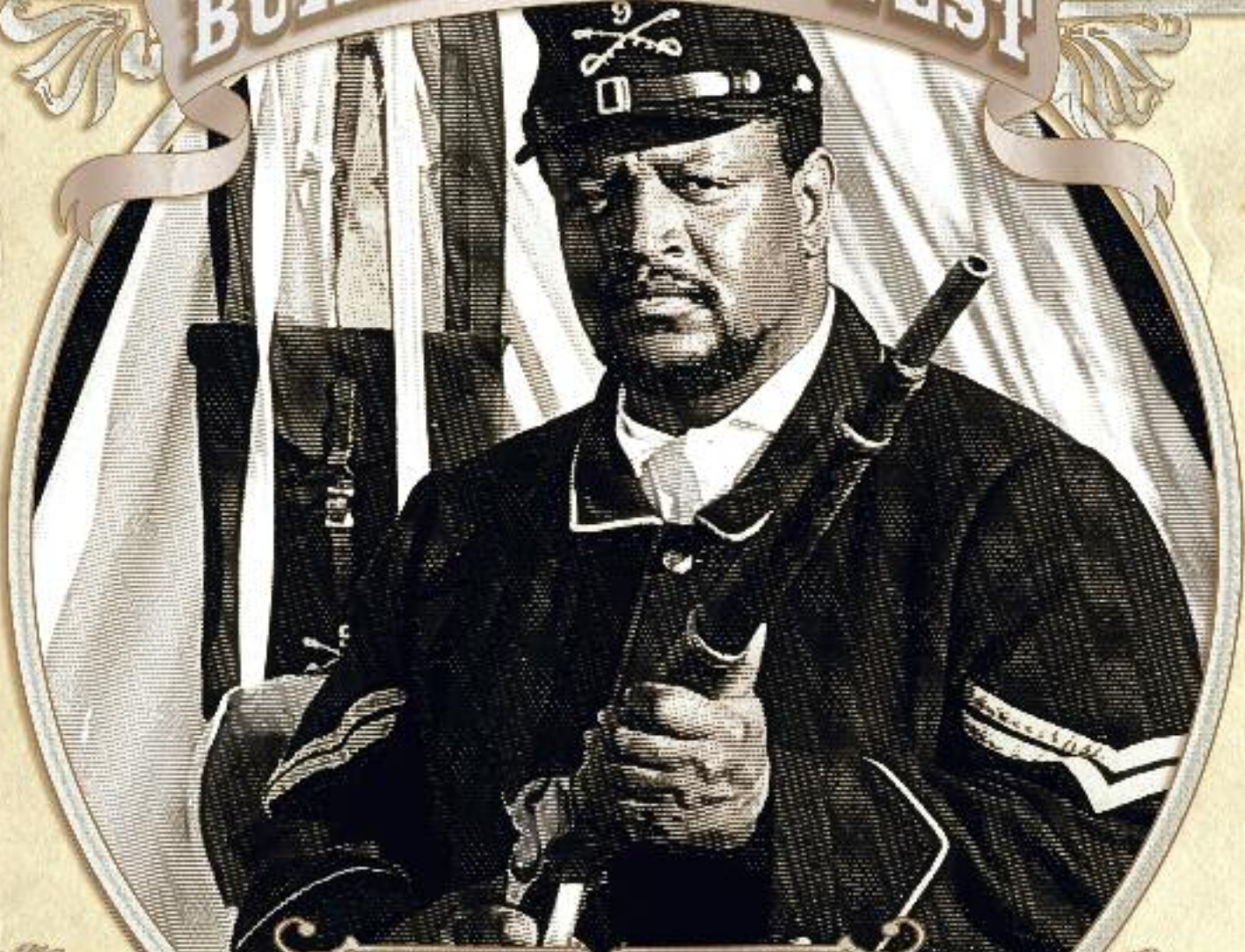


Keep Texas Wild

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BUILDING THE WEST



THE FIRST AFRICAN-AMERICANS TO SERVE in the U.S. military during a time of peace were called "Buffalo Soldiers" by the Cheyenne Indians. The soldiers were given this name because of their strength and courage in battle and their dark, curly hair, which resembled the mane of the buffalo. Life on the frontier was hard, but during the Indian War campaigns of 1866- 1892, four regiments of Buffalo Soldiers lived and worked in some of the most remote and dangerous parts of the United States. Their dedication helped to build the American West.

BUFFALO SOLDIERS

DAILY LIFE

SINCE WOMEN WERE NOT allowed to serve in the army in 1866, Cathay Williams changed her name to "William Cathay" and pretended to be a man. Williams was the first African-American woman to enlist in the U.S. Army, and the only known female Buffalo Soldier. Two years later, a doctor discovered her real identity and she was discharged. Today she is a famous and honored historical figure.



Famous figures
CATHAY WILLIAMS



WHILE ON CAMPAIGN, Buffalo Soldiers lived and worked in military camps. These were arranged in a straight line, almost like a street. Most soldiers had to carry their own tents when they moved camps. The type of tent would vary according to the soldier's

SINCE MOST BUFFALO SOLDIERS had been slaves before the Civil War, very few had received formal education. Serving in the military gave them an opportunity to learn. Often chaplains (military preachers) taught the soldiers how to read and write. Playing cards, which had no written numbers in the late 1800s, were used to teach memorization and counting. For example, soldiers learned to count to six by counting the number of hearts, spades, clubs or diamonds on the card.



OFTEN THE MOST DIFFICULT PART of being a Buffalo Soldier wasn't fighting battles or saving stagecoaches; it was the long weeks spent waiting for the next mission, the days spent doing routine assignments. In this way, the life of a Buffalo Soldier was very similar to our own. He even



LEARNING



READY AND FORWARD!

SOLDIERS

Life in Camp

rank. For example, pairs of enlisted men, the lowest rank, shared a tent and each man carried half of it. Even after a long day of traveling, Buffalo Soldiers liked to sing around the campfire before they went to sleep.



SERGEANT EMANUEL STANCE was the first African-American to receive the medal of honor after the Civil War. He was commended for leading two brave charges against Indians raiding wagons and trying to steal horses. During the Indian Wars, 18 Buffalo Soldiers received the Medal of Honor, the highest award of the U.S. military.



Famous figures
EMANUEL STANCE

IN ADDITION to protecting frontier outposts and railroads from attack, Buffalo Soldiers scouted out many of the roads we use today, aided officers in taking measurements and drawing maps, and built the first telegraph lines in Texas.



A SOLDIER'S LIFE

had to brush his teeth, though his toothbrush wasn't quite like the kind we buy at the store! The handle was made of wood or bone, and the brush was made of pig bristles or some other type of stiff, coarse animal hair that had been cleaned and boiled. For toothpaste, a soldier would use baking soda or even fire ash.



ILLUSTRATION BY AUGGIE HAUNDT/PMW



Spike's Activity Page



>> WILD SCIENCE



SINCE BUFFALO SOLDIERS were often on the move, they needed food stores that would stay good for a long time. A type of bread called "hardtack," which looks a lot like a Pop-Tart® with no frosting, would not mold and could be eaten up to several years after it was made.

Here's an experiment you can do at home. With your parents' help, make your own hardtack using the recipe below, and then test the hardtack in different conditions. For example, will the hardtack mold if it gets wet? How quickly does regular sliced bread mold under the same conditions? What do you think makes hardtack so special?

Ingredients:

- 4 cups flour (preferably whole wheat flour)
- 4 teaspoons salt
- Water (about 2 cups)

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees.
Mix the flour and salt together in a

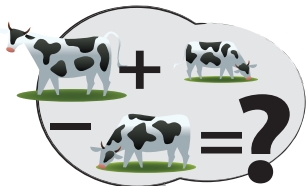
bow. Add just enough water (less than two cups) so that the mixture will stick together, producing a dough that won't stick to your hands, rolling pin or pan. Mix the dough by hand. Roll the dough out, shaping it roughly into a rectangle. Cut the dough into 3-inch squares about 1/2-inch thick.

After cutting the squares, press a pattern of four rows or four holes into each square, using a nail or other such object. Do not punch through the dough. The appearance you want is similar to that of a modern saltine cracker. Turn each square over and do the same thing to the other side.

Place the squares on an ungreased cookie sheet in the oven and bake for 30 minutes. Turn each piece over and bake for another 30 minutes. The crackers should be slightly brown on both sides.

The fresh crackers are easily broken but as they dry, they harden and assume the consistency of fired brick.
(Yield: 10 pieces)

>> WILD MATH



IN THE 1800s, it was difficult to transport meat out to a fort, which meant living cattle had to be brought where they were needed and butchered there. If the officers at the fort purchased \$400 of beef at 5 cents per pound, how many pounds of beef did they purchase?

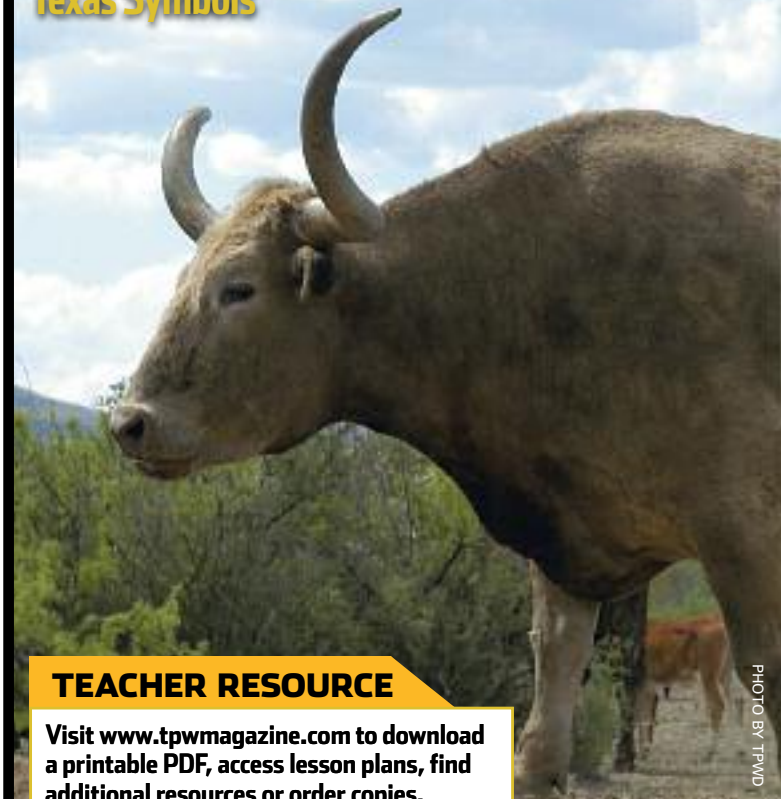


Participate!

You don't have to imagine what life must have been like as a Buffalo Soldier – you can experience it for yourself at one of the Texas Buffalo Soldiers' living history events! View their calendar at www.tpwd.state.tx.us/learning/community_outreach_programs/buffalo_soldiers/calendar.phtml.



NEXT MONTH: Texas Symbols



TEACHER RESOURCE

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