

STANCE

(Laughing.) Trimble ain't tellin' no lie. Shucks, Quartermaster sent us that junk they'd call supplies, bad rifles, bad ammo...We had to grow some vegetables keep that scurvy from killing us. Good thing most of us ain't never seen no better. Some of us ran off in the beginning, went to Mexico joined up with Indians, desperados, but by 1876 the white Seventh Cavalry had 72 deserters, the Third had 170, the Fifth had 224 but the all black Ninth had 6, you hear me SIX and the Tenth had 18. The lowest desertion rate in the army.

BOYER

And you now if the white fellas was runnin' off like that, you know, you KNOW it was bad! Say now, what about ole William Cathy?

(They laugh.)

TRIMBLE

Now, there's, there's a story. William Cathy served two years as a Buffalo soldier and earned an award for bravery. The hitch was he wasn't William Cathy, SHE was Cathy Williams! For two years she posed as a man so she could be a buffalo soldier. Ain't that kick in the head.

STANCE

Like her, we just wanted to soldier! We liked the hard work, the discipline, being with ya comrades. But before long the War Department had us smack dab in the middle of things.

TRIMBLE

Major George A. Forsyth, Third Infantry, with his second in command Lieutenant Frederick Beecher had just left Fort Wallace, Kansas and was thirteen miles east investigating an Indian attack on a freight train. They camped that night along a fork of the Republican River but little did they know that many of them wouldn't see another day.

BOYER

Cheyenne war parties had come up through the Saline and Solomon rivers like a tornado - attackin' settlements. Us Buffalo soldiers got orders to force the Indians south of the Kansas line. We had been up and down the Smoky Hill, Saline and Solomon rivers, scoutin'. Suddenly, we come up on two of Forsyth's scouts, they commenced to sayin' Forsyth's camp had been attacked and was surrounded by hostiles. In desperate straits they was running out of rations, medicine, many had been wounded.