno, Half Yellow Face and White Swan. When Custer's troop came into contact with the Indian village, the scouts were excused; they had done their job. Among them, Curley refused to leave. Nevertheless, Mitch Bouyer, one of Custer's mixed-blood French and Lakota guides, insisted that the 17 year old Curley depart, allegedly telling Curley that "We have no chance at all," and relay the message to Terry that "all are killed." In 1983, archeological exploration of the battlefield was conducted. Previously unidentified remains were found. Using modern forensic science, the remains of Boyer were identified.

Curley departed and was able to observe the battle with a spy glass from a ridge about a mile and a half away. He then eluded the Sioux by crawling through coulees until he found the pony of a dead Sioux, taking the Sioux pony and blanket, he then rode two and a half days until he found the Steamboat Far West, where through sign language and drawing he was able to disclose the disaster. Because of language difficulties, however, the extent of the disaster was not fully realized.



Curley and White Swan 1903



Curley (Ashishishe)
1856? - 1923

Curley was the youngest of the Crow scouts with Custer. He was probably about 20 years old the day of the battle. Curley is the English name for Ashishishe, a Native American of the Crow tribe. Ashishishe was born in approximately 1856 in Montana, the son of Strong Bear (Inside the Mouth) and Strikes By the Side of the Water. Curley resided on the Crow Reservation in the vicinity of Pryor Creek, and married Bird Woman. He enlisted in the U.S. Army as an Indian scout on April 10, 1876 and was later chosen to scout for the Seventh Cavalry during the Little Bighorn expedition in 1876 along with fellow Crow warriors White Man Runs Him, Goes Ahead, Hairy Moccasin and others. He carried the news of the battle to the steamboat Far West at the mouth of the Little Bighorn. He witnessed parts of the Battle of the Little Bighorn, and his translated account later appeared in several newspapers, as he was thought to be the only surviving witness from the U.S. side of Custer's Last Stand. Curley later gave several variations on his account, and the accuracy of his recollections has been questioned.



However, two of the most influential historians of the Battle of the Little Bighorn, Walter Mason Camp (who interviewed Curley on several occasions) and John S. Gray, accepted Curley's account. Curley later lived on the Crow Reservation on the bank of the Little Bighorn River, close to the site of the Battle. He served in the Crow Police. He divorced Bird Woman in 1886, and married Takes a Shield. Curley had one daughter Awakuk Korita ha Sakush ("Bird of Another Year") who took the English name Nora. Curley received a U.S. pension as of 1920. He died May 21, 1923 at his ranch home near Crow Agency of pneumonia, and his remains were interred in the National Cemetery at the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, only a mile from his home.



Whiteman Runs Him 1908

Whiteman Runs Him (Mahr-Itah-Thee-Dah-Ka-Roosh)
c. 1858 - June 2, 1929

was a Crow scout serving with George Armstrong Custer's 1876 expeditions against the Sioux and Northern Cheyenne that culminated in the Battle of the Little Big Horn. His accounts of the battle and the events leading up to the battle are invaluable to modern historians but were largely ignored for nearly a hundred years.

Also known as Crow Who Talks Gros Ventre and White Buffalo That Turns Around, he was born into the Bear Lodge Clan of the Crow nation, the son of Bull Chief and Offers Her Red Cloth. At the age of about 18, he volunteered to serve as a scout with the United States Army on April 10, 1876, in its campaign against the Sioux and Northern Cheyenne, traditional enemies of the Crow.



Originally assigned to the infantry, he was later transferred to Custer's Seventh U.S. Cavalry. He scouted for Lieutenant Charles Varnum's column in the days preceding the battle. On June 25, 1876, he accompanied Varnum and Custer to the Crow's Nest, a natural rock formation overlooking the Little Big Horn valley, to assess the situation. The Crow scouts, including White Man Runs Him, Goes Ahead, Curley, Hairy Moccasin and others, advised Custer to wait for reinforcements. Custer refused their advice however and prepared to attack. When Custer saw the scouts taking off their uniforms and putting on Crow war clothing, he demanded to know what they were doing. They responded that they wished to die as warriors rather than soldiers. Angered, Custer sent them away about an hour before engaging in the final battle. White Man Runs Him retired to a ridge along with Goes Ahead, Hairy Moccasin, and Strikes That Bear to join Major Marcus Reno. They were engaged briefly in battle but would survive the engagement. He then joined Colonel John Gibbon's column.



After the battle, he lived on the Crow reservation near Lodge Grass, Montana. He was the stepgrandfather of Joe Medicine Crow, a Crow tribal historian who used his grandfather's stories as a basis for his later histories of the battle and grandfather to Pauline Small, the first woman elected to the Crow Tribe of Indians. His status as a Little Big Horn survivor made him a minor celebrity late in life and he even made a cameo appearance in the 1927 Hollywood movie, "Red Raiders".



Despite his fame, his accounts of the battle and Custer's command were largely ignored for nearly a century. The United States Army and Custer's widow Libby had begun a public relations campaign to portray Custer as a gallant fallen hero. The Crow scouts depiction of Custer as vainglorious, headstrong, and reckless did not fit with the accepted view of the time. White Man Runs Him, the other surviving scouts, as well as Sioux and Cheyenne warriors told their side of the story to photographer and writer Edward S. Curtis in the early 20th Century. His book told their story, but even he left out the more controversial parts of the account. It wasn't until the late 20th Century when Curtis's private notes became public that most historians began to take a second look at Native American accounts of the battle. White Man Runs Him lived the remainder of his life on the Crow reservation in the Big Horn Valley region of Montana, just a few miles from the site of the famous battle. He died there in 1929 and was buried in the cemetery at the Little Big Horn Battlefield.



US General E S Godfrey and White Man Runs Him at a monument marker at the site of the Battle of Little Bighorn, Montana, where the Seventh Cavalry was massacred by the Sioux and Cheyenne American Indians. This photograph was taken on 25 June 1926, 50 years after the battle took place there.





Hairy Moccasin (Esh-sup-pee-me-shish)
? - 1922

was a Crow scout for George Armstrong Custer's Seventh Cavalry during the 1876 campaign against the Sioux and Northern Cheyenne. He was a survivor of the Battle of the Little Big Horn. He volunteered to become an Army scout on April 10, 1876, and joined fellow Crow warriors White Man Runs Him, Curley, Goes Ahead and several others to assist the Army's fight against the Sioux and Northern Cheyenne. Both tribes were traditional enemies of the Crow. After scouting the encampment on the banks of the Little Big Horn River, they reported to Custer. After Custer refused their advice to wait for reinforcements, Hairy Moccasin was dismissed by Custer about an hour before the last stand. He joined Strikes the Bear, White Man Runs Him, and Goes Ahead with Major Marcus Reno's column on the ridge overlooking the last stand. Attacked but not overrun, most of Reno's men survived the engagement. After the Black Hills War ended, Hairy Moccasin settled onto the Crow Reservation in Montana. He died October 9, 1922 near Lodge Grass and was buried in Saint Ann's Cemetery.



Goes Ahead
1851 - 1919

Usually called Goes Ahead, this scout had several names - The First One, Goes First, The One Ahead, Comes Leading, Man-With-Fur-Belt, and Child of the Stars. He played the same role in the Battle of the Little Bighorn as Hairy Moccasin and Whiteman Runs Him, starting out with Custer, then going to the ridge top and becoming involved in the hilltop fight. The scouts sighted the encampment on the banks of the Little Big Horn River near the current site of Crow Agency, Montana. On June 25, 1876, Goes Ahead and the other scouts warned Custer not to attack but to wait for reinforcements. Custer refused their advice and prepared for an attack. Goes Ahead and the others took off their Army issued uniforms and put on traditional Crow clothing with eagle feathers to assist their flight to the spirit world should they be killed. When Custer saw this, he was enraged seeing the move as defeatism and he dismissed the scouts. Goes Ahead and the others joined Major Marcus Reno on the ridge overlooking the last stand. Attacked but not overrun, Marcus's column survived the engagement.



GOES AHEAD, CUSTER SCOUT — CROW

Goes Ahead 1925

After the battle, Goes Ahead settled on the Crow reservation, married and had a family. He was interviewed by historian and photographer Edward S. Curtis in the early 20th Century. His book was one of the first to present a balanced account of the battle to the general public but even then the more controversial parts of the story were not disclosed. The whole account of Curtis's interviews with Goes Ahead and the other Crow scouts would not become general knowledge until Curtis's notes became public in the 1990s more than 40 years after his death.

Goes Ahead died on May 31, 1919, and was buried at the Little Bighorn Battlefield Cemetery. His widow, Pretty Shield, who was a source of information for historians on the battle, lived until 1944. She was 92 when she died on April 30 of that year. She was interred next to her husband in the Battlefield cemetery.



Half Yellow Face ? - 1879

Crow born in Montana Territory. Joined 7th cavalry on April 10, 1876 as a Corporal, Indian Scout. Was at little Big Horn in the valley and hilltop fights. He died in 1879 at Fort Custer, Montana Territory. The place of his grave is unknown





White Swan
1851 - 1904

Crow born in 1851, Montana Territory. He joined the 7th cavalry on April 10, 1876 as a Private, Indian Scout. He was in the valley and hilltop fights at Little Big Horn and became wounded. He died August 12, 1904 at Crow Agency, Montana Territory. His grave is unknown.



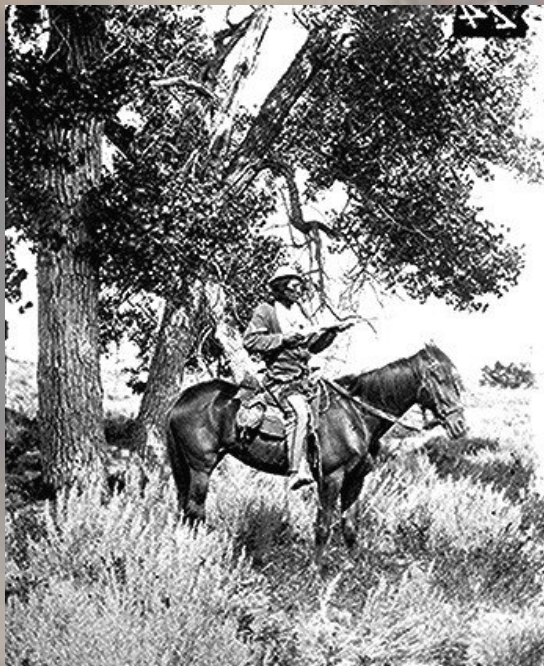


Custer and Bloody Knife (kneeling left) 1874

Bloody Knife
1837 - 1876

Arikara born in the Hunkpapa Reservation, Dakota Territory. His father was Hunkpapa and his mother was Ree(Arikara). He spent his first 16 years with his father but was frequently taunted, beaten and abused for being a "half-breed". At age 16, he left the Sioux camp with his mother but returned in 1860 to visit his father. Bloody Knife was still despised by the Sioux, and was almost killed during his visit. Chief Gall, a leader of the Hunkpapa, killed Bloody Knife's two brothers in 1862. Bloody Knife was married to She Owl in 1866.

In 1868, Bloody Knife enlisted as a scout in the U.S. Army and was assigned to the 7th Cavalry. He quickly became George Armstrong Custer's favorite scout. He was insolent toward whites and ridiculed them. He often amused Custer by ridiculing his marksmanship. Custer never got angry and often gave gifts to Bloody Knife.



Bloody Knife

In 1874, Bloody Knife guided the 7th through the Black Hills. He was with Custer in the Little Bighorn campaign and told

Custer there were too many Indians to fight, a warning Custer ignored. Bloody Knife, in turn, ignored Custer's plea for him to stay out of the battle. Bloody Knife was assigned to Major Marcus Reno during the Battle of the Little Bighorn and was killed by a shot to the head as he was standing beside Reno in the battle. Reno was attempting to ask him what the Indians were doing when he was shot and his blood splattered Reno's face. Reno then lost all inhibition and barked out orders that did not make sense before fleeing. It has been speculated that Bloody Knife's blood splattering put Major Reno in a state of shock. Bloody Knife was beheaded by the Sioux, who took the head to their camp. His grave is in the valley, Little Big Horn Battlefield, Montana.

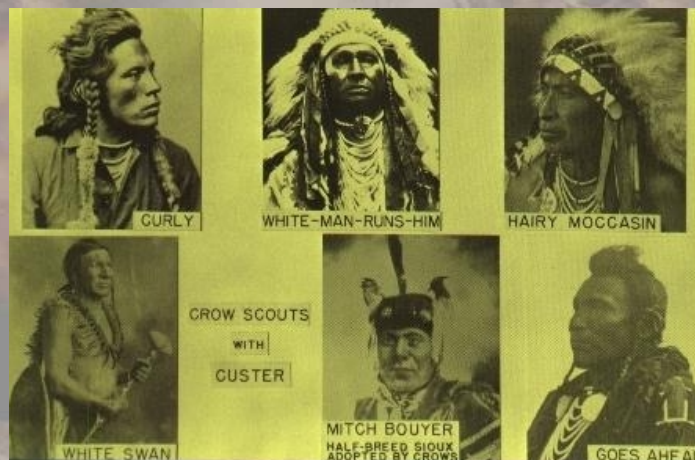
Sources:

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Wikipedia The free Encyclopedia



Custer's Crow scouts visit Custer Battlefield about 1913. Left to right: White-Man-Runs-Him, Hairy Moccasin, Curley, Goes Ahead.



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