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COVER PHOTOGRAPH Looking Into Camp Rucker



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COCHISE COUNTY HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY P.O. Box 818 Douglas, Arizona 85607

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THE CANYON NAMED FOR A HERO

By Jeanne L. Graham

Nestled snugly in the wild, rugged, pine covered western slopes of the beautiful, mysterious, awesome Chiricahua Mountains of Southeastern Arizona, lies the remains of an old, long abandoned Army Camp. Although it had a humble beginning as a mere Supply Camp for the troops sent south and east from Fort Bowie in search of renegade Apaches, the role this Camp played in the history of Southeastern Arizona, Western New Mexico and Northern Mexico is worth noting.

Life in this area was not an easy one and was known to defeat the strongest and stouthearted. One had to fight not only the cruel, unpredictable elements of Mother Nature but the crafty, embittered, hostile Apache renegades as well.

With the discovery of precious metals, gold and silver, in the nearby mountain ranges came more and more of the hated white man. Realizing that they were slowly losing the battle for their existence, their homelands, the Apache Indian stubbornly held on as long, as hard as he could and in the only way he knew how warfare.

From time to time peace had been negotiated between the Red man and the White man, but it never seemed to last—one side or both sides would violate the peace treaty and hostilities would flare up.

Fearing they would lose their newly found riches, the White Man insisted upon two things:

- (1) The establishment of forts near the various mountain ranges and enough troops stationed at these forts to supply protection against the numerous bandits and renegades who roamed the area.
- (2) All Indians were to be removed from this area and placed on reservations where, hopefully, they would be kept from now on—forever.

Both of these requests were difficult to fulfill as the frightened, angered Apaches were just as determined to stay free and on his own lands as the White Man was to remove him.

The lands set aside by the Great White Father and the U.S. Federal Government were utterly worthless, extremely arid and generally unfit for human habitation. Yet, thousands of Indians, friend and foe alike, were banded together and driven to their new homes on the hated reservations. Once here, they were expected to make a new life for themselves, the White Man's way. No longer were they free to roam their beloved mountains and valleys to hunt and gather food. Instead, they were to become farmers, sheep and goat herders.

Little or no effort was made to understand the ways of the Indian. Those who did make such an effort were unable to make their superiors understand the errors of their ways. These people saw the Indian in a way that no one else seemed to find or care to find that the Indian, the Apache Indian, was a human being just as they were; they had feelings and needs—just like the White Man.

Some of the Apaches, especially the older ones, were willing to settle down and live peacefully on the hated reservations and even make friends, or at least try, with the White Man. But, there were those who had suffered much at the hands of the Pony Soldiers, the miners and ranchers, and they wanted revenge. They took the bloody trail of the WARPATH.

In order to track down the deserters and renegades from the reservation, forts and supply camps were established throughout the vast area. Brigadier General Orlando Willcox was placed in command of the Army of the Department of Arizona. General Willcox realized that in order to capture Geronimo, Victorio and Juh, he would have to spread his troops thin in order to keep watch on all trails into and out of Mexico.

In late March, 1878, Captain Daniel Madden received orders to establish a Supply Camp at or near the San Bernardino Ranch located on the International Border. Weeks were spent in getting the needed supplies and feed for the horses and livestock from Fort Bowie to the newly established Supply Camp. On April 4, 1878, Captain Madden reported to the Assistant Adjutant General that at long last a Supply Camp has been established approximately one-half mile from the old San Bernardino Ranch and just north of the International Boundary Line. He mentioned in his report that after a considerable search for a suitable site, this location seemed the best, even though there was a lack of adequate feed for the horses and livestock.

A short time after Captain Madden sent off his report, he received a telegram from Major C. E. Compton, Commander of Forces in the Field at Fort Grant. The telegram stated that Governor Mariscal of Mexico had issued a complaint to the Territorial Governor by stating, "the Mexican Government forbids troops on either side from crossing the line."

^{1.} History of Camp Rucker, p. 1

On the 20th of April, Major Compton ordered the Supply Camp moved to a more favorable location away from the border. This, again, was no easy task as the basic components of a frontier post had to be re-established despite such complicated problems as the complete lack of roads, rough uncharted terrain and the torrential rains that accompanied the coming of summer. Hectic, tiresome days and nights passed as the little garrison of troops, fifty in number, labored under the direction of First Lieutenant J. H. Sands in making the move.

The second site chosen for the Supply Camp was in one of the many ravines located along the western slopes of the rugged beautiful Chiricahua Mountains. The camp was established at a point near the junction of the main creeks in the White River Canyon.

Besides the availablity of food for both the soldiers and their horses and livestock, this site was chosen to keep the renegade Apaches from using this choice site. The Pony Soldiers could also intercede the bands of renegade warriors intent on skipping across the border to raid the desolate, isolated Mexican ranches or to escape the pursuing American Soldiers. On April 29, 1878 Captain Madden notified Headquarters that the new Supply Camp had been established and were in readiness for their orders. Members of the Twelfth Infantry and Company C Sixth Cavalry were stationed here. Company C of the Indian Scouts under the leadership of Second Lieutenant John A. "Tony" Rucker and Company D of the Indian Scouts under the leadership of First Lieutenant Austin Henely were also stationed at Camp Supply.

The three main officers of Camp Supply were:

- Lieutenant Hiram F. Winchester—Received his Commission as Second Lieutenant in the 6th Cavalry. He was not a graduate of any Military Academy.
- Lieutenant Austin Henely—Was of Irish descent. He was admitted to the United States Military Academy in June, 1868 and graduated on June 14, 1872 as a Second Lieutenant. He was assigned to the 6th Cavalry. When the Sixth was transferred to Arizona in the Summer of 1875, he became the Inspector of Indian Supplies at the San Carlos Agency. He was also given the Command of a Company of Indian Scouts. His accomplishments with the Indians may have helped to explain the transfer in the Spring of 1878 to Camp Supply where he renewed his acquaintance with Lieutenant Rucker.

Lieutenant John A. "Tony" Rucker-Came from a military

family. He was the son of General Daniel Henry Rucker of the Quartermaster Corps; his brother-in-law was General Philip Sherman. On July 1, 1868 he was admitted to the United States Militery Academy but was discharged on June 30, 1870 because of poor grades. He did not leave the military and on July 1, 1872 he received his Commission as Second Lieutenant. He renewed his friendship with Lieutenant Henely at Camp Supply when he was assigned there with his Company of Indian Scouts.

The Supply Camp began and ended as a tent community. From time to time, however, efforts were made to provide permanent buildings in which the supplies would be protected from the elements of nature and also to provide a place where essential services could be given.

Major General Irving McDowell described Camp Supply as being in an irregular quadrangle—in the angle where the two creeks came together to form the White River which was just west of the occupied area.

Along the North Fork and up the furthest part of the slope could be found the Officer's Quarters (their tents) and the hospital tent. At the West end of the Parade Ground, located also on the North Fork, were the neat rows of the Company Quarters (tents).

Back of this could be found the Company Kitchen and behind this stood the Guardhouse, the Blacksmith Shop, the Bakery and the Corrals. Three of these buildings, the Guardhouse, Bakery and Hospital Storageroom, were of log construction.



Camp Rucker Bakery

Along the South Fork were the Storehouses and the tents occupied by the two laundresses, Mrs. Nusser and Mrs. Gill.

A short way from this encampment, the Post Trader set up his quarters. The main reason for this was the fact that he sold liquor by the drink.

Further down the fork, the Indian Scouts were encamped.

Life in the Supply Camp was anything but easy and pleasant. The men had to be ready for action on a moment's notice. As one scouting party came in, another one was leaving—looking for white hostages and hostile Apaches. Needless to say, often times the pressure of every day life along with inadequate food, tempers were raw and outbreaks of fits of temper were common.

Feelings toward the Indian Scouts were also running high. One such incident took place during the night of June 1, 1878. The Post Adjutant, Lieutenant Winchester, had little time for the Indian Scouts stationed at the Supply Camp and did everything he could to make them feel unwelcome. He ordered them to make their encampment on the outskirts of the Supply Camp. During the early evening hours of June 1, 1878, Lieutenant Henely's Scouts, so claimed Lieutenant Winchester, were making some rather unusual noises in their camp. Lieutenant Winchester requested that if the Scouts remained within the limits of Camp Supply all noises were to cease after taps.

Lieutenant Henely came to the defense of his Scouts and denied any unusual noises coming from their encampment. The only noise he heard was the chanting of his Indian Scouts which really wasn't an unusual noise or sound. "I do not know of the existence of any order from competent authority setting off a reservation one mile square for Camp Supply, and until I receive word of the existence of such an order, I shall be of the opinion that my Camp is at a proper distance from Camp Supply, to make it a distinctly separate camp and shall consider the action of the Commanding Officer as meddlesome and presumptious."²

During the course of the following day, Lieutenant Henely learned that if his Scouts began their singing or chanting again, Lieutenant Winchester would have them arrested and, if Lieutenant Henely interfered he, too, would be arrested. This prompted Lieutenant Henely to write, "If the Commanding Officer of Camp Supply can show me authority from a competent source for his action, I will cheerfully submit to it. If not, then the

2. op cit p. 3

Indian Soldiers will sing this evening if they choose and any effort to arrest them or me will be met with armed resistance of the entire force under my command."

This statement did not set well with Lieutenant Winchester who considered this to be a mutinous and insubordinate act. He ordered Lieutenant Henely and his camp out of hearing distance of Camp Supply.

July 11, 1878 dawned like any other Arizona summer day—dry, hot and humid. By late afternoon, however, it was an entirely different story. The brilliant hot sun had been replaced by black, billowy, rain laden clouds that hung low over the valley, hiding the high peaks of the mountains that surrounded the valley. The air crackled as lightening bolts flashed in the skies, sometimes striking the ground. The ground shook with vibrations as the sharp, deep voiced thunder resounded through the valleys. Within minutes, the clouds released the moisture they contained.

The rain fell so rapidly and hard that the dry, parched ground was unable to absorb the moisture and much of the water ran off the mountain slopes into the normally dry creek beds causing them to fill rapidly to the point of flooding.

When the rain came, Lieutenant Rucker and Lieutenant Henely, along with two friends, took refuge in the saloon. Before long, they



Creek where Lt. John "Tony" Rucker and Lt. Austin Henely lost their lives

3. op cit p. 3

heard the rush of the roaring water bounding down the mountainside. They also heard the frantically shouted order by Sergeant Valentine to save the Company property lying along the flooded banks of the creek. Lieutenants Rucker and Henely rushed out of the saloon, jumped on their drenched, waiting mounts and, to the delight of their men, made several trips across the wildly rushing, treacherous flooding waters of the narrow creek.

Suddenly the cheers and shouts stopped and everyone seemed to freeze in their place with looks of fear frozen on the faces of the men who lined the banks. Lieutenant Henely's horse stumbled over a piece of debris that was hidden in the murky waters of the swiftly flowing stream, throwing his rider head first into the water. For a moment, Lieutenant Rucker was struck dumb.... then he dashed his spurs into the flanks of his horse. He darted around the bend, below which Lieutenant Henely was still to be seen, and, from a little height, plunged into the swiftly flowing stream. The men of both companies lined the banks of the flooded stream and helplessly watched in horror as their beloved "Tony" was dashed from his horse and swept swiftly down stream that was also carrying his friend to his death.

The end can best be summed up by the telegram sent to Lieutenant Rucker's brother-in-law, General Philip Sheridan:

> "Telegram Camp Supply, Arizona Territory July 12, 1878

Lieutenant Rucker was drowned about 7:00 o'clock yesterday afternoon in a desperately heroic but fruitless effort to rescue Lieutenant Henely from death. Body recovered mile and a half away after three hours indefatigable search—by all troops and Indians resuscitation was impossible though skilled and determined treatment through the night was applied. Lieutenant Henely's body was just recovered. I sent the remains of both into Bowie at once. I refrain from breaking the sad news to General Rucker—sending it to you. Not knowing Lieutenant Henely's people, I cannot notify them.'' '

> H. F. Winchester Lt. Comdg.

In a letter to General Sheridan dated July 12, 1878 he went into further detail of the tragedy. "There are but few more particulars concerning Lieutenant Rucker's noble death that my telegram

4. Journal of Arizona History pp. 108-109

just sent you embodies-high water, rather a torrent-pouring down the canyon in which we were encamped, came suddenly between us and Captain Madden's camp here-in which, while attempting to cross, Lieutenant Henely was swept to his death. Tony instantly plunged in after him mounted—but it was hopeless without almost a miracle from the moment Lieutenant Henely was washed off his horse-the flood came down with the usual roat-full of driftwood, making it very hazardous to attempt crossing—and was of such violence that large boulders in the ordinarily dry bed of the creek, were distinctly heard heaving against each other. Lieutenant Henely's head shows the effect of a blow or snag that if received before drowning, would doubtless have rendered him senseless. Tony simply drowned. He was dead when his remains were recovered and so pronounced by Doctor Burr who was with me in the search, but I was unwilling to give him up so had everything that skill could accomplish done. Doctor Burr did not leave him an instant until late in the morning but with a detail of men worked himself to exhaustion. We are crushed with grief. Tony's Indians seemed awestruck. They were perfectly devoted to him. I know of no one more universally liked and esteemed."

The Companies of Indian Scouts were indeed shocked, stunned, and lost without their leaders. In their own way and custom, they mourned the loss of their beloved "Tony" and Lieutenant Henely.

Fellow officers added their words of tribute calling both of them brave and honored soldiers. Lieutenant Rucker was honored by Trumpeter John P. Ward of the Sixth who composed a rhythmed account of the drowning which he submitted to the Army-Navy Journal—the editors took the liberty of condensing it into prose. When the flood waters subsided, Lieutenant Rucker's watch was found by an enlisted man, Jack Dunn, who promptly returned it to General Rucker.

On October 12, 1878, Captain Madden sent to the Assistant Adjutant General of the Department of Arizona at Prescott, a copy of Order Number 59 which states that upon approval of the Department Commander, the name of Supply Camp would be changed and would now be known as Camp John A. Rucker thus "to perpetuate a vivid recollection of his brilliant career as a young and gallant soldier."

On November 30, 1878 the name change was approved by the Departmental Commander and word of the name change was received at Fort Bowie on the 6th of December, 1878. Although Camp John A. Rucker is now a page of history, the canyon in which it was located still bears Lieutenant Rucker's name and is known as Rucker Canyon.

5. op cit p. 109

Life at these Supply Camps was solitary, monotonous and often got the men into trouble. Drinking and being drunk while on duty were the usual charges placed against the men and, often times, these charges were serious enough to result in a court martial.

Finally, this drinking problem reached such a point at Camp Rucker that it required drastic action to control the problem—the issuance of a series of orders from the Post Commander to the Post Trader:

"Owing to the many cases of drunkedness at this camp, it is hereby ordered that in the future not more than three (3) drinks of intoxicating liquor be sold or given to any enlisted man in any one day by the Post Trader or his employees, at least two (2) hours interval occurring between each drink. A violation of this order will immediately be followed by the expulsion of the offending party beyond the limits of this camp." ^o

Fearing that the Post Trader was peddling a whiskey unfit for human consumption, the Post Commander of Camp Rucker requested the Post Surgeon to examine and test the whiskey being sold. The surgeon, Dr. W. W. Douglas, wrote the Post Commander of his findings:

"The whiskey was found to be VERY INFERIOR and must surely have an injurious effect upon anyone using it."

No record was ever found showing what type of test Doctor Douglas used or if he became ill after making his test. Therefore, just how he arrived at his conclusion is not known.

Regardless of where the men were, within the confines of Camp Rucker or out on patrol, the men faced the continued danger of being ambushed. At intervals the men at Camp Rucker were sent out into the territory to seek out and destroy the enemy. One such occasion came on February 11, 1878 when Lieutenant Rucker, along with sixteen enlisted men and Company C of Indian Scouts, were ordered to search the immediate territory south and east of the Supply Camp for hostages and-or hostiles. They were to have provisions for at least forty (40) days; the cavalrymen were to be furnished with one hundred (100) rounds of carbine ammunition per man.

On yet another occasion, Lieutenant John A. Rucker's orders read as follows:

"Second Lieutenant John A. Rucker, 6th CAV, H & L 6th CAV. with twenty (20) enlisted men of Cos. H & L 6th CAV.

6. op cit p. 109 7. op cit p. 109 mounted, armed and equipped, and all available men from Co. C Indian Scouts will proceed in search of the party of renegade Indians who are reported to have attacked the mail courier on the 3rd near Silver City, New Mexico. When finding the trail of the indians, Lieutenant Rucker will pursuit (sic) it as long as there is any hope of overtaking and punishing the renegades, but will not cross the Sonora line."

Once the scouting assignment was over, however, the soldiers returned to the boredom and isolation of camp life that often resulted in irritability and shortness of temper. Captain A. B. McGowan revealed the state of mind when he sent a testy telegram marked "in haste," declaring he had not hired a mule but that the assistant topographic engineer had done so at a cost of \$2.00 per day until it was returned to its owner.

Another source of agitation for those at Camp Rucker was horseshoes. The horseshoes wore out quickly on the rough terrain. An order went out for a new supply of the sorely needed horseshoes. Apparently the request was written in rather brusque language as the reply, on file in the National Archives, reads as follows:

"Telegram of 10th instant is considered disrespectful in tone, and a new request must be made for the horseshoes."

The boredom of camp life most likely intensified the soldier's desire for fun and frolic. The Commanding Officer did his best to prevent all outbreaks of animal spirits—for instance the Order Number 4 dated January 16, 1879 which reads as follows:

"The discharging of firearms in or about the camp after retreat is hereby prohibited.""

One of the favorite past times of the soldiers was target practice. By the time a new supply of target cloths reached Camp Rucker, the existing cloth was so full of holes and so shot up that it was impossible to score properly. This enraged any poor soldier proud of his marksmanship.

From the time Camp Rucker had been established, it continued to grow. In fact, by August, 1880, all drill and target practice was cancelled because the men, when they were not on patrol, were needed for building and improving the camp.

8. op cit p. 111 9. op cit p. 103 10. op cit p. 103-104 One feature of Camp Rucker that benefitted the entire community was the hospital. Those who were stationed at Camp Rucker as well as those who lived in the surrounding territory were treated here. The rates charged citizens for care amounted to \$1.00 a day—rates cheaper than what is charged today. If the patient did not have some form of hospitalization insurance, the patient was charged in advance for services rendered. The care at the Camp Rucker hospital must have been excellent as the records indicate that only two deaths occurred at the hospital. This fact may not seem so important, but, dear reader, we must remember that the hospital was made up of a series of tents. Before Camp Rucker was closed, a more stable hospital was built at a cost of \$453.15.

One of the many problems that seemed to reoccur at Camp Rucker was the problem of good food, the quality of food and the lack of it, especially the staples. Providing wild game or beef, which could be had at 15 cents a pound, for the tables was no problem but getting other items to go with the meat did present a problem.

In his reminiscences, Scout John Rope recalls that on numerous occasions the Indian Scouts were issued extra cartridges, one for turkey and one for deer, a fact which speaks well for their markmanship. Like every other hunter, the Scouts expected to eat their share of the game they killed and brought into camp. When the game was taken away from them and given to the soldiers, very hard feelings resulted. Some of the game that they successfully hunted was deer, antelope, elk and mountain sheep.

The food situation reached such a point that on September 5, 1878, Captain Madden, the Commanding Officer at Camp Rucker sent the following report to his superior, Major Compton, the Commander at Fort Bowie:

"There is no flour, beans, or sugar at this Camp for issue. The whereabouts of the train, (meaning the Pack Train) with supplies for here is not known. What is to be done?" "

If the necessary connections were, and at the right time, such items as canned tomatoes, potatoes, plums, apples, onions, salmon, ham, powdered sugar, butter, lard, coffee could be obtained at the Trading Post.

On July 26, 1880, Captain McGowan wrote to the Departmental Headquarters, "I have the honor to request that the ration of bread at this post be increased to 22 ounces as there are no vegetables at the post."^a Once the bakery had been built at Camp

11. op cit p. 104 12. op cit p. 104 Rucker bread was plentiful. A Mr. Bennett, a resident of Maricopa County, had the contract to deliver some 12,000 pounds of flour to Camp Rucker at 7¹/₂ cents per pound.

Another time, word was received at Camp Rucker, from Camp Grant, that some 10,000 pounds of bacon was being shipped to them. Order went on to state that a hole was to be dug and the bacon put into it. Now, dear reader, this statement could mean one of two things—this was the best way in which to store the bacon, or, the much needed bacon was in such a condition that the only thing left to do was to bury it.

The Officers and their families usually fared better than the enlisted men. One Officer's wife, Mrs. Martha Summerhayesm observed that the primary food staples consisted of beans, very salty boiled beef, and biscuits without butter.

The theft of food was quite common. Once the Board of Survey at Camp Rucker was directed to investigate the loss of the following:

6 pounds of coffee 2 jars of onions 4 jars of butter

- 2 cans of salmon
- 1 cans of samon
- 1 can of vegetable soup

The investigation concluded that some officer's private food stock had been discovered and pilfered by persons unknown.

As was true of other localities in the Southwest there was usually a special group of men, not of European origin, that was camped outside the limits of the post and not subject to regular Army Discipline. These were the Indian Scouts.

At several different times attempts were made to use other peoples to track down the hiding Apaches but nothing seemed to work. In times of danger some would run to safety or throw down their arms and join the renegade members of their family. The Mexicans would often times desert during the night before the assault would be made on the enemy.

General Crook had definite ideas and theories about the Indian and he finally persuaded the Officials in far off Washington D. C. to let him experiment with some of his theories. History proved that many of the theories of General Crook were correct and usable, especially when it came to dealing with the Indians.

General Crook believed that it took one Indian to find another Indian, especially if the second Indian did not want to be found. At first General Crook enlisted some members of the Western Apache bands that were hostile towards the Chiricahua Apaches and thus used them to his full advantage. Problems developed with this so General Crook decided to use friendly Apaches to fight with the hostile Apaches. Often times, the friendly Apaches were members of the same tribe, the same family as the hostile Apaches.

General Crook also believed that only outstanding young, responsible officers should be placed in full command of these Scouts. He chose such men as Lieutenant John A. Rucker and Lieutenant Austin Henely, Captain Emmett Crawford and Lieutenant Marion P. Maus. These officers had a deep feeling for these Scouts and soon mutual admiration developed and this led to much success in later campaigns.

The jobs assigned to these Indian Scouts were Apache specialities, inherent in their way of life—tracking and fighting. The Scout was admired and looked up to by members of his family and other members of the Indian community. The money earned by the Scout was used to buy extras for the family that they might not otherwise have or be able to obtain. It was not unusual for the Scouts to re-enlist several times.

Near the end of the Geronimo Campaign, some of the Chiricahua Apaches who became Scouts included such leaders as Chato, Perioc and Chapo. It is believed that they finally decided it would be best to be on a winning side.

In late December, 1879, Juh and Geronimo both surrendered to the United States Cavalry. With this came the one thing all who called Camp Rucker their home away from home hoped for—the closing of Camp Rucker. It was not until the elimination of Victorio in the fall of 1880 that final preparations were made to close the Camp. In the year 1880, some two and a half years after it was established, did the troops move out, never to return to the camp as a permanent station.

In 1886 a small attachment of troops did return to this Camp but camped only briefly while pursuing renegade Indians.

By this time, however, the land had reverted back to public domain and was now occupied by a Michael Gray. After the soldiers left the area, he placed a claim and demanded payment for the damage done while the soldiers were on his property. There was some question as to whether or not his claim was valid but he seemed to have cleared the title and sold the land.

For a time it was owned by the cowboy artist Theodore Hampe and later on Charles and Mary Rak. In 1970, through a land exchange, the U.S. Forestry Service acquired this tract of land. Although few traces of Camp Rucker remain today, Camp Rucker retains a special but small niche in the history of the Indian Wars of the Southwest United States. This is a list of the officers and men who were assigned to Camp Rucker during the years of 1878-1880.

Captain William Wallace Captain D. Madden Captain A. B. McGowan Captain C. B. McClellan Captain G. McMillen Lt. John A. "Tony" Rucker Lt. Austin Henely Lt. James Halloran Lt. Augustine P. Blocksom Lt. H. P. Perrine Lt. Joseph H. Hurst Lt. J. H. Sands Lt. T. A. Toney Lt. George L. Scott Surgeon R. T. Burr John Reuben John Delray James O'Conner George Morran George Adams George W. Himrod

Benjamin Dorwart Eli Hayes Charles O'Neil William Goudlow William Trapper Patrick Driver Victor Gomez Frank Brooks **Charles Safly** Bernard Schlang Edward Winkler Joseph Jones George Garland John Swain James B. Curry John D. Grass **Thomas Dandell**

The Scouts of Company C The Scouts of Company D

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APACHES—A LOST NATION—A LOST PEOPLE

By Jeanne L. Graham

Everything has a beginning and everything has an ending. Often times, in quest to reach their ultimate goal, circumstances present themselves that may change the course of history. Thus the founding of nations, great and or small. Our native Americans were no exception.

Scientists, Ethnologists and Archaeologists believe that, at one time, a land bridge called Beringa and being approximately 1,000 to 2,000 miles wide, existed between Asia and what is now Alaska. It was along this early route that the early hunters, searching for better food supplies, better hunting grounds, entered into the "New World."

At first, the nomadic Indians drifted from place to place, their mere existence revolving around their religion, environment and upon what Mother Nature could supply them in the way of food. Those weaker or few in number either died out or were absorbed into the larger, stronger tribes. As they wandered about, if they found an area that suited them, they broke away from the once larger band and settled in their new territory and established themselves into their new environment. Through the course of time, the remaining bands drifted into the area referred to as THE GREAT SOUTHWEST.

The generic name given to these Indians was "Athabasican" Clan. The first mountain men found them to be roaming in the territory now known as western Kansas, Central Texas, Western Arizona-New Mexico Territory and Northern Mexico.

Soon even further divisions took place within the Athabasican Clan and each group adapted themselves into their new enLife at these Supply Camps was solitary, monotonous and often got the men into trouble. Drinking and being drunk while on duty were the usual charges placed against the men and, often times, these charges were serious enough to result in a court martial.

Finally, this drinking problem reached such a point at Camp Rucker that it required drastic action to control the problem—the issuance of a series of orders from the Post Commander to the Post Trader:

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"The whiskey was found to be VERY INFERIOR and must surely have an injurious effect upon anyone using it."

No record was ever found showing what type of test Doctor Douglas used or if he became ill after making his test. Therefore, just how he arrived at his conclusion is not known.

Regardless of where the men were, within the confines of Camp Rucker or out on patrol, the men faced the continued danger of being ambushed. At intervals the men at Camp Rucker were sent out into the territory to seek out and destroy the enemy. One such occasion came on February 11, 1878 when Lieutenant Rucker, along with sixteen enlisted men and Company C of Indian Scouts, were ordered to search the immediate territory south and east of the Supply Camp for hostages and-or hostiles. They were to have provisions for at least forty (40) days; the cavalrymen were to be furnished with one hundred (100) rounds of carbine ammunition per man.

On yet another occasion, Lieutenant John A. Rucker's orders read as follows:

"Second Lieutenant John A. Rucker, 6th CAV, H & L 6th CAV. with twenty (20) enlisted men of Cos. H & L 6th CAV.

6. op cit p. 109 7. op cit p. 109 age and won the respect of all tribal members before he had reached the age of 20. Cochise tried living in peace with both the Red and White man. Cochise believed that both nations had much to teach one another. He managed to achieve part of his dream until a stupid blunder, along with inexperience in handling the Western Indian Tribes ended peace with the White man and caused many years of terror and bloodshed—the Bascom Incident.¹ Because they lived so closely to the International Border as well as in the scarcely populated areas of the New Mexico-Arizona Territory, this band was the last of the Apache Nation to be brought under control.

After the brutal slaying of Juan Jose, Chief of the entire Apache Nation, no one person was designated to follow him as Chief of the Apache Nation. Instead, the individual tribes elected their own leaders from members of their own tribe. They did, however, select a few of the leaders to act in unity, to keep their Nation together, in times of serious trouble and threats of being totally wiped out. Some of these leaders were Cochise, Mangas Colorado and Victorio.

There were, usually, no hereditary chiefs. Those who succeeded the dead chief had to prove themselves to the elders of the tribe via his persuasiveness and warlike prowess. There were a few exceptions to the rule—Cochise was one of the few chiefs to succeed his father as Chief of the Chiricahua Apache Nation. Throughout his life, Cochise showed strong leadership tendencies and when the time came for Cochise to assume his leadership role, there was no question from the elders of his tribe, or, as a matter of fact, from the rest of the Apache Nation.

A real democracy existed among the Apaches. If their leader failed in any way, he was quickly and quietly dropped and ignored by the rest of the tribe. A new and stronger leader was then selected from the young men of the tribe.

The chiefs had, for the most part, the final say in the governing and welfare of their tribe. Many of them did listen to the elders of the tribe before reaching their final decision, as did Cochise and Mangas Colorado. One element of their tribe that they could not control was the warriors—they were free to carry out raids on their own, which they did at their pleasure and as often as they could.

The tribe was made up of family units and the family units were made up of the Grandparents, unmarried sons and daughters, married daughters and their husbands, the married daughter's

^{1.} American's Fascinating Indian Heritage pp. 205-249

children. The home of the wife's mother was the family center. Once married, the male was lost to his own people—his alliance was now to the tribe of his wife and his wife's family. Cousins were called "brothers and sisters." Blood ties ran deep as far as the Apache is concerned.

Outsiders or those not related in any way to the family could join the family group if those concerned were in mutual agreement and mutual interests existed. Once a family group was formed, it was for life and never to be broken. Each family group had a spokesman or leader—one who spoke for the family. He earned this position by wisdom and leadership abilities. Regardless of how large the family groups got, they were always cooperative and worked with one another—the women gathering in the food, making clothing, household equipment and the men would hunt and make war together.

The family lived in wickiup dwellings, a dwelling with many advantages. They were built by the women of the household, using materials they had on hand. The poles, made from pine, juniper or mesquite, were placed in a circle and set a few inches apart into the ground. The tops were then securely lashed thus completing a conical framework. This was then covered with grasses or brush. They could be built in a matter of a few hours and could be abandoned or burned without regret. They were made in all sizes—short if the stay is short and if the stay is to be permanent, the wickiup was large and roomy. The wickiup was snug in the cold weather and cool in the summer.

The Apache people were basically a fun loving, hard working group of people. He could, however, at a drop of a feather become fierce, brutal and given to fits of rage and temper. It was said that when the spirit moved him, the buck may whip or even kill the squaw for the slightest infraction. An adult, however, never strikes or harms a child. The little girls usually could be found at their mother's heels, playing with homemade dolls or learning the fine arts of homemaking and food preparation. The little boys played with bows and arrows—hunted small game that could be found in the area around their camp. They attended classes held by the warriors and elders of the tribe and learned the art of manhood and warfare. It was said that an Indian child could ride a horse before he could walk.

The Apache Nation was a deeply religious nation. Although they recognized numerous denizens of the supernatural world, they did have a supreme deity they called "Ysun or Ussen—The Giver of Life." They believed that it was from this deity that all life generated. They appealed to this spirit for help in coping with everyday problems—drought, illness, the shortage of game. This power or deity has no sex or place—thus the Apache cannot approach this power directly. The power must work through something and every Apache is a potential recipient. This agent of power is revealed through dreams and visions, through certain animals and when revealed, becomes the Apache's guardian spirit or his medicine. Their God or Life Giver was sometimes called "Earth Maker," their Madonna was known under a variety of names—"White Painted Woman, White Shell Woman or Changing Woman"; her Son, their Christ, was known as "Child of the Water."

Many things were sacred to the Apache. Turquoise and Abalone Shell are considered to be holy. Each tribe had a sacred mountain that was located near their stronghold. It was on this mountain that the leaders of the tribe received their visions and dreams they used in guiding their tribes.

They had colors that represented the four cardinal points—the East by black lightning, the South by bluegreen lightning, the West by Yellow lightning and the North by White lightning.

The Apache feared death and, even in warfare, took no unnecessary chances in getting themselves killed. When death did strike the family, those who had had contact with the dead body had to go through a purification ritual—walking through thick sagebrush smoke and then washing themselves thoroughly in the nearby stream. They had to adorn themselves in new clothing and destroy that which was worn earlier.

The body, along with all of his personal possessions, were quickly buried and his wickiup burned to the ground. His name would never again be mentioned by the members of his immediate family or by the tribe.

The purpose of the Apache life was to be born free and to live a free life. They gradually lost this beloved freedom but not without a long, exhausting fight. The Spanish Conquistadors were the first to try but soon found they were no match for the spirited, crafty Apache. The Mexican Government was the next to try but found the Apaches to be elusive for them and they gave up. Finally the United States Government got into the act and almost succeeded in ridding the world of the long, feared, dreaded and hated Apaches.

Before being placed on the hated reservation, the Chiricahua Apache lived a life of freedom and mobility; loved and respected everything the Great Creator made. They understood and closely related their lives to Mother Earth and the elements of nature the sky, the sun, moon, stars; the thunder, lightning and rain.

The Chiricahua Apache was equally at home in either the

mountains or on the desert. They called Arizona-New Mexico Territory and Old Mexico, especially the northern part, their home. They depended upon nature for their existence and when this was taken from them, they did what any man would do—fight for what was theirs and their father's and their father's father before him.

They depended upon nature for their existence—the rivers provided cool, clear, refreshing water; the forest and desert provided food, roots and nuts; wildlife provided meat, such as buffalo, deer, rabbit, javelina, and their skins provided clothing and shelter for them.

Although the Apaches got their first glimpse of their future enemy, the White Man in 1535, it was not until 1540 did they see and fall in love with the horse. To the Apache, the horse was not only mystical and supernatural but truly a gift from God. Now the Apache could, and did, obtain mobility with a great quantity of speed. Years later, the Apaches would receive yet another gift from the White Man-the gun. From the time the Apache first met the White Man, it was nothing but bad news for the Apaches. Their lands and freedom were now in jeopardy and they were forced to fight for their lands and their right to live their life as they chose. Because of this drastic change, the Apache Nation, particularly the Chiricahua Apaches, became aggressive, restless, brutal and when they took to the warpath, all hell broke loose. They raided, plundered and virtually destroyed all who dared to invade their territory. The utterance of the word APACHE struck fear into the stoutest, the fearless-it had, one might say, the same impact as a sledge hammer striking a blow upon a piece of hot steel.

Slowly the Apaches gave up their freedom and the land they loved so very much. The price was high for both sides. Mangas Colorado and Victorio were killed for their beliefs. Geronimo, the last Apache leader to finally give in, kept the Southwest in terror and flame for almost a decade before yielding to his enemy and the dreaded and hated reservation and certain death for his followers.

At the height of the Apache warfare, General George Crook decided to try something different in his dealings with the crafty Apaches. First of all, he treated them as human beings and insisted that those under his command do the same. Anyone caught cheating or taking advantage of the Apaches found themselves unemployed. In order to bring law and order to the Apache Nation, General Crook decided to use Scouts, made up of other Indians other than Apaches, to hunt out the renegades and bring them in to the reservation. When this failed, he used other Apaches as Scouts which met with much success. Unknown to General Crook, General Miles and to the Apaches themselves, General Crook's plan would become a tool that the Federal Government would use against the Apaches. Speaking on behalf of the Federal Government, General Crook promised those who served as Apache Scouts would not be harmed when the renegades had been captured and placed, for the last time, on the reservation. When the last of the renegades were placed on the train at Bowie, those faithful men who served as Indian Scouts were arrested and placed on the train and headed for Florida. This deceitfulness was long remembered with much bitterness by the Scouts and their descendants.

Once they reached Florida, yet another promise was broken families were split up, some never again to be reunited. The Chiricahua Apache was unable to adapt themselves to the new climate and environment which resulted in a heavy loss of life. At long last, their cries for help and mercy were heard in the hall of Congress and the Chiricahua Apache, what was left of them, were allowed to return to the Southwestern part of the United States, but not to Arizona. Never again would they be allowed to call the Chiricahua Mountains, the Dragoon Mountains and the Sulphur Springs Valley their home. Instead, they were sent to either the Reservation at Fort Sill, Oklahoma or to the Mescalero Reservation in New Mexico.

The spirit of the long feared and dreaded Apache Indian was now broken—justice was not, and in many incidences still not, for the Indian.

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