

## GRIERSON (Cont.)

General William Hoffman, Third Infantry, commander of Fort Leavenworth, disliked negroes and the officers that served with them. He tried to make our stay there as uncomfortable as possible. He quartered the men on low ground which soon became a swamp causing several of the men to fall ill with pneumonia. He ignored my pleas to at least create walk ways so the men could keep their feet dry. Hoffman was very petty issuing dozens of complaints against my men for minor trumped up infractions. During inspection my company commanders were ordered to keep the Negro troops at least ten to fifteen yards from the white troops and we were not allowed to march in review. Other times he told us simply to stay out of sight! I fought back, protested mainly to no avail. I instructed our company commanders to strike the word "colored" from our reports. We are simply the Tenth Regiment of Cavalry, United States Army! There are Old Fogies in this army that still see no place for the Negro, they would love to disband the colored regiments. But I SAY, Colored troops will hold their place in the Army of the United States as long as the government lasts.

(Lights down, GRIERSON, Lights up, WARD.)

## WARD

Now, Bobby, I'll split my story up in two parts. First I'll tell ya about the legendary and heroic Ninth Cavalry and then when I'm through talkin' about the Ninth, I'll tell ya about the legendary and heroic TENTH Cavalry. Let me explain somethin' to ya. I didn't fight in the Indian Wars. I joined the Tenth Cavalry in 1916. But when I talk about those that DID fight the Indians, it was like I WAS there. Because I am, a buffalo soldier. All of us, past and present, take the credit for our honor and our shame.

(Black out WARD, fade up three black soldiers. SHARPE is pacing, upset while BOYER and TRIMBLE, are sitting at a wooden table.)

## SHARPE

I don't know, Andrew, we been here now going on three months. They can't find no white officer that wanna take charge. You seen the supplies they send us. Look how many men are in the infirmary SICK...twenty-three done died of cholera! And they wonder why the men is runnin' off.