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THE COCHISE QUARTERLY, a journal of Arizona history and archaeology, contains articles by qualified writers, as well as reviews of books on history and archaeology in this area. It is a publication of the Cochise County Historical and Archaeological Society.

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About the author

Charles K. Mills was born in California, received his BA from Lake Superior State College (Sault Ste. Marie, Mich.) in 1968; his Master's at the University of Arizona 1979.

He has been an Army officer, department store manager, librarian, and as author has had published:

"A Mighty Afternoon" (Novel - Doubleday, 1980);

"Battle of the Rosebud and the Sibley Scout" (military history — Arthur H. Clark, 1983); "Gray Fox" (biography of General George Crook — Arthur H. Clark, 1983); "Harvest of Barren Regrets" (biography of General Frederick W. Benteen — forthcoming); "After the Little Big Horn" (Military history — forthcoming).

His current projects are: history of 7th Cavalry 1866-1870; "source book" (in collaboration with John M. Carroll and Brian C. Pohanka) of 7th Cavalry 1866-1891 — featuring photos, biographical sketches, maps, copies of official reports, unit rosters (intended as "ultimate" reference book on subject of Indian Wars period 7th Cavalry).

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They came from the West.

About 15,000 years ago, the first people to inhabit what is now Cochise County made their way out of the vast reaches of the Asian continent, crossed the Bering Straits land bridge, and worked their way south and east down the Pacific Coast. It took quite a while for them to find Cochise County, which was apparently balmy in those days, but by about the year 6,000 BC, these Asian nomads filtered into the area from the west. They were hunters and food gatherers, and seemingly loathe to stay in one place too long. Their technology was strictly Stone Age and little or nothing is known about their cultural life.

Millenniums later, students would pick over their bones and implements and, after consultation amongst themselves and much scholarly muttering, decide upon a name for the first residents of the county. The name chosen was: Cochise Man.

Mammoths walked the land in those days and there is conclusive evidence that Cochise Man, in a fashion not much different from Cro-Magnon Man in Europe, hunted and slew these woolly elephant-like creatures for fur, food, and maybe just for the hell of it. They built no permanent structures, apparently carved no messages, and left no legends.

After about 4,000 years of nomadic existence, and for reasons not too obvious today, Cochise Man settled down and became a food producer. There is some evidence that the woolly mammoths were exterminated about this time. Whether this was due to Cochise Man's hunting skill or a changing environment is not too clear. It was probably a combination of both. But, their numbers were few and they were off the beaten track of migration, so they remained in near isolation until about 1,200 AD. Then, they vanished.

Whether they were destroyed or absorbed by the three great Arizona civilizations that followed in rapid succession is not known. When the Athapaskan peoples drifted westward from the area of the Great Plains, they apparently found the southeastern corner of Arizona uninhabited. The Athapaskan Indians were nomadic by nature and might have just continued to drift on through, but events far to the south and north sent out shock waves that buffeted them to a virtual standstill. The events were manifestations of one phenomenon: the coming of the Europeans.

Now, Cochise County's time clock began to tick faster and faster. Instead of changes taking place over periods of thousands or even hundreds of years, they began to occur in generations and decades. The

Spanish conquest of Mexico had the most immediate effect, but the French colonial enterprise in Canada sent shock waves out that rippled across an entire continent. To the north and east, bands of Indians more numerous, driven from their homes by hereditary enemies who had acquired European firearms, pushed onto the Great Plains, capturing and taming herds of wild horses abandoned by Spanish explorers. The most powerful of these peoples, the Sioux, Cheyenne, and Comanches, drove Apache Indians westward.

Though parts of the San Pedro valley were apparently settled when the Spaniards rode through it, the Chiricahuas found Cochise County uninhabited when they first arrived around the year 1700. There is considerable evidence that the Chiricahuas actually came from Mexico, after a brief sojourn there following their *hegira* from the Plains.

The Chiricahuas were Apaches, one of the least numerous of a stock of Indians who were Athapaskan ethnically. In 1700, the most powerful Athapascans were the Navajos, Comanches, and the so-called Western Apaches. These three groups — and others — as well as the Spanish Empire to the south essentially “trapped” the lesser Apaches in southern Arizona and New Mexico. Had the time clock been ticking as slowly for the Apaches as it had been for Cochise Man, they might have eventually abandoned their nomadic lifestyle and taken up cultivation of the soil and food producing.

Instead, events caught them in mid-cultural shift. They did not cease their nomadic wandering and food gathering lifestyle, they merely restricted their range, confining themselves to a relatively limited area — south of the White Mountains, east of the Santa Cruz River, west of the Rio Grande River, and north of the Yaqui River in Mexico. With each succeeding generation, their ‘home’ dwindled in size from the pressures caused by the advancing Spanish-Indian culture from the south and the incredibly rapid westward thrust of the English speaking peoples from the east. The Spanish in Mexico were essentially a colonial people, exploiting the native Indian labor and shipping the bulk of the minerals extracted from the land back to the Old World. By 1800, the northward thrust had largely stagnated, due to a lack of immigration and a loss of control over the sea routes. The English (and others) in the east were essentially a settlement people and infrequently intermixed with the native population, choosing to exploit the land and minerals with a steady supply of immigrants from the Old World.

Inevitably, the English speaking peoples and the Spanish speaking peoples came into conflict and, when they did, the battleground was alarmingly close to the Apache homeland: Texas. The result is a matter of historical record. The new American government went to war with

even newer Mexican government and won decisively, taking as spoils of war the vast area north of the Gila River from the Great Plains to the Pacific Ocean.

For the Apaches, the most immediate result was a further diminishing of their newly-acquired homeland. In the same year that the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed, gold was discovered in California. This triggered an even more rapid westward thrust of Americans. Prompted by a desire for a year around overland route to California (and a possibility of more mineral exploitation), the United States in 1853 purchased the ‘worthless’ Gadsden Strip — homeland of the Apache — which, of course, included Cochise County.

By the time of the Gadsden Purchase, the population of Cochise County was almost exclusively Chiricahua Apache and didn’t number more than 1,000. To their west, were the Papagoes, sedentary, Spanish ‘protected’ and more numerous. To the south, were an amalgamation of lesser Indians and the Spanish-Indian peoples calling themselves Mexicans.

(There was a small band of Apaches in Mexico called Nedhnis, Chiricahuas who had either not yet made the move north to Cochise County a century before — or had gone, stayed a generation or two and returned.) To the east, were the Chiricahuas’ “cousins”, the Chihenne Apaches. The Chihennes (the “Red Paint People”) were variously known as Mimbres, Mimbrenos, Ojo Calientes, Warm Springs Apaches, Coppermine Indians, and Mogollons. Though the designations were often specific to only a fraction of the Chihennes, they were, to all intents and purposes, the same peoples. To the north, were even larger bands of related peoples, and while the Chiricahuas did intermingle with them to some extent, they were not as close as the Chihennes to the east.

The Chiricahuas were not that much different from the rest of the Indians of North America in that they had been rather rudely thrust out of the Stone Age into a highly technological modern era featuring steam engines, firearms, and the printed word. Their isolation had protected them from the worst effects of the culture shock for only a generation or two. Had they been given a little more time, the effect might not have been so drastic or disastrous, but the time clock for long-neglected southern Arizona was ticking madly — like a bomb.

The Chiricahuas were not blind to the changes. They were not so completely bewildered as to become befuddled. And, they did make an effort to adapt. But, their adapting was inept — in the long view. They chose to exploit — or try to exploit — the newcomers. They became scavengers — raiders, plunderers, ‘protection’ racketeers, thieves — all

in a vain effort to make the most of the new 'civilization'. From a technological point of view, they were hopelessly outclassed. They were also badly outnumbered, though they didn't realize it. Their only hope for survival as a culture was to adapt as quickly as possible, taking the best of the new way and disdaining the worst. Had they been afforded even two generations to ponder the matter and act wisely in their own best interests their history might have been happier. But, they were not given that precious time. The Americans were upon them — in force — in less than 10 years.

The result might not have been inevitable, for the Chiricahuas in the late 1850s had an unusually wise and competent leader. He was in his middle thirties — a tall, strong man with an enviable reputation as a hunter and raiding party leader. He was related by marriage to the chief of the Chihenne peoples to the east. His name was Cochise.

The culmination of events far beyond the boundaries of the Chiricahua homeland broke upon them with a vengeance in the winter of 1860-61. Prior to that time, the Chiricahuas had permitted the Butterfield Overland Stage Company to operate through their land. They continued to depredate into Mexico and even harassed the infrequent immigrant party or individual prospector who blundered into Cochise County, but they left the stage coaches alone. Cochise even permitted the company to build a way station high up in Apache Pass near a natural spring. The reason for this uncharacteristic accommodation is not difficult to guess at, for the stage company needed horses and mules — and hay to feed them. Cochise's people promptly cornered the hay concession and even "rescued" stray horses and mules and returned them to the grateful stagecoach company employees for a "fee". While this petty graft might have been annoying to Butterfield Overland, it was infinitely less expensive than an all-out war with the Indians — especially as the US Army, small in numbers and spread thin, was reluctant, perhaps unable, to grant full protection to the stage line. The newly-acquired Territory was sparsely populated and Washington was preoccupied with other crises.

The most serious of these 'other crises' came to a head with the election of Abraham Lincoln in November of 1860. Almost at once, Southern states begin to talk of secession and begin to take serious acts-in-furtherance of that end. Cochise and his Chiricahuas, already hard at work "adapting" to the swift changes, apparently could not comprehend American politics — which is certainly no criticism of their mental powers; not even the Great White Fathers really understood what was going on.

But, the timing was unfortunate. And, for the Chiricahuas, it was doubly unfortunate. It led to a disastrous misunderstanding that plunged

southeast Arizona into a conflict that was to rage until the Chiricahuas were removed from their home. That misunderstanding came to a tragic anticlimax in Apache Pass in February of 1861 and came to be known to history as the Bascom Affair. It deserves a close look.

The Bascom Affair

In January of 1861, a band of Apaches (probably Coyoteros from the north) raided a small ranch in the Sonoita Valley, making off with a number of oxen and a 12-year old boy, the stepson of the rancher, John Ward. (The boy reappeared years later as one Mickey Free, described rather pungently by the old scout, Al Sieber, as "half Mexican, half Irish and whole son of a bitch".) His stepfather trailed the raiders for a while and then turned back, hastening to Fort Buchanan, south of Tucson, to report the kidnapping. Fort Buchanan's commanding officer, Lieutenant Colonel Pitcairn Morrison, dispatched Company C of the 7th Infantry (54 strong) under 2d Lieutenant George N. Bascom to Apache Pass. The reason Colonel Morrison sent Bascom to Apache Pass was because John Ward had informed him that Cochise's Chiricahuas were responsible for the outrage and because he had other information to the effect that Cochise's people were "wintering" in Apache Pass.

Lieutenant Bascom and his men arrived at the pass, mounted on mules, on February 3rd. Colonel Morrison had ordered Bascom to demand restitution from Cochise and, failing to get it voluntarily, to use necessary force. Both men were undoubtedly inspired by an earlier incident in which a dragoon officer, Captain Richard S. Ewell (later a Confederate general), secured the release of a young Mexican girl who had been kidnapped by turning the tables, so to speak, on her captors.

Bascom met Cochise the following day, February 4th, and made his demand. Contrary to popular legend, Cochise did not "escape" from this meeting, but was released after promising to see what he could do. (Bascom, emulating Ewell, held 6 Apaches hostage, hoping to insure Cochise's best efforts.)

Cochise returned the next day, February 5th, backed by some Coyoteros in great numbers. Whether he was genuinely outraged by his treatment at the hands of Bascom the previous day or merely fortified by the reinforcements is debatable, but Cochise held Bascom's attention in negotiations while part of his band made an assault on the stage station. An alert sergeant called Bascom's attention to the trick and general firing broke out. In the confusion that followed, the Apaches succeeded in capturing a man named Wallace, employed by the stage company.

On February 6th, Cochise reappeared and offered to exchange Wallace for the six Indians. Bascom refused. The sequence of events after this meeting has been fairly well established in popular legend and needs not be detailed here. Suffice it to say that Cochise and his Chiricahuas and Coyoteros made a concerted effort to block the Pass and capture all the traffic going and coming. They succeeded in killing and capturing more men, but failed to block the pass completely. One of the men who got through was a first lieutenant named John R. Cooke (and, therefore, Bascom's superior). Cooke was ostensibly on a furlough east, but in fact bound to Virginia to offer his services to the Confederates. He took command of the situation at the stage station, where Bascom's men were fortified up and apparently advised Bascom to hold firm. Bascom sent a courier to Fort Buchanan.

The courier got back to Fort Buchanan on the 8th, thanks to the strange inefficiency of Cochise's warriors blocking the Pass. The Chiricahuas were loathe to engage in combat at night and the US Army very quickly learned to take advantage of this. The courier rode all night and most of the next day, relatively undisturbed. The next day, Colonel Morrison dispatched a surgeon, Dr. Bernard J.D. Irwin, with the remainder of the troops who could be spared, to go to Bascom's relief. He also dispatched another courier to Fort Breckinridge north of Tucson, for additional help from the dragoons there.

On February 10th, Companies D and G of the 1st Dragoons left Fort Breckinridge. There were 70 dragoons in the column, commanded by 1st Lieutenant Isaiah N. Moore and 2d Lieutenant Richard S.C. Lord. That same day, Dr. Irwin surprised and captured three Coyoteros that he encountered on his way to the Pass. He moved with commendable speed, pushing on to reach Bascom by evening. (Lieutenants Moore and Lord did not arrive until February 14th.)

Bascom, Irwin and Cooke concentrated on maintaining a rather precarious control over the spring located just a few hundred yards from the stage station. Cochise's warriors and their allies rarely showed themselves on the brushy, rock-strewn mountain sides, but they were still there — in force. The stalemate lasted until the dragoons finally arrived on the 14th, and oddly enough, through the following day as well.

The 12-year old captive was by this time forgotten. Bascom, superseded first by Cooke, then Irwin, and finally Moore, was no longer in command. The object had changed, first to sheer survival, and then to an attempt to battle and defeat Cochise. Accordingly, on February 16th, Lieutenant Moore led his 70 dragoons and 40 of Bascom's and Irwin's

infantrymen in a sweep through the surrounding mountains to locate and destroy Cochise. The soldiers found only hastily abandoned camp sites — and burned them.

The next day, February 17th, Dr. Irwin discovered the mutilated remains of Wallace and five other men and buried them. The Army officers conferred and decided to return to their respective posts, as Cochise gave no evidence of wanting to engage in combat with them, the hostages Cochise had taken were dead, and there appeared to be little hope of ever recovering the boy. They departed Apache Pass on February 19th.

As they passed a spot where the Apaches had ambushed a wagon train and massacred its men — near where Irwin had buried Wallace and the other five — the Army officers conferred again. This time, they debated a suggestion by Dr. Irwin that the three Coyoteros he had captured and three of the six Chiricahuas Bascom had seized two weeks before be hanged. Bascom protested, but was outranked by Irwin and Moore. The latter, as senior officer present, volunteered to accept full responsibility. The Indians were duly hanged.

From that day until the fall of 1872 — 11½ years later — no white man was safe in Cochise County. The Chiricahuas were incensed, of course, but it seems that they also misinterpreted subsequent events. Almost immediately, Bascom was singled out by the newspapers for "blame" in the incident in the typically simplistic style of American journalism. Four months later, Forts Buchanan and Breckinridge were abandoned. Understandably the Indians regarded events as proof of the weakness of the Americans and concluded that Cochise had won a victory in Apache Pass. This miscalculation was to have tragic effects.

Cochise and his Chiricahuas were not given much time to enjoy the fruits of their labors. Sherrod Hunter's Confederates invaded Arizona from the east and, after a very brief sojourn in the territory, retreated to Texas. The Indians attributed the withdrawal to their own incessant raids on the small bands of Confederates and the capture of many horses and mules. The truth of the matter was that the Confederates were driven out by pressure from the west. Major General James H. Carleton, a pre-war major of dragoons, led a large force of Union volunteers into the territory. This force is known to history as the California Column.

In July of 1862, a company of the 5th California Infantry led by Captain Thomas L. Roberts moved into Apache Pass and were promptly engaged by several hundred Chiricahuas, Coyoteros and Chihennes

under the combined leadership of Mangas Coloradas and Cochise. Roberts, using artillery canister, succeeded in gaining control of the spring and re-establishing control of the old stage station that the Indians had burned the year before. General Carleton, realizing the strategic value of Apache Pass, directed that a fort be built and maintained on a hill overlooking the spring. The fort was duly constructed and named in honor of the colonel commanding the 5th California. It was called Fort Bowie.

The rest of the Civil War in Cochise County was relatively quiet. That is to say, there were no major battles, but rather a series of minor skirmishes, patrols, raids and sweeps through the mountains — that neither defeated the Chiricahuas nor caused the Union Army to abandon Fort Bowie. Travellers were safe only when accompanied by a military escort and the Indians were safe only when the patrols returned to the fort.

In May of 1866, the California Volunteers were relieved of duty at Fort Bowie and replaced by the post-war Regular 14th Infantry. Once again, Cochise and his people saw the change as a sort of victory. The infantry troops at Bowie maintained a low profile, content to show the flag and hold the spring. On occasions, their strength dipped below 35 men and it was all they could do to keep the Apaches out of the buildings. Travellers through Cochise County went at their own peril. Except for the small garrison at Bowie, the Chiricahuas had southeastern Arizona to themselves.

In 1868, the site of Fort Bowie was moved about ½ mile to the east, athwart the new military road through the Pass. The Apaches apparently abandoned the effort to drive the Army out of the pass, contenting themselves with raids on the horse herds and outlying pickets and just generally making the surrounding countryside unsafe for small groups. The great alliances of the Civil War period between the Chihennes, Coyoteris, and Chiricahuas were largely a thing of the past — as each and every band of Apaches in the Territory now found themselves under attack from Army units in Arizona and New Mexico.

In 1869, the infantry at Fort Bowie were replaced with cavalry as part of a Territory-wide campaign to put pressure on the Indians. Mounted troops had proven superior when it came to surprising Indians in the mountains and were infinitely superior in pursuit. The 8th and 1st Cavalry regiments each sent a company to Fort Bowie. Cochise could be pardoned for thinking that there was something familiar looking about the new troops. The 1st Cavalry was the old 1st Dragoons — reorganized.

Bowie's new commanding officer, Captain Reuben F. Bernard, had been a sergeant under Lieutenant Moore during the Bascom Affair eight years before.

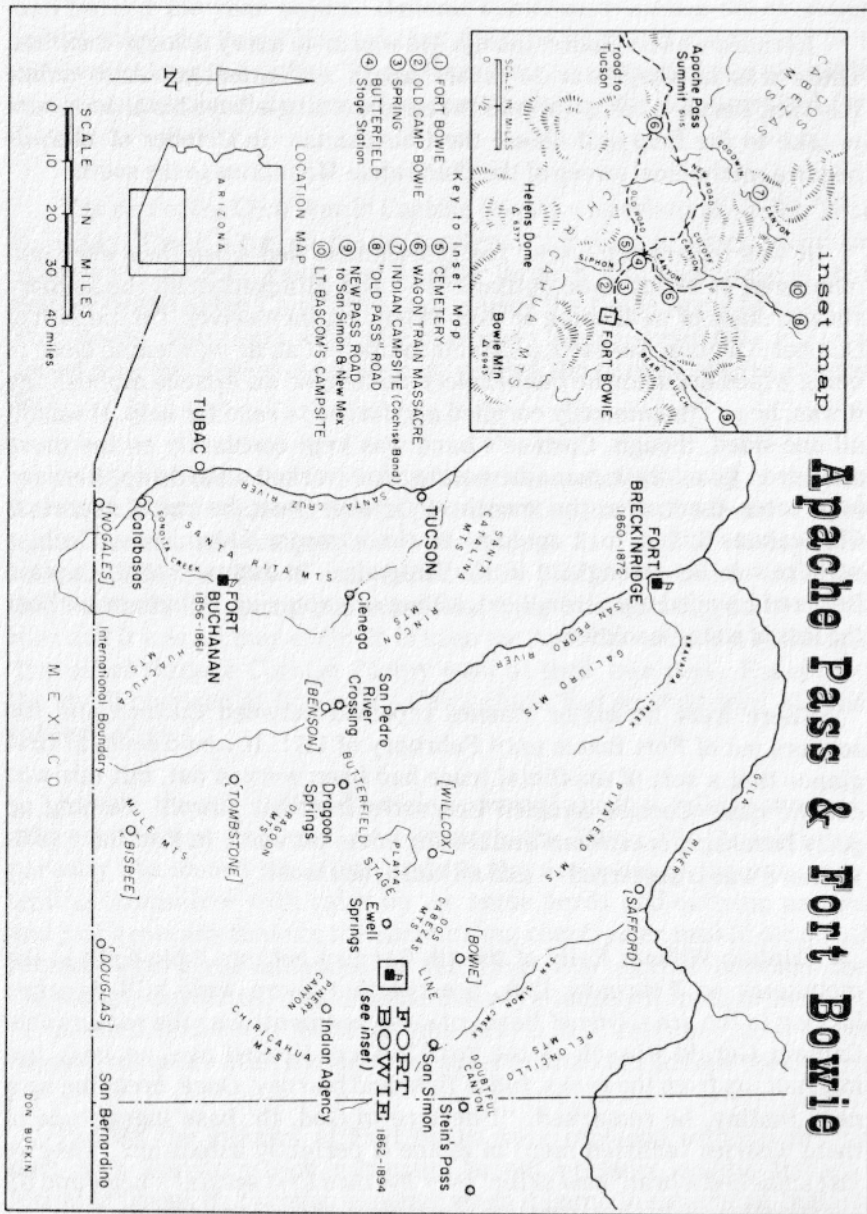
Bernard was no Moore, though. He was in no hurry to leave the Pass. There was no Civil War to divert troops and attention. And, unlike Bascom, Bernard had no orders to retrieve a single boy; his orders were to take to the field and defeat the Chiricahuas. In October of 1869, he began a methodical sweep of the Chiricahua Mountains to the south.

It was frustrating work. The Chiricahuas fled when they were outnumbered or about to be outflanked — and attacked when the soldiers showed signs of weakening or over-extending themselves. On the 24th of October, Captain Bernard, able and competent as he was, came close to being wiped out when he deliberately challenged an Apache ambush. As it was, he was ignominiously corralled and forced to send for help. It wasn't all one-sided, though. Cochise's band was kept constantly on the move and, even given their nomadic nature, this worked a hardship. Bernard kept after them. For the month of October 1869, he could report 32 Chiricahuas killed to 2 soldiers in three major skirmishes. Cochise withdrew to his stronghold in the Dragoons. In January 1870, Captain Bernard invaded the Stronghold, killing or capturing 15 Indians without the loss of a single soldier.

There were no major clashes reported between Cochise and the soldiers out of Fort Bowie until February of 1871. It would seem at first glance that a sort of unofficial truce had been worked out, but this was not the case. Cochise avoided Bernard's frequent patrols, keeping up petty harassing operations and fleeing when pursued. In February 1871, Bernard was transferred — and all hell broke loose.

Captain William Kelly of the 8th Cavalry got into a big fight in the mountains on February 12th, proving that there were still Apaches lurking in the area. One of Bernard's replacements was the remarkable Captain Gerald Russell of the 3rd Cavalry. Russell was an Irish immigrant, up from the ranks, full of fight and blarney. Once, breaking up a near mutiny, he remarked, "I declare to God, th' base ingratitude of them wearies (enlisted men) of moine is perfectly astonishin'. They've just smacked a bran' new skillet over me nice first sergint's head and all because they didn't have enough tomatoes in their God damned soup!"

Captain Russell took his "wearies" into Cochise's Stronghold in April of 1871, but with no apparent success. Cochise remained active, dodging



the competent and aggressive officers like Russell and Bernard, and swooping down on the unprotected ranch spreads that were — incredibly — being established in his domain.

The most celebrated Army/Apache encounter of the period, the May 1871 ambush and killing of Lieutenant Howard B. Cushing of the 3rd Cavalry, was actually masterminded by Juh, though Cochise was mistakenly given "credit". Juh was the acknowledged leader of the Nedhnis, the Chiricahuas who had remained in Mexico.

In June 1871, a new commanding general was sent to Arizona Territory: a tough, no-nonsense professional with a reputation for getting things done. His name was George Crook.

Crook had enjoyed considerable success in the Northwest both before and immediately after the Civil War. He brought to Arizona a hard-nosed determination diluted with a genuine liking — and understanding — of Indians. He also brought a novel tactic: the use of Indian scouts. Too much cannot be made of this. Though it was undeniably good tactics in the strictly military sense, its greatest recommendation was in the psychological realm. As long as the Indians were fighting alien white (and later, black) troops, they could draw on an inherent cohesiveness borne of ethnic solidarity, but once the "enemy" became their own brothers and cousins, their morale and determination plummeted.

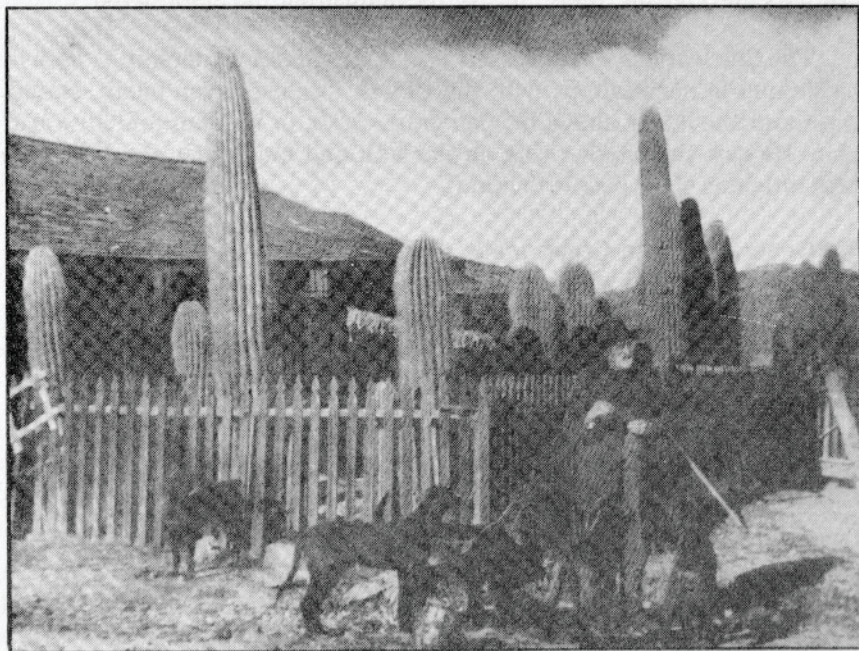
The Chiricahuas were blessed with magnificent leadership — both in battle and in negotiations with the whites. Cochise, even today, stands head and shoulders above his contemporaries in wisdom and stewardship. He saw the handwriting on the wall and made his move with the best interests of his people in mind.

General George Crook made clear his intentions. He had a whole territory to contend with and the virtually unpopulated Cochise County area was very low on his list of priorities. This gave the Chiricahuas a little time — and Cochise made the most of it. Ten years of ceaseless warfare had taken its toll. His anger was spent and he was casting around in his mind for a way out — short of humiliating surrender.

In September of 1872, Cochise got his opportunity. One of his very few white friends, an ex-Army scout named Thomas Jeffords, appeared in Cochise's Stronghold accompanied by a pitifully small party that included a one-armed general. The general was Oliver Otis Howard, a pious Civil War hero whose concern for minority groups distinguished him in an era of expansion and imperialism. (He founded the all-Negro Howard University in Washington, D.C.) General Howard came offering peace.

Like most Indian chiefs, Cochise was a leader-by-consensus, which merely meant that he could not unilaterally make decisions that affected the welfare of the people he led. He had to consult with the older men, the raiding party leaders, the others of influence or power within the tribe. These others had to be gathered together, consulted, and be given time to weigh the matter, air their views, and come to a decision that all could accept. Obviously, this was a long, involved process, but Howard was accommodating and seemed to have plenty of time. The negotiations lasted 10 days.

Howard was anxious to conclude a peace, reasoning correctly that there could be no real peace in Arizona until Cochise came off the war-path. Perhaps he was too anxious. At any rate, Cochise was a shrewd negotiator. He bundled Howard off unceremoniously midway through the talks to insure that the troops at Fort Bowie would leave his people alone until the talks were over. Howard dutifully went and returned. Then, Cochise point-blank refused to move his people to the proposed reservation in New Mexico. Howard changed the reservation boundaries to include most of what is now Cochise County, but insisted that Cochise eschew plunder raids into Mexico. Cochise refused to be bound to such a promise and Howard dropped the issue. Finally, Cochise insisted that his friend, Tom Jeffords, be named Indian agent. Howard consented.



Thomas J. Jeffords from Charles Nichols manuscripts.

In the immediate sense, it was a brilliant piece of negotiation on Cochise's part, gaining almost everything he sought and conceding only Fort Bowie and the sovereignty of the United States government. (On the other hand, he hadn't succeeded in driving the troops out of Apache Pass. They were still there like an aching tooth. And, of course, he couldn't very well ignore the United States government.) Yet, in the long view, it wasn't a very good peace. Aside from the fact that the Army — or at least the government — had shown an almost craven weakness, the peace was predicated on one fallacious assumption. That assumption, though unspoken, was that Cochise County was worthless commercially and that it would be generations before white immigrants arrived in numbers large enough to pose a problem — if ever. Howard and Cochise parted with pledges of peace and friendship.

To give Cochise credit, he lived up to his end of the bargain. There were about 50 "broncos" in the area that he admitted he couldn't control, but he did keep the vast majority of the Chiricahuas in line. There was no way he could have known or guessed that the waves of immigration that had changed the continent in less than 200 years would not cease or abate. Howard believed that the Chiricahuas would have at least 50 years to hang onto their culture, their land, and their traditions while slowly, wisely, adapting to the changes. In fact, they didn't even have 5 years.

General Crook let it be known that he was not satisfied with the peace Howard and Cochise concluded. In fact, he was furious. Aside from a natural jealousy and the blow to his professional pride, he perceived (correctly) that Cochise had yielded only what he absolutely had to and predicted that there would be trouble with the Chiricahuas. He believed strongly that a lasting peace could only be achieved when the Indians were overawed by superior force and viewed the Howard treaty as a kind of surrender.

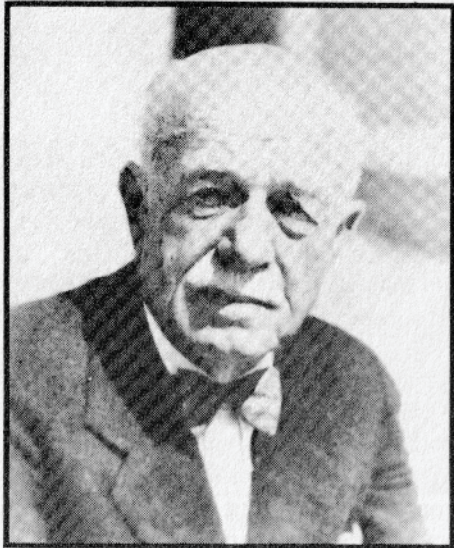
He was wrong — and right. As long as Cochise lived, the peace treaty was not violated. But, Cochise died on June 8, 1874 and was buried secretly in his beloved Dragoon Mountains. Almost immediately there was trouble, but not for the reasons Crook had dolefully predicted. The Chiricahuas had nothing to gain and everything to lose by violating the treaty and, to give them credit, most of them realized it.

The problem was the leadership void created by the death of Cochise. His oldest son, Taza, was not the man his father was and to further complicate matters, died soon after his father, causing the leadership of the Chiricahuas to devolve on a younger son named Naiche. In the Apache Indian culture, it took years for a young man to gain the reputation and concomitant respect among his peers that Cochise had

enjoyed. Naiche might not ever have equaled his father in influence and wisdom, but it is one of the tragedies of Arizona history that he was never given the chance.

While Taza was still living, catastrophe visited the Chiricahuas. The Department of the Interior, Jeffords' bosses in Washington, decided for reasons of economy to transfer the Chiricahuas from their reservation to the White Mountains. Contrary to popular legend, there was very little political pressure from the Territory of Arizona to remove the Chiricahuas. There was very little interest in the southeastern corner of Arizona at the time. And, the Chiricahuas had faithfully abided by the treaty. The reason for the move had nothing to do with any anti-Chiricahua sentiment, but rather was a bureaucratic maneuver. The clerks and secretaries who ran the Interior Department were on an economy kick and infatuated with a "new" policy of "concentration". They reasoned that it would be "best" for the Indians to be put together with "their own kind" and at the same time save the government money by concentrating the support services.

Taza was no Cochise and the proposal as explained to him was reasonable. What no one pointed out (and what Taza lacked the wisdom of his father to see) was that the other Indians already located in the White Mountains had laid claim to the best water holes, camp sites, and grazing land. The Chiricahuas, believing that they would have approximately the same amount of land to roam on, were bamboozled by a well-meaning but blundering set of bureaucrats. The alternative, of course, was renewed warfare. In the end, about half of the Chiricahuas went to San Carlos voluntarily.



John P. Clum from
Charles Nichols manuscripts.

The agent who replaced Jeffords and supervised the move was John P. Clum, an important figure in the history of Cochise County. Clum managed to move about 600 Chiricahuas to the White Mountain reservation agency at San Carlos in June of 1876. He was assisted by Colonel James Oakes and most of the US 6th Cavalry as well as Apache Indian police.

Once the move was accomplished, the Army went to work clearing out the rest of what had been the Chiricahua reservation. It was strictly police work. The remaining Apaches were scattered, demoralized and largely leaderless. There were no major pitched battles as in the days of Cochise.

It may have seemed at the time that the Chiricahuas had uncharacteristically gone out with a whimper rather than a bang, but subsequent events proved that the Chiricahuas still had fight. However, in the final analysis, they had been removed from their homeland — the land they had fought 10 long years to hang on to — with astonishing ease and rapidity. The irony of the whole episode is that they were removed not by embattled settlers or even the US Army, but by a handful of government employees, most of whom had never even been to Arizona. Taza died shortly after the resettlement and Naiche was never able to fully assert his authority.

As a matter of fact, the removal was so sudden and uncomplicated that the people of the Territory were caught unprepared to exploit it. Except for Fort Bowie and a few isolated ranches, the area that became Cochise County was largely uninhabited. But, it didn't stay uninhabited long. Prospectors began to drift into the area, apparently undeterred by the band of holdout Chiricahuas still in and through the area. Mexican bandits also helped fill the void. The Army was kept busy.

In January of 1877, a raid through the region by another group of Apaches, supposedly pacified on a reservation in New Mexico, prompted the new commanding general in Arizona, August V. Kautz, to establish another Army post on the west side of the San Pedro River, close to the Mexican border. He sent two troops of the 6th Cavalry to scout the area and establish the new post. The commanding officer of this expedition was Captain Samuel M. Whitside, a big, bluff Regular who had been an enlisted man before the Civil War. (In fact, Captain Whitside had risen from private to sergeant-major **before** the War, been commissioned during it, and remained on active duty with the cavalry until 1902! He was generally regarded as the 6th Cavalry's best troop commander, though he is best remembered today for his role in the Wounded Knee affair in the Dakotas in 1890 — while serving as a major in the 7th Cavalry.)

Accompanied by two companies of cavalry and a young West Pointer, Captain William A. Rafferty, Whitside selected a small canyon in the Huachuca Mountains equidistant from the San Pedro River to the east and the Mexican border to the south. There were two reasons, basically, for the establishment of what became known as Fort Huachuca. First, the Army needed a permanent base for operations in defense of the settlers who would eventually populate the San Pedro valley. Specifically, they needed a base that was closer to the field of operations than either Fort Bowie in Apache Pass or Fort Lowell in Tucson. Second, the Army was committed to a line of picket posts along the Mexican-American border. These posts served two functions: 1) to monitor Indian activity and 2) to discourage Mexican guerrillas from using the Cochise County area as a staging ground and resting place. The border posts had to be supplied, the personnel rotated, and, occasionally, reinforced quickly. The new camp, which was designated Fort Huachuca in 1882, was perfectly located.

In 1878, General Kautz was replaced by General Orlando B. Willcox after a political squabble with the then-governor of the Territory, Anson P.K. Safford. Both Willcox and Safford had towns in Arizona named after them. (Kautz and Whitside were not so honored.) One of Willcox's first acts as commanding general was to launch a major campaign to clear out the remaining hostiles and tighten up the border.

(During this campaign, one of Willcox's second lieutenants had a military installation named after **him** — under tragic circumstances. One of the campaign's supply bases was located 40 miles south of Fort Bowie in White River Canyon. It was rather prosaically named Camp Supply. During a flash flood not far from there, 2Lt. John A. Rucker of the 6th Cavalry perished in a vain attempt to rescue another officer. Camp Supply was re-named Camp Rucker.)

In the wake of the troop movements this campaign brought, came scores, later hundreds, of prospectors. One of the first — and luckiest — of these men was Ed Schieffelin. Ed, his brother Al, and their partner, Dick Gird, staked claims in the foothills east of the San Pedro River. Warned by the Army that he would find nothing there but his tombstone, Ed whimsically named his strike "Tombstone" and in a matter of months, thousands of hopefuls flooded the area. Gird and the Schieffelins had found silver.

The event no one had foreseen transformed the erstwhile Chiricahua reservation into the most populous corner of Arizona Territory — all in the amazing time of less than two years.

By the 1880 Census, the town of Tombstone, hard by Schieffelin's first strike and the largest of the boom towns in the area, boasted a population of over 7000 — equal to that of the Territory's largest town, Tucson. Naturally, none of the hostile Chiricahuas still hiding out in the mountains or just passing through were enumerated by the census takers, but the Indian population at the height of Cochise's power couldn't have numbered more than 1000.

Logically — and realistically — the struggle was over. The Chiricahuas, in less than two hundred years, had been driven yet again from a homeland. Only some of them didn't know it. From 1880 until well into the 20th century, small bands of "renegades" continued to operate in and around the area that formally became Cochise County in February of 1881. The most spectacularly successful of these renegades was a raiding party leader whose activities, in the end, were to lead to the most extensive campaign in Arizona's military history and, eventually, to the removal of the Chiricahuas from the Territory. His name was Gokhlayeh, better known as Geronimo. He deserves a close look.

Geronimo

Geronimo was an incredibly complex person and, though his name has come to personify ferocity and fighting skill, he was at times an amazingly inept fighter. He was tall for an Apache (about 5'7") and hardy in the extreme. A Nedhni originally, Geronimo was probably born in Arizona where his father, who had married into the Chihennes of New Mexico, was wandering. Geronimo won early renown as a raiding party leader in Mexico and attached himself, through marriage, to the Chiricahuas. The most remarkable attribute Geronimo possessed was what might today be called extra-sensory perception. He had an ability, unique even among Indians, to "see" what was happening miles away with uncanny accuracy. This and his fighting and raiding skills attracted a following. There is no hard evidence, popular fiction notwithstanding, that Cochise and Geronimo were rivals. In fact, Geronimo was a "follower" (and close advisor) of Cochise's youngest son, Naiche. Eventually, Naiche "fell under" the influence of Geronimo, but whether this was due to Geronimo's "magic" powers or the fact that Naiche was perceived as incompetent by his followers is an issue that will probably never be resolved.

For all his pugnacity and vision, Geronimo was frequently captured in what might otherwise be termed humiliating circumstances. His first fling at the wild life of the renegade was cut short in 1877 by John P. Clum at the Warm Springs (New Mexico) Agency. Clum, aided by his redoubtable Indian police, captured Geronimo with relative ease and

packed him off to San Carlos, where most of the rest of the Chiricahuas had been assigned. Geronimo stayed a few months, gathered a following, and led a break out to Mexico. After nearly starving to death in the Sierra Madres in the winter of 1880, he meekly surrendered and was returned to San Carlos.

No doubt he would have run off again sooner or later, but an ill-advised move by the US Army insured that it was sooner. To be more precise, in the late summer of 1881, Colonel Eugene A. Carr of the 6th Cavalry, in compliance with orders from General Willcox and against his own better judgment, arrested a Western Apache medicine man named Noch-ay-del-klinne at a place called Cibicue in the White Mounatins. The arrest triggered an uprising that threatened to plunge Arizona Territory into an all-out Indian war rivalling that of the Sioux War of 1876. Geronimo had nothing to do with the Cibicue uprising, content to merely watch the proceedings with interest — and mounting alarm.

General William T. Sherman, commanding general of the Army, reacted quickly and with characteristic overstatement. He wired General McDowell (Willcox's superior) that "this annual stampede" of Indians was to be stopped once and for all. (Sherman, always free with pungent comments, didn't spare Arizona. He once remarked that the land had been won in a war with Mexico and wished that another war could compel the Mexicans to take it back. On another occasion, an officer's wife remarked that Arizona was not such a bad place, lacking only water and good society. Sherman acidly observed that the lack of those features was all that was wrong with hell.) As a result of Sherman's impatience, Arizona Territory found itself host to the largest concentration of US Army troops prior to World War II. Troops poured in from California, Kansas, Colorado and New Mexico. Geronimo bolted.

It took a major campaign by General George Crook himself, recalled to the Territory for that express purpose, to root Geronimo out of his Sierra Madre stronghold in Mexico. Geronimo came back to San Carlos in 1884, having stretched a promise of two months delay into nine months.

The expense and manpower committed to the recapture of Geronimo rose with each "escape", even though Geronimo's following dwindled with each adventure. However incompetent Geronimo might have been as a holdout in the late '70s and early '80s has been wiped away by his remarkable showing in the 1885-86 campaign. He apparently learned from his mistakes and got better with each attempt, while the US Army seemingly got more inept.

The last break out was the most spectacular. In the spring of 1885, in an atmosphere of tension and confusion, Geronimo led a small party off the reservation. They eluded Army patrols and reached Mexico. George Crook's civilian enemies made capital of the incident, which wasn't as serious as many then and now would have folks believe. The famed Apache Scouts made contact in Mexico almost right away. Captain Emmett Crawford's strike force hit the hostiles in the Babispe Mountains and captured 15 of Geronimo's band. A little over a month later, Captain Wirt Davis' strike force captured the same number in the Sierra Madres. Crook kept up the pressure.

In the spring of 1886, as Crook was patiently carrying out his strategy of sealing the border and keeping long range patrols after Geronimo in Mexico, the political climate heated up. General Sherman, in retirement since 1883, kept his peace for once, but his successor, General Philip H. Sheridan, bombarded Crook with unsolicited advice and querulous questions. Crook hung on and in March, after a dramatic surrender conference in the Canyon de los Embudos just over the border, succeeded in bringing the object of the attention, Geronimo, back.

Then it happened.

Geronimo, having been persuaded that he would be shipped to Florida and not turned over to the vengeful Arizona citizenry, was plied with bootleg liquor and frightened off by an unscrupulous civilian trader of the type that had been the bane of Crook's existence. Sheridan lost all patience.

The issue was Crook's use of 43 infantry companies, 40 cavalry troops, and the Indian scouts, who to Sheridan's dismay were almost entirely Chiricahuas. Crook had used the regular troops to seal the border and had sent the Chiricahuas under picked officers into Mexico after Geronimo. Sheridan, mindful of Geronimo's previous nine month "vacation", wanted Crook to make better use of the regular troops. He felt that the Chiricahua Scouts, almost all of whom had been hostiles themselves at one time, were basically unreliable. Crook disagreed vehemently and, tired of the squabble, asked to be relieved.

There is good reason to believe that Crook misjudged Sheridan, his old West Point classmate, and that he felt by asking to be relieved that he would instead be given the support he needed. But Sheridan, sensitive to the political pressure from Arizona, had a replacement waiting in the wings — Brigadier General Nelson A. Miles.

Miles was a remarkable man in many respects. For one thing, he was the only general in the Army at that time — except for General Terry — who was not a West Pointer. He had been a clerk in a crockery store in

Boston when the Civil War broke out and had risen from the ranks to major general by the war's end. He was married to General Sherman's niece, though the evidence is strong that the relationship actually retarded his advancement until Sherman's retirement. He had added luster to his Civil War reputation on the Plains, mopping up the mess that Custer, Crook, and others had made in the Sioux War of 1876. Ten years later, he was regarded as the best Indian-fighting officer in the Army — except for Crook, the man he replaced.

The two men couldn't have been more unlike in terms of personal style. Crook had made his battered cork helmet, rumpled corduroys, and braided beard symbols of the unorthodox Indian fighter. He had invariably travelled accompanied only by a single aide and a couple of Apache scouts. Miles, on his arrival a scant twelve days after the blowup, showed an entirely different style. He never went anywhere without the proper uniform, tailored and immaculate as circumstances permitted. He was invariably accompanied by whole squads of "spear carriers", who would not permit him to so much as stoop to pick up a pencil when he dropped it.

Miles' detractors have pointed to his life style as proof that he was a "phony" of some sort. But, Miles was far from a phony. He was, in fact, one of the ablest officers ever to wear a general's star. And, he possessed a political astuteness and flexibility that Crook had apparently lacked. He saw at once that the real problem was not Geronimo and about 40 fugitives hiding in Mexico from 4000 US Army troops, but rather, Arizona politics. The Arizonians wanted Geronimo captured, to be sure, but were divided amongst themselves as to whether they wanted to hang him or shoot him once caught. In the meantime, they didn't want to miss out on any of the revenue the concentration of Army troops had brought to Arizona — not to mention the financial opportunities inherent in a corrupt reservation system. In short, they wanted Geronimo and his pitiful band back where they could exploit them. Miles was determined to effectively break the vicious cycle of 'surrender-break-out-raid-surrender' that had plagued the Territory since the removal of the Chiricahuas from Cochise County in 1876.

He visited the agency at San Carlos. On the day of his visit, some of the younger Chiricahuas had managed to get hold of some rotgut whiskey and were comporting themselves in a manner not unlike modern teenage hooligans. Miles was appalled and years later remarked: "a more turbulent, desperate, disreputable band of human beings I had never seen before and hope never to see again". He decided on the spot to ship the entire tribe out of the Territory. Incredibly, he was supported by the Arizona politicians when he did just that. In all, some 400 souls were shipped off to military prison camps in Florida and Georgia.

How much responsibility for this turn of events can be laid on Geronimo's escapades will probably never be agreed upon objectively. Since no other Indian tribe in Arizona was ever shipped out en masse, it is hard to pass off Geronimo's actions as irrelevant. (The Navaho removal of 1864 was nowhere near as complete and certainly not as final — or swift.) In the end, Geronimo enjoyed more publicity and attention than did Cochise. Ironically, he did absolutely nothing for the Chiricahuas in their struggle to hold onto their land.

General Nelson A. Miles tried using regular troops in Mexico as per Sheridan's advice. The only significant contact was early in May of 1886 when a patrol of "buffalo soldiers" from the all-Negro 10th Cavalry clashed with the hostiles in the Penito Mountains of Sonora. Miles also reorganized the Department of Arizona into "districts of observation" assigning a specific officer to a particular piece of the Territory with the responsibility of reporting any hostile movement or activity. He brought the heliostat and placed it into widespread practical use for the first time in the United States. He set up a series of heliograph relay stations that were able, in the end, to handle over 2000 messages and transmit from Yuma to El Paso in just 8 hours — a vast improvement over mounted couriers and a telegraph line that could be cut. He maintained the pressure. The famous Henry Lawton/Leonard Wood campaign into Mexico was ordered by Miles. It accomplished little.

Finally, defying Sheridan, Miles took a leaf from Crook's book and sent the Indian (Chiricahua) scouts into action. He did restrict their numbers, apparently hedging his bets. Lieutenant Charles B. Gatewood of the 6th Cavalry took a small patrol into Mexico and made contact with Geronimo. The fact that Miles had shipped the Chiricahuas out of the Territory came as a complete shock to Geronimo and influenced him to surrender for the last time.

For all practical purposes, the Apache "Wars" were over. Geronimo surrendered with 39 people — including women and children — on September 4, 1886 and Miles lost no time in hustling them off to the railroad depot at Bowie Station. He also shipped out the loyal scouts who had risked their lives to bring the holdouts in.

This generated a storm of controversy, though it was not the apparent callousness that Miles' critics protested. The "authorities" wanted to turn Geronimo and some of his followers over to the civilian courts for trial. Miles had promised Geronimo and his people that this would not happen, so he blithely shipped them out as fast as he could and answered War Department inquiries in an infuriatingly obtuse manner.

President Grover Cleveland intervened and ordered the train stopped at San Antonio. An Army officer was instructed to go aboard and learn from the Apaches what terms had been given — as this information could not be obtained in telegraphic exchange with Miles. President Cleveland was enraged when he learned that Miles had pulled a “fast one”, but felt morally obligated to let the terms stand and the train proceed.

General Miles has been severely criticised by historians for this episode, though undeservedly. While the inclusion of the loyal scouts and their families was perhaps unconscionable, the actions of Miles showed a remarkable moral courage. He risked his rank and career to make good a promise to a scruffy Chiricahua brigand everybody else wanted to hang.

Nelson A. Miles was never a modest man and, to Crook's chagrin, promptly took full credit for having pacified Arizona. The newspapers sang his praises to the skies and Miles lapped it up. He went on to become commanding general of the Army, apparently unperturbed by the controversy he had generated — a controversy that rages to this day. His successors — Generals Benjamin H. Grierson and Alexander M. McCook, inherited no Chiricahua problem except for a few fruitless patrols against lone holdouts such as Massai, Mangas, and the Apache Kid.

* * *

They are all gone now.

The Chiricahua culture did not flourish long in Cochise County. In the amazingly brief span of two hundred years, the people who gave the County its character, history, and its name had come and gone. Little remains. Cochise's bones are hidden somewhere in the Dragoons, kept company no doubt by hundreds of others, red and white, in graves marked and unmarked. Fort Bowie exists only as ruins — and a tourist attraction. Fort Huachuca still thrives, but not even the progressive and innovative General Miles would recognize it today. Tombstone, the first county seat and once the largest settlement in the Territory, has fewer inhabitants than it did when Geronimo passed by it on his numerous trips to Mexico.

The culture that so rapidly displaced the Chiricahuas has been on the scene about half as long as the Indians were. If history holds true to pattern, they too will eventually be driven out by an alien culture — or absorbed by it — or simply vanish. There are no signs of an imminent displacement, but if history is any guide to the future, the change will come upon them with astonishing speed. The first people of Cochise County had thousands of years to enjoy their culture and hundreds of years to adapt to changes. The next people had less than two hundred years for their culture to thrive and just over two decades to struggle with the changes. The most recent people now celebrate their first hundred years. The question that remains is how long they will have to adapt to changes before they too are displaced.



Photo Opposite: 1886 Geronimo surrenders to General Crook. Mulheim Collection. Photograph C. S. Fly. Courtesy Bisbee Mining & Historical Museum.