The Sand Creek Massacre

Told June, 2000 told by Mary Kate Underwood

My grandma, the way she told me things, she, you know.

Uh, I, I know, you know, in my computer [points at her head].

I don’t, uhh [forget], and then what grandma said was that they were in ca[mped at] Sand Creek there, all camped, these Arapahos.

Teeccxo’ hu’un nihii, he’iiteinihi’ toonoo’oohihiii3i nihu’ beh’eihoho.
Long ago at that, ??? the old men were almost [all] massacred.

‘oh tei’yoonoh’o noh huseino, hi’in ne’hii3e’ he’ih’ii-, Sand Creek, he’ih’ii3ooninoo.
And children and women, at that place there, it was, Sand Creek, they called it.

He’ih- nee’etootii3i’ beisihi’ nuhu’ hitesiino’ noh nihu’ Arapahos,
That is where all these Cheyennes and these Arapahos were camped.

and then honootii3i’ beisihi’ four or five chiefs, kee’in, different tribes, tribes’ chiefs.
And then all different tribes, four or five chiefs, you know they are camped there.

Some were of Oklahoma, and then they were, southern, but these northern Arapahos, too, they were all camped there, different, you know, different places like that.

He’ih’oonootiino’ hinit nuhu’uno neeceeno’ nohkuuhu’ nihu’ hitiiteebinoo.
These chiefs were camped there with their tribes.

Hitiiteeb, that means your tribe.

And they all, these men, young men, people, be, that would-.

Nuhu’ wonooneihi3i’, wonooni’i’oo3i’, honoh’oho’, wonooneihi3i’, niinih’ini heeneinoo’ei3i’.
The younger people, young people, young men, were out hunting.

He’ihwoniinoo’eino’.
They had gone hunting.

Beebee’ on noooeih’ nihciiciisikohei3i’, tih’eeeneinoo’ei3i’ nihu’,
Maybe they had ridden way far away, when these ones went out hunting,
tih’ii- nih’ihookohuusiini.
since they had to [hunt].
Hoseino’, neneeni’ hihi’iine’etiitooninoo.  
Meat was what they lived on.

Noh neneenini’ nuhu’ huhnoonotii3o’ono nuhu’ hiinoo’eihiiho’.  
And that was what these hunters were looking for.

Cese’ beh’eihoho’ noh betebihoho’ noh nuhu’ teiyoonoh’o’,  
Only old men and old women and the children,

‘oh nuhu’ wonooneihi3i’ hiseino’ he’ih’entoono’.  
Just the young women [with children] were there in camp.

Ne’hi’in...ceeciis he’ihbisitoneih nuh’uuno nonooneheini3i.  
Then that...all of a sudden they were attached by the cavalry.

Noh nonoonehehi3i’, wotsiikookon hih’oowoowuuyeino’.  
And the cavalry, I guess they just had no respect for anything.

Wooxutoo3i’.  
They do bad things.

He’ih’ini... noh he’ihnokoo3inoo’ono’  
They...and they went completely berserk

heeneescoocoboo3i’ nuh’uuno nih’eentouhuni3i.  
the way they just shot anyone who was there.

‘Oh he’ihbeexo’eino’ nuhu’ beh’eihoho’ nuhu’ huseino’ nuhu’ teiyoonoh’o’.  
And it was mostly old men and women and children [who were there].

Noh neh’eeno nihii, nebesiibehe’ woowotox he’ih’iistoko nuh’uuno.  
And this well, my grandfather tried to flee from them but it was useless.

Woow he’ihni3inowuu hi’in, nihii, niwwohoe; that’s flag, niwwohoe.  
Now they had this, well, flag.

He’ih’ouuteninino.  
It was hanging [at the center of the camp].

Noh noo-, nuhu’ nihii, American Flag, he’ih’ii3ooninoo.  
And this well, American Flag, they called it.

Noh nuhu’ nonoocoo’, white, white flag, he’ih’ouuteninino.
And this white flag, it was hanging there.

Woow kooxnehe’ nebesiibehe’ he’ihsehyiistoko.  
Now my grandfather fled again, over there [to where the flag was].

‘oh hoowniiwoo’ei.  
And he wasn’t armed.

Hoowuuni.  
He had no [weapons].

Hoowunii3in toon.  
He didn’t have anything whatsoever [to use as a weapon].

Woow nihciinbooboo’ei3i’.  
They had stopped fighting.

‘oh ne’ nuh’uuno nih’ii-nooneehei3i’, nenee3i’ nih’e3ebisii-tonoo3i’ nuhu’ hetebinouhuunino.  
But this cavalry, they attacked these poor people over there.

Noh siikookon he’ihbisnoo’oecoocoboono’.  
They were just shooting in any and every direction.

Coocoboo3i’ nuhu’ hiseino nuhu’ tei’yoono’o noh nuhu’ beh’eihoho.  
They were shooting the women and children and old men.

Nebesiibehe’ he’ihcebii.  
My grandfather was shot.

Kooyo honinoo’oo.  
?? he fell down.

He’ne’iini hi’- hiit hih’oowuni, hih’oowkou3iine’etiino’.  
Then...[these ones] here didn’t give to live a long life.

Heeyouhhuu, beebeet nuhu’ hoh’en[ih]ji noh nuhu’ niiyoo hohootno’ he’h’ii.  
The only things [that live long] are the trees and the mountains, [my grandmother] said.

He’ne’nih’ii3ootineet tih’ii-,  
That’s what they sang [in the death song].

Noh tohcoono’oot, woow tohneh’eiyeihit.  
And because he couldn’t do anything about it, now he was killed right there.
Noh neneenini’ nihbeebeet hi’in hiihniiboo3oo, nee’eessiini.
And that was just what he sang, [his death song], that way.

‘Oh nuh’uuno he’ihnouuniini coocoboono’ nuhu’ nonoonehei3i’.
And the cavalry were still shooting all around.

Koowoow - woowotox he’ihieneintokothuutoon hiseino’ hu’un tei’yoonoh’o noh nuhu’ be’ei-.
The women and children and old people tried to flee all over, but it was useless.

Woowotox koo’ o’e’i’see heeneintokohuno’.
They just fled in all directions as they were able.

Hinit heet - along the creek, he’ihyoo-, neyeyooyootoieihino’.
Right there where...along the creek, they tried to hide.

‘oh nuhu’ he3ebwoneeeceebii hi’in nooneeheini3i.
But the cavalry went there and shot them.

‘oh nuhu’ huseino’ nih’etneeneiniisooni3i, nihcooneihi3i’ he’ih’i’i,
And the women who were going to have children, who were pregnant, she said,

Nih’iikoxkuhu’u he’ih’i’i.
They were stabbed, she said.

Koonteh’eikuu3ei’i, ‘oh nuhu’ tei’yoonoh’o he’ihbisino’oonino.
Their stomachs were cut open, and the [unborn] children came out.

Nee’e3ei’ieneeoxooteihit nehe’ nihoo3oo.
That’s how cruel this white man is.

‘Oh siihooowbeetoonotoonee heeyouhuuhuuhuuhu.
And they never want to pay for anything [they do].

hee3neeneeebe3nontoot.
They made a really big mistake.

‘Oh nuhu’ beh’eihoho’ hoowuboo’eino’.
The old men weren’t fighting.

Niinii3inou’u niiwohoe.
They had the flag.

‘Oh nuhu’ niiwohoe hoowoeteeneetowuu nuhu’ nonooneehei3i’.
But the cavalry didn’t respect this flag.

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They just went ahead [and attacked] anyway, truly.

They shot the children, women, old men.

They didn’t respect [the flag].

That’s how these white people treated them cruelly.

They were pitiful.

And they started to flee, like I was saying, to this, well, gully.

But they couldn’t get there.

The women tried to flee into hiding.

And they were chased.

And [the cavalry] killed them, they massacred them.

This white man is cruel.

They were not happy that we [Arapahos] lived around here.

It was really no good, the way [they treated] the old men, like that.
They were massacred, because the old men didn’t have the strength to respond, since they didn’t...

tohciin- tohcoboo3i’ wo’ei3 tohciini nii3inou’u hetmi’boo’eitonoono’.
when they had quit...because they shot them when they didn’t have anything to fight with.

Honoh’oho’ nenee3i’ beisce3ei’oo3i’, beiswoniinoo’ei3i’.
The young men had all departed, they had all gone hunting.

Hoowkohtowu3ecoono’.
They weren’t thinking of doing anyone any harm.

Noh nhu’ neeso’ooteihi3i’, hini’ heentoo3i’, hoowkohtowu3ecoono’.
And the ones who stayed behind, the ones in camp, they had no bad intentions.

‘oh nee’eesi3ecoono’.
They were just thinking about getting along.

Heetbisiitnei3i’ hiibineeniihi’ nhu’ nonooneeheini3i,
Where the cavalry attacked them without warning,

Siihenee3neeniini ciini’oo’ nih’ii3oot neinoo neibinoo.
that was really no good my [greatgrandmother] told my mother.

Wo3onohowuunu’u nhu’.
These things have been written down for people [to read].

Nihchwoneenei’inou’u that Sand Creek.
People have found out about Sand Creek now.

Hini’ nih’ei’towuunu’u nebesiwoho’ nih’iiskocoo’oteihini3,
My grandfathers were told how [my grandfather] died,

nih’iisiheit nhu’ nonooneeheini3i.
how the cavalry treated him.

heetneihoowbeetceh’e3tii nih’oo3oo nih’iisnontoot.
The white man doesn’t want to listen about how he made a mistake.

‘Oh no3onneihoownonihi’ nhu’ Custer, yeah,
and don’t forget about this Custer,

and that Custer was bloodthirsty, and then neenit, that’s why he got killed.