UNITED STATES ARMY SCOUTS: THE SOUTHWESTERN EXPERIENCE, 1866-1890

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of the North Texas State University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

By

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May, 1975
Nance, Carol Conley, United States Army Scouts: The Southwestern Experience, 1866-1890. Master of Arts (History), May, 1975, 156 pp., 4 maps, bibliography, 107 titles.

In the post-Civil War Southwest, the United States Army utilized civilians and Indians as scouts. As the mainstay of the reconnaissance force, enlisted Indians excelled as trackers, guides, and fighters. General George Crook became the foremost advocate of this service. A little-known aspect of the era was the international controversy created by the activities of native trackers under the 1882 reciprocal hot pursuit agreement between Mexico and the United States.

Providing valuable information on Army scouts are numerous government records which include the Annual Report of the Secretary of War from 1866 to 1896 and Foreign Relations of the United States for 1883 and 1886. Memoirs, biographies, and articles in regional and national historical journals supplement government documents.
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CHAPTER I

THE SOUTHWEST: CONVENTIONAL ARMY,
UNCONVENTIONAL ENEMY

In April 1865 the American people, grateful that the nightmare of civil war had ended, little dreamed that the Army of their reunited nation faced a series of frontier wars just as terrifying to its participants and lasting six times longer than the war just concluded. The western states and territories would become the new battleground as whites and Indians fought for permanent control of the West. Accustomed to enemies who shared common methods of warfare, American soldiers faced Indians whose combat tactics not only differed from those of the soldiers, but who also knew the country for which they battled and could cope with the harsh geographical conditions imposed by nature throughout much of western America. To combat Indian warriors possessing such essential knowledge and skills, the Army needed men who were familiar with Indians and their natural environment. After the Civil War, most soldiers did not meet the requirements; therefore, the Army employed civilians and friendly Indians as scouts.
The southwestern region of the United States, in which many Army scouts lived and served, can be described geographically as a series of increasingly elevated plateaus slashed by canyons and ribbed by numerous mountain ranges from the Panhandle and the Trans-Pecos regions of Texas westward to the Colorado plateau of Arizona, and then southward along the Sierra Madre Mountains of Mexico. ¹ The ascent of the tablelands begins in the Texas Panhandle. To the east of the generally level Staked Plains, the land is rough and broken, the handiwork of rivers and their tributaries as the watercourses descend from the higher plain. On the Staked Plains, the rivers with their numerous branches continue to carve the surface, the Canadian River sculpting gentle valleys with ample timber, water, and grazing, while the Red River cuts deep canyons into the plains.²

To the west and southwest of the Panhandle, the terrain becomes increasingly harsh and elevated. The Trans-Pecos

¹Although the geographical Southwest includes parts of Oklahoma, Colorado, Utah, and Nevada, the area referred to in this work as the Southwest consists only of the territory within the present-day states of Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona.

area, the scene of much activity against Indians during the 1870's, contains rough mountain ranges and their adjacent foothills gashed by canyons, gullies, and ravines, thus providing an inexhaustible number of hiding places. The land continues to rise across New Mexico and into Arizona to the Colorado plateau. Mountains rising to elevations of 5,000 to 13,000 feet above sea level dominate the landscape. Here, also, rivers carve canyons and valleys into the plateaus. Running in a north-south direction in the Mexican states of Sonora and Chihuahua are the Sierra Madre Mountains, rising from 2,000 to 12,000 feet in altitude. In Sonora is located the western slope of the Sierra Madre range, for decades a favorite stronghold of renegade Apaches with its impassable canyons and high precipitous ridges.

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In the arid expanse of plains, plateaus, and mountains adjacent to the Mexican border the United States Army dared to build its forts and to pursue the Indian tribes who called the Southwest their home. Forts abounded in the Southwest, their construction in Indian territory being part of the overall strategy of the Army. The purpose of the forts was to prevent or end raids, but the Army simply did not have enough soldiers to man them. If the Army had maintained its numerical strength following the Civil War and had used that strength against the western tribes, the nature of the Indian wars would probably have been radically different. The Army could have overwhelmed the Indians by sheer numbers, thus rendering the contributions of scouts less important.

Shortly after the end of the Civil War, the Army began to shrink in size from approximately 1,000,000 men in 1865 to approximately 35,000 in 1870, then to approximately 25,000 in 1874, the size at which the Army remained until after the close of the Indian wars. The number of troops stationed

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in Texas and the two territories of New Mexico and Arizona averaged approximately 6,000 in any year between 1869 and 1892. Texas, with its exceptionally long frontier, averaged approximately 3,100 men, and Arizona and New Mexico averaged approximately 1,700 and 1,200 men respectively. The highest levels of troop concentration reached in both territories corresponded with the increased activity of hostile Apaches in the early 1870's and most of the 1880's. Troop concentration in Texas remained high from the beginning of the Reconstruction period to the early 1880's when Indian depredations ceased. In the 25 years following the Civil War, companies from 9 cavalry regiments and 22 infantry regiments served in the Southwest. 8

In addition to the limited number of troops available for duty in the Southwest, a major weakness of military strategy was the Army's insistence on using conventional methods in what was in reality an unconventional war. During the 1870's and 1880's, the aim of military campaigns against Indians was to subdue and place them on reservations. To accomplish this aim effectively, the Army depended heavily

8 Information on troop concentration and assignments of cavalry and infantry companies are based on figures included in the Adjutant General's reports in the Annual Report of the Secretary of War for the years 1866 and 1869 through 1892.
on surprise attacks on Indian encampments by converging columns of infantry and cavalry. The logistics of a campaign called for the transportation of supplies by wagons pulled by slow-moving mules or oxen.9

To achieve success in the Southwest, the military had to adapt its strategy to meet the problems posed by the extremes of geography, the need for mobility, and the nature of the enemy. Although coveted by the Army, the advantage of surprise belonged to the Indians. By observing military traffic on the plains and in the valleys from safe, inconspicuous mountain lookouts, Indians could decide whether to attack or hide, then remove themselves to places chosen especially for ambush or refuge. Also, hostile Indians inhabited areas that were usually remote, inaccessible, or unknown to whites.10

Tactics required swift military pursuit, but on foot the infantry was ineffectual in rough terrain. Extremes of heat and cold and scarcity of water and forage exposed the lack of endurance of both men and horses. Uniforms and

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boots quickly wore out in the rock-strewn brush country. Supply wagons pulled by oxen or mules slowed the movement of troops.11

The enemy further compounded the difficult situation faced by the military in the Southwest. The Army fought to subjugate the Indians, thus freeing the land for white occupation: the Indians fought for possession of plunder, honors in combat, and defense of home and family. In warfare they practiced swift and sudden attacks, living off the land as they retreated to their strongholds. Causing problems for Indians trying to live peacefully on reservations was the fact that friendly Indians were hardly indistinguishable from unfriendly ones.12

To surmount the problems of geography, mobility, and the enemy, the Army in the Southwest learned to depend on three factors--the cavalry, the mule pack train, and scouts. An early approach to the dilemma of finding sufficient numbers of soldiers to hunt raiding parties was to mount the infantry, but the practice saw only limited use. By 1877 the Army had increased the number of men enlisted in

11Ibid., pp. 82-85, 152, 156, 162.

the cavalry, so that although infantry regiments outnumbered cavalry regiments by two to one, the ten cavalry regiments contained more men than did the twenty-five infantry regiments in the entire Army. The mule pack train, developed into a fine art by General George Crook during his campaigns against the Apaches in Arizona, gave troops needed independence from ponderous supply wagon trains. The Army made its most significant departure from traditional strategy during this period by employing frontiersmen and friendly Indians as scouts. The Indian wars in Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona pitted the Army and its scouts against some of the most cunning and ruthless tribes in America. Without guides and scouts, the task of subduing hostile Indians would have taken longer and at a greater cost in lives.

An Army scout can be defined as one who traveled ahead of soldiers looking for signs of hostiles or following their trails. Upon discovering evidence of Indians, the scout would inform the patrol commander. He also guided units through unfamiliar territory, locating water, grass, and fuel sufficient for campsites. Other terms used in reference

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to scouts are guide and trailer. A guide specifically led troops through areas familiar to him but unknown to the soldiers. A trailer specifically searched for a trail left by Indians and then followed it, hoping to lead his unit to the hostile camp. Although the combined duties of guides and trailers differed little from those of scouts, the Army made definite distinctions when hiring a civilian for the job of scout, guide, or trailer. Enlisted as a scout, an Indian performed the duties of both guide and trailer. To accompany Indian scouts, the Army employed interpreters, who frequently could boast of their own experiences as scouts.  

To be a good Army scout a man had to meet special qualifications. In light of the rugged terrain of the Southwest and the nature of his work, a scout had to be physically fit. Excellent eyesight coupled with sharp observation of details enabled a scout to discover the movements, location, and numerical strength of the enemy.

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14 James H. Cook, Fifty Years on the Old Frontier as Cowboy, Hunter, Guide, Scout, and Ranchman (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1957), pp. 163-164 (hereafter cited as Cook, Fifty Years). Although military reports do not specifically define the duties of scouts, guides, and trailers, the references made to the men hired for these jobs and the execution of their duties indicate that definite distinctions did exist. Examples may be found in the departmental commanders' reports in the Annual Report of the Secretary of War for the years 1866 through 1896.
Resourcefulness, knowledge of frontier ways, and ability to keep one's bearing under all conditions of nature aided in a man's survival in the wilderness areas into which he must go. Knowledge of Indian ways and competence with guns insured a scout's possession of his scalp longer than many other men. Lacking the necessary frontier skills and keen insight into Indian culture, few white men qualified as scouts. Scarce in number, those men who did qualify rated high salaries and other favorable terms of employment. While men who knew the country often became guides, the best scouts came from among Indians and half-bloods.15

The utilization of Indians as scouts by English-speaking people originated during the colonial Indian wars in the seventeenth century. Prior to 1866, Indians served with the Army but not in it. The status of Indian guides and trailers altered with the passage of the Army Reorganization Act of 28 July 1866. The act stipulated the enlistment of one thousand Indians to serve as scouts in the territories and in Indian country. As remuneration the Indians would receive the pay and allowances of cavalry soldiers. Departmental commanders would determine the duration of enlistment. The effectiveness of Indians as scouts encouraged the War

15Cook, *Fifty Years*, pp. 164-166.
Department to establish several all-Indian, non-scout companies as an experiment during the 1890's. In 1916 General John J. Pershing's expedition into Mexico included an Apache detachment to perform as guides and trackers. So successful were Indian scouts that the Army maintained some units until 1943.16

Motives for and opinions about the use of Indians as scouts varied. The dominant motive was practical necessity. Officers in the field recognized the difficulty encountered by whites in acquiring tracking skills. In general, soldiers lacked the competency and the time for trailing activities. Troops needed men trained to track Indians, and no one could do this better but the Indians themselves. A second motive behind the use of Indian scouts was a belief that military service would be one way to civilize Indians. Through exposure to military discipline and fraternization with white soldiers, Indians might absorb some of the traits of

white culture. Opposition did occasionally appear. Vincent Colyer, spokesman for a peace commission traveling in Arizona in 1871, complained so vociferously about General Crook's recruitment of peaceful reservation Indians that the general suspended the activities of his scouts until after Colyer left Arizona. Agreeing with Colyer in his condemnation of the practice were renegade Indians, but for vastly different reasons. 17

The leading advocate and unquestioned expert in the efficient use of Indian scouts was George Crook, who commanded the Department of Arizona during the early 1870's and early 1880's. Crook founded his utilization of Indians on military expediency and his personal humanitarianism. Not content to assign small numbers of scouts to various commands as trailers, Crook organized scout companies which hunted hostile Indians in cooperation with troops and often fought as independent units. Crook not only believed that the Army

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benefited from the skills of the scouts, but the scouts in turn benefited from the civilizing influence of the military. Crook had such a strong faith in his scouts that in 1886, when Philip H. Sheridan, Lieutenant-General of the Army, insisted that Crook rely more on regular soldiers than on Indians to pursue renegades, Crook requested to be relieved of his command in Arizona rather than switch to a less efficient system.\textsuperscript{18}

The activities of Indian guides and trailers not only influenced the progress of the Indian wars in the Southwest, but they also directly affected relations between the United States and Mexico. During the 1870's and 1880's, soldiers frequently went on patrol to seek out renegades raiding across the border from Mexico. Scouts often accompanied such patrols. When troops did find and follow the signs of raiding parties, the trails usually crossed the border into Mexico. The international boundary stood as a frustrating barrier for the Army since the two nations did not have an agreement allowing the pursuit of Indians into either country. Only after 1882, when such an understanding materialized,

\textsuperscript{18} U.S., Congress, Senate, \textit{Letter From the Secretary of War, Transmitting in Response to Senate Resolution of March 11, 1890, Correspondence Regarding the Apache Indians}, S. Doc. 88, 51st Cong., 1st sess., Serial No. 2686, 1890, pp. 6-7.
did troops of either country enter foreign territory in pursuit of hostiles. Pleased with the results obtained through the use of the reciprocal pursuit agreement, the United States and Mexico renewed it several times. 19

In 1886, deep in the Sierra Madre Mountains in Mexico, Mexican irregulars attacked a group of Apache scouts and their white officers. The unfortunate incident resulted in heated accusations and conflicting investigative reports by the American and Mexican governments regarding the role of Indian scouts under the 1882 agreement. So significant were the attack and the subsequent investigations that the terms of the hot pursuit agreements of 1890 and 1896 bore the imprint of the affair. 20

In examining the use of civilians and friendly Indians as scouts by the Army in the Southwest, four general ideas


emerge about which specific questions may be asked. First, because of limited manpower, geography, and the nature of the enemy, the United States Army employed both civilians and friendly Indians as scouts. What relationship existed between the Army and its civilian scouts and between the Army and its Indian scouts? How effective were both? Why?

Second, the Army in the Southwest relied more on Indian scouts than on civilian scouts. Why? What recruitment procedures and terms of service did the Army use? What problems arose from the Army's application of Indian guides and trailers? How did Army service affect the later lives of the Indians serving as scouts?

Third, General George Crook developed the scout service to its highest degree. How did he do it? Why did he succeed? How did Crook interrelate his military policy and personal philosophy in his dealings with Indian scouts?

Fourth, the use of Indian scouts in the 1880's under the hot pursuit agreement led to difficulties between the United States and Mexico. What happened in 1886 in Mexico when Mexican irregulars attacked Apache scouts and killed their white commanding officer? What did Mexican and American investigations reveal concerning the activities of the scouts in Mexico? How did the 1886 incident affect the hot pursuit
agreements between the United States and Mexico? Did the assault on the scouts affect the United States Army's policy toward its Indian auxiliaries in Arizona? In the eyewitness accounts of the experiences and observations of white and Indian participants in the struggle for control of the American Southwest, in government records, and in recent works on the Indian wars of the post-Civil War period, one can discover the answers to the above and other questions concerning United States Army scouts and their contributions toward the inevitable pacification of the Southwestern tribes during the second half of the nineteenth century.
CHAPTER TWO

ARMY SCOUTS: CIVILIANS ON THE TRAIL

To survive as a United States Army scout in the turbulent Southwest of a century ago, a man needed not only the ability to defend himself and to guide others safely through Indian territory, but he also needed to understand how Indians thought and acted. Only those men endowed with such qualities became outstanding civilian scouts, while less qualified persons applied their skills as guides. Patrols guided by individuals fraudulently claiming to be scouts or guides, but who actually possessed scant knowledge of the country and its inhabitants, frequently fell victim to failure and misfortune.¹

In contrast to its policy of classifying enlisted Indians as scouts in general, the Army specifically designated civilians as scouts and guides, depending on an individual's qualifications. Although subject to military orders, as civilian employees they escaped military discipline. Technically involved in the transportation of troops, civilian scouts and guides secured their employment from the Quartermaster General's

Department. Their compensation came from appropriated funds designated as incidental expenses. The usual salary amounted to $125 a month, although smaller stipends occasionally were paid. During the early 1870's a reputable Mexican scout, Francisco Grijalba, earned an average income of $80 a month. The relative amount he received may have been the result of ethnic discrimination rather than the estimation of his ability and worth as a scout.²

In the years immediately following the Civil War, the Army recruited many civilian scouts and guides from territorial volunteer companies being disbanded. Other guides were simply citizens offering their time and skills to the task of subduing restless Indians. In his annual report for 1867, General Irvin McDowell evaluated the volunteer guides in the far Southwest. He found the long-time residents of an area to be most valuable for temporary service. McDowell also noted that the civilians objected to military discipline and to officers unfamiliar with the territory and its residents.

On the whole, the early guides and scouts proved satisfactory. Men lacking previous experience with the Army frequently did overlook basic military needs and methods when on patrol. Officers occasionally complained of citizen guides who neglected to check on water and forage available at prospective campsites, thereby subjecting soldiers and horses to inconveniences civilians were expected to eliminate.  

Ethnically, the Army's citizen employees could boast of Anglo, Mexican, and Indian parentage. Representing the half-bloods who rendered valuable services as guides, scouts, and interpreters were Sam Bowman and Archie MacIntosh. Bowman worked as a guide and interpreter for General Crook during the 1870's and 1880's. Archie MacIntosh, a Scottish-Chippewa from Canada, had served under Crook in the Pacific Northwest before answering his former employer's invitation to scout for him in Arizona in the 1870's. MacIntosh terminated his career with the Army in 1884 when his expropriations of government supplies for personal profit came under public scrutiny.  

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In preparation for his first campaign against the Apaches in Arizona, General George Crook hired fifty Mexican civilians to act as scouts, in addition to several Indians, Anglos, and half-bloods. He did so on the recommendations of the territorial governor and several leading citizens who assured Crook of the Mexicans' familiarity with Apache warfare and habitats. John G. Bourke, who later served as Crook's aide, saw the Mexicans in an altogether different light. He described the heterogeneous group of scouts as "... a fair sample of the social driftwood of the Southwest..." and remarked that some of the Mexicans had taken part "... in every revolution or counter-revolution in northwestern Mexico since the day that Maximilian landed."\(^5\)

During Crook's subsequent sweep of Arizona, he and his men sighted Indians, but failed to surprise and capture any of them, as accepted military strategy dictated. Success having eluded him, Crook decided to discharge the Mexicans

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as soon as the contingent reached Fort Apache and ended the patrol.⁶

Crook's early experience with Mexican scouts undoubtedly strengthened his conviction that friendly Indians trailed hostile Indians better than non-Indians. In groups such as the one hired by Crook in 1871, Mexican scouts failed to demonstrate the talents attributed to them by the territorial governor. The disappointing performance of Mexican guides employed to track bandits in Texas in 1893 gave rise to suspicions of their collusion with the bandits. Similar to other non-Indians, only a scant number of Mexicans qualified as good scouts and guides. Men of the caliber of Francisco Grijalba, Antonio Besias, and Montoya established enviable reputations as reliable scouts and guides in the Southwest of the 1870's and 1880's.⁷

To fill the job of chief of scouts, the Army selected only highly experienced and competent individuals. As the vital link between white officers and Indian scouts, a chief of scouts bore the responsibility of providing strong leadership

⁶Crook, Autobiography, pp. 164-165.

for his Indian subordinates. He had to know and understand his scouts thoroughly in order to insure their cooperation with the officers commanding them. Often exerting authority similar to that of officers, the chief of scouts commanded and led his men into battle and administered discipline when necessary. For accepting the responsibility of leadership, the chief of scouts could expect from the Army a stipend of $125 a month plus rations and ammunition for an average employment period of six months.8

Possibly the best chief of scouts to serve in the Southwest during the 1870's and 1880's was Al Sieber. Before becoming an Army scout, Sieber worked as a freight wagon driver and guard, ranch foreman, prospector, and miner. Exactly when Sieber embarked on his scouting career is obscure, but by 1872 he had begun guiding patrols in Arizona in search of recalcitrant Apaches who refused to settle on reservations. In September of that year he led eighty-six Hualapai Indian scouts on a patrol with three companies of the Fifth Cavalry under the command of Captain Julius Wilmot Mason. That Sieber possessed the attributes of a competent leader became evident when, on the above occasion,  

he successfully guided the Indian scouts and troops into position for a simultaneous assault on four adjacent Apache rancherias or camps, a feat seldom accomplished against Indians. Feared and respected by the Apaches, Sieber exercised caution on the trail, but could when the occasion demanded take calculated risks to perform his job. Resigning his positions as guide and chief of scouts at Camp Verde, Arizona, Sieber returned to civilian life in 1880. Volunteering his services once more in 1882, when General Crook resumed command of the Department of Arizona, Sieber served admirably as chief of scouts at the San Carlos agency.9

In 1884 the outbreak by Geronimo and his followers from the Turkey Creek encampment on the San Carlos reservation resulted, in part, from a serious error in judgment committed by Al Sieber. The outbreak generated from the Apaches' refusal to obey the Army's prohibition against the manufacture and consumption of tizwin, a native beer concocted from fermented corn mash. Geronimo and his band had demonstrated their increasing defiance of Army control by holding drinking parties. Unsure of how to enforce the tizwin prohibition without seriously antagonizing the Apaches, Lieutenant

Britton Davis, the officer overseeing the encampment at Turkey Creek, telegraphed Captain Francis E. Pierce, the military commandant at the San Carlos Agency. Assuming that Pierce would forward his warning to Crook as was the practice with a potential crisis, Davis waited uneasily for word from the general.  

Pierce, unfamiliar with the Apache temperament, showed the telegram to Sieber and asked his advice. Evaluating the situation as a harmless *tizwin* drunk, the scout believed that Davis could handle it alone. Pierce, trusting Sieber's analysis, decided not to forward Davis's telegram to Crook's headquarters. The officer's decision was unfortunate, for had the general learned immediately of the conditions faced by Davis, he could have taken a course of action calculated to ease the tension at Turkey Creek and prevented an outbreak. Several months later, Sieber terminated his reconnaissance activities for the Army when Captain John L. Bullis, the new commandant at the San Carlos agency, fired him for his implication in a dispute over the delivery of a case of liquor to an enlisted man.  

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During the Indian wars in the Southwest, various individuals gained reputations not only for their expertise as guides and reconnoiterers, but also for their courage and devotion to their jobs. Working for General Crook in central Arizona, Dan O'Leary distinguished himself in 1873 by saving the general from an Apache assassin's bullet. During the Red River War in 1874-1875, William Schmalsle, William Dixon, and Amos Chapman demonstrated the bravery typical of the outstanding civilian guides and scouts. Risking probable capture and death at the hands of Comanche and Cheyenne warriors, William Schmalsle journeyed ninety danger-filled miles to Camp Supply in Indian Territory to obtain troops to relieve a besieged Army supply train in the Texas Panhandle. Having experienced the fury of a Comanche assault at Adobe Walls in the Panhandle in the summer of 1874, William Dixon, Amos Chapman, and five companions held off a large war party for a prolonged period at an isolated spot on the Texas plains, in what is now known as the Buffalo Wallow Fight, until a relief column arrived and drove the Indians away. For their exceptional courage, the War Department presented Dixon and Chapman with the Congressional Medal of Honor.\(^\text{12}\)

\(^{12}\)William F. Dixon, *Life and Adventures of "Billy Dixon of Adobe Walls, Texas Panhandle*, comp. Frederick S. Barde,
Rugged individuals possessing fortitude, endurance, knowledge, and skills, civilian scouts and guides unquestionably contributed to the pacification of Southwestern Indian tribes. While serving in the capacities of chiefs of scouts, scouts, and guides, they unflinchingly gave of their time and abilities to the military endeavors to secure peace in the Southwest. Many of the men who survived the Indian wars later aided in the development of the region through agricultural, mining, and legal careers. Representative of the more civic-minded guides and scouts were George Stevens, an Arizona rancher and territorial legislator, Edward Wolffarth, (Guthrie, Okla.: Co-Operative Publishing Co., 1914), p. 278; John T. Marshall, The Miles Expedition of 1874-1875: An Eyewitness Account of the Red River War, ed. Lonnie J. White, (Austin: Encino Press, 1971), pp. 27, 46; Nelson A. Miles, Personal Recollections and Observations of General Nelson A. Miles (New York: Werner Company, 1896), pp. 172-173; Dan L. Thrapp, "Dan O'Leary, Arizona Scout," Arizona and the West 7(1965):293. In 1917, a special Medal of Honor review board, by the authority of an act passed by Congress the previous year, revised the official list of recipients. Basing its decision on the belief that only officers and enlisted men could meet the new criteria for the Congressional Medal of Honor, the review board ordered the elimination of the names of Billy Dixon, Amos Chapman, and 909 other winners from the official rolls. The men or their families could retain the medal, but no one could wear it, such being a misdemeanor offense. For further information see Joe F. Taylor, ed., "The Indian Campaign on the Staked Plain, 1874-1875," Panhandle-Plains Historical Review 34(1961):45; and U.S., Congress, Senate, Subcommittee on Veterans' Affairs of the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, Medal of Honor Recipients, 1863-1963, 88th Cong., 2d sess., 1964, pp. 20-22.
a county sheriff in Texas, and Jack Stillwell, a frontier lawyer and judge. 13

Generously compensated for their high-risk jobs, civilian scouts and guides met the challenge of frontier warfare, often exhibiting exceptional courage and intelligence. Motivated by desire for a permanent cessation of Indian hostilities, hatred of Indians, the search for adventure, or enjoyment of the work, civilian scouts and guides boasted of various ethnic backgrounds. Whether a civilian was an Anglo, a Mexican, or a half-blood mattered little when entrusted with the reconnaissance for an Army patrol. Uppermost in the minds of officers and enlisted men was the assurance of competent guidance by an individual of proven reliability and skill as a guide and scout.

CHAPTER III

ARMY SCOUTS: SET AN INDIAN TO CATCH AN INDIAN

In a report dated 6 September 1882 General George Crook, commanding the United States Army in Arizona, stated that the great difficulty in the solution of the Apache problem lay in catching the Indians; and, if done at all, it had to be achieved mainly through their own people.¹ Although Crook was describing the complicated Indian problem in Arizona, his statement could easily have been an assessment of the general Indian situation throughout the Southwest. The early post-Civil War Army lacked experience in fighting Indians under the conditions facing it in the Southwest. The rugged, arid landscape and the unconventional warfare waged by the Southwestern tribes forced the Army to make adaptations in its conventional methods of fighting. One of the adjustments was the use of enlisted Indian scouts to guide soldiers to the camps or strongholds of hostiles

¹George Crook to Assistant Adjutant General, Division of the Pacific, 6 September 1882, George Crook Letterbook I, Rutherford B. Hayes Memorial Library, Fremont, Ohio (hereafter cited as Crook Correspondence).
undetected, so that the troops might make a surprise attack.²

That Indians were better qualified than non-Indians to track other Indians is indisputable. Having been trained from early childhood to survive in the harsh environment of the Southwest, an Indian scout knew the kinds of places hostiles would seek for rest and protection from pursuit. As a trained warrior, he knew how other Indians would attack an enemy and defend themselves against capture or death. His experience as a wilderness hunter enabled a tracker to recognize and interpret evidence of the presence of Indians that would have gone unnoticed by persons untrained in the art of trailing. Employing Indians to a greater extent than other high ranking officers in the West, General Crook often appealed to captured warriors to enlist in the belief that the wilder Indians made more outstanding scouts than so-called tamer ones.³

Why Indian warriors would ally themselves with white soldiers to fight other Indians, even those of their own tribe or band, has been a perplexing question. Some renegades

³Ibid., p. 182.
believed the scouts worked against their own people for money. A member of Victorio's band, which committed depredations north and south of the Rio Grande in the late 1870's, bitterly remarked "... they are used against their own people, and for what? Only the silver--the eight pieces of silver they get every moon." Some Indians may have served out of a desire for financial gain or simply may have recognized the futility of resisting the onslaught of white civilization. The most logical reason, however, would be that fighting, whether against whites or other Indians, was essential to an Indian's lifestyle. Being an Army scout was a recognition of a warrior's ability, and it was certainly a welcome change from the dull routine of reservation life. The object of admiration and envy, an enlisted tracker possessed two things forbidden to reservation Indians--a rifle and ammunition. Not only was his rifle a weapon, but it also provided the means by which he could hunt game to supplement his Army rations. Pride also motivated an Indian to become a scout. As long as a man fought the enemies of his tribe or band, he received the respect of his people, but when he hunted members of his own tribe, hate often supplanted respect.

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5Ibid., p. 80; Eve Ball, "The Apache Scouts, A Chiricahua Appraisal," *Arizona and the West* 7(1965):315-328 passim;
Indians had offered their services to white soldiers against unfriendly Indians as early as the seventeenth century, but their status was that of allies with only limited numbers being used. With the passage of the Army Reorganization Act in July 1866, Indian scouts became enlisted members of the Army. A maximum of one thousand men could enlist and receive the pay and allowances of a cavalry soldier. During the period of the Indian wars, a scout earned thirteen dollars per month during the average enlistment time of six months. If not obligated to send his pay home to relatives, he frequently used it to buy horses or to gamble. Enlisted warriors could also draw a limited amount of rations and supplies for their families from the post commissary. The quartermaster issued a rifle, cartridge belt, canteen, tin cup, and blanket to each man. Commanding officers usually issued cartridges. Uniforms were optional.

When a scout's enlistment ended, he returned the rifle and other equipment to the post quartermaster. If owed back pay, a discharged trailer would receive that amount plus a refund on his clothing allowance on the condition that he had not drawn a uniform from the quartermaster. 6

Recruiting techniques appear to have been casual and the chief requirement to have been physical fitness. When a department commander wanted new or additional scouts, notice would be sent to the camps of friendly Indians or to reservation agencies calling for volunteers. Prospective enlistees would report to a designated military post or reservation agency where officers would examine them for fitness for duty. According to John Rope, who described his first attempt to enlist as an Apache scout in Arizona, the men formed a line and waited to be chosen. Officers examined the arms and legs and then pounded the chest of each man to learn if any had respiratory ailments. If a man coughed, the officers rejected him as unfit. Normally,

a man with a physical disability of any kind was unacceptable. The general policy for the few allowed to enlist with a pre-existing disability was to make sure the man understood that the government would not give him a pension for that particular disability.  

Although the Army Reorganization Act of 1866 stipulated a maximum enlistment of one thousand Indian scouts, at no time during the fifty years in which they served did the figures go beyond six hundred men. Only three times did the enlistments reach peaks of five hundred or more—in the late 1860's, mid-1870's, and mid-1880's. After the last Sioux uprising in 1890, recruitment slacked off. By 1902 the Army would accept only seventy-five enlistees. In 1911 Forts Apache and Huachuca in Arizona and Fort Clark in Texas served as headquarters for the sixty Indian scouts stationed in the Southwest. The remaining units operated from Fort Sill in Oklahoma.

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7 George Crook to Adjutant General, United States Army, 3 August 1887, Crook Correspondence; Goodwin, Western Apache Raiding, pp. 103-104, 129.

The Reorganization Act of 1866 made no provision for organizing the scouts into companies or battalions. In the first years that Indians enlisted, division and department commanders recommended the creation of companies commanded either by white officers or friendly chiefs. The Army initiated the practice in the early 1870's, and assigned the ranks of private, corporal, and sergeant to the scouts. 9

Most Indians did not speak or understand English, and even fewer soldiers could speak or understand any of the various Indian languages and dialects of the Southwestern tribes; therefore, an interpreter accompanied most detachments. In the absence of interpreters, trackers and officers resorted to rudimentary sign language. Because Southwestern tribes could speak or understand Spanish, most interpreters were Mexicans or Spanish-speaking Anglos. As civilian employees of the Army, interpreters received their pay from scouts during the Indian Wars can be found in the tables of the actual strength of the Army in the Annual Report of the Secretary of War for the years 1868 through 1890.


The efficiency of Indian units depended not only on the leadership of chiefs of scouts, but also on the officers commanding a scout company or troops to which they might be attached. Officers such as Captain Emmet Crawford, Lieutenant Britton Davis, Lieutenant Charles B. Gatewood, and Lieutenant John L. Bullis, all who commanded scout companies in the Southwest, maintained control of the Indian auxiliaries through tact, common sense, fairness, and a knowledge and appreciation of the habits of their men. General George Crook, in a communication to Lieutenant William E. Shipp of the Tenth Cavalry, listed four rules for the effective guidance of Indian trailers. The first rule advocated by the general required that an officer must show his men that he trusted them. Crook advised next that the best directions an officer could give to his scouts would be simply to
explain what he expected of them and then allow the Indians to do their work in their own way. The commander also cautioned that the Indians thus employed should not have to do sentinel or picket duty. Crook concluded by saying that individuality was the best quality of the scouts; therefore, they would be most efficient if given freedom of action in their tracking duties.\(^{11}\)

The chief function of the Indian scouts was to track hostile Indians; however, the Army discovered other uses for their tracking abilities that included such diverse activities as policing the reservations, persuading hostiles to surrender, spying on reservation Indians, or herding strayed cattle. Scout companies stationed on the Indian reservations, by acting as local police, prevented unhappy tribesmen from bolting the confines of the reservation, trailed and arrested those natives who broke laws, and guarded captured renegades and offenders. In one instance, scouts from the SanCarlos reservation in Arizona aided soldiers in the apprehension of outlaws who had robbed an Army paymaster of $28,000.\(^{12}\)

\(^{11}\)Bigelow, On the Bloody Trail, pp. 43-44; George Crook to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 28 November 1887, Crook Correspondence; Nelson A. Miles, Personal Recollections and Observations of General Nelson A. Miles (New York: Werner Company, 1896), p. 452 (hereafter cited as Miles, Personal Recollections).

\(^{12}\)Goodwin, Western Apache Raiding, pp. 135, 184-185, 203; U.S., Congress, House, Annual Report of the Secretary
The activities of scouts as negotiators with hostiles proved to be a successful practice. After troops had harassed renegades for weeks or months to the point of the Indians being exhausted and near starvation, mediators would often enter the camps to persuade the warriors to surrender and accept life on reservations. During the winter and spring of 1875, groups of scouts convinced several bands of Comanches and Kiowas in Texas to surrender. In 1883 Apache scouts convinced Geronimo and his adherents to listen to the terms of surrender being offered by General Crook. Three years later, General Nelson A. Miles, who had succeeded Crook as commander of the Department of Arizona, selected Lieutenant Charles B. Gatewood of the Sixth Cavalry, interpreter George Wrettan, and two Chiricahua Apache scouts to locate Geronimo, who had broken from the San Carlos reservation in 1884, and to arrange negotiations for surrender. On 24 August 1886 the two Apaches, Ki-e-ta and Martinez, entered Geronimo's camp in the Sierra Madre Mountains and convinced the renegade

chief that he should at least listen to what Gatewood had to say. The meeting between Geronimo and Miles, arranged by Gatewood and the scouts, resulted in the final surrender of Geronimo and his small band to military authorities.\textsuperscript{13}

One special group of scouts took no part in active campaigns in the 1880's. Five men and two women secretly observed the activities of their fellow tribesmen on the reservations in Arizona. General Crook ordered these agents to note any signs of unrest, hostility, and mutiny, and to report their observations to Captain Emmet Crawford at the San Carlos agency, to Lieutenant Britton Davis at Turkey Creek, and to Lieutenant Charles B. Gatewood at Fort Apache. In an account of his personal experiences in Arizona, Britton Davis described how his secret scouts would wait until the

lights in his quarters went out at night and then would tap quietly on a window to get his attention. In the darkness of Davis's quarters, the informer would then report through an interpreter. To preserve secrecy and the anonymity of the spies, the officers kept each one in ignorance of the others. Risking retaliation by their tribesmen for spying on them, the seven men and women enabled the Army to prevent several serious problems and outbreaks on the reservations. 14

The views held by the officers employing the skills of native scouts appear to have determined the extent of Indian participation in campaigns. To send a handful of men as trailers with soldiers on patrol was the customary practice. Most experienced officers reportedly agreed as to the efficacy of Indian scouts, but used them as trailers only and in small numbers with troops. The general consensus of the officers was that Indians would be efficient and reliable as long as they worked with troops, but alone would be unreliable and likely to turn against their white officers. 15


15 Miles, Personal Recollections, p. 449; Annual Report, War, 40th Cong., 2d sess., 1867, pp. 30, 73-74; U.S., Congress, House, Annual Report of the Secretary of War, H. Doc. 1,
George Crook stands out as the foremost advocate of using Indians not only as trailers, but also as combatants, alone and with soldiers. Emmet Crawford and Charles Gatewood in Arizona and John L. Bullis in Texas proved that this could be done. The scouts commanded by these same men often fought hostiles without supporting troops and successfully captured prisoners, supplies, and horses.16

Reports of the patrols sent out in Arizona in 1879 and 1880 are an example of the results obtainable when Indians participated. A total of seventy-seven patrols took place during the two-year period. Twenty-seven patrols included scouts; forty-four did not. Scouts unaccompanied by soldiers went out six times. Of the patrols guided by natives, four encountered hostile Indians. Of the patrols that did not include trailers, only two resulted in engagements with hostiles. Of the all-scout patrols, two successfully fought the enemy. Having Indian scouts did not guarantee positive


results for patrols, but it certainly increased the probability of a patrol sighting and engaging hostiles in battle.17

Proud sceptics, on the other hand, asserted that regular soldiers could pursue hostiles as successfully as the scout units could. In the spring of 1886 General Nelson A. Miles and Captain Henry W. Lawton of the Fourth Cavalry set out to demonstrate that regular troops could function in any terrain and run Indians to exhaustion. Miles ordered Lawton to take a combined force of fifty-five men from the Fourth Cavalry and Eighth Infantry, in addition to twenty natives acting as trailers only, into Mexico to hunt and capture Geronimo's small band of followers. After more than four months of arduous marching in and out of the Sierra Madre Mountains, Lawton's command had pushed Geronimo's people close to the limits of their endurance, but failed to capture the renegade leader. Lawton's men did show that regular troops could operate under harsh conditions of climate and geography, but even Miles frankly admitted that only with the help of the Indian scouts

could the soldiers find and follow the trails of the renegades. 18

Of the many Indian groups inhabiting the southwestern United States and northern Mexico, the Army recruited its best scouts from the Apache tribe in Arizona, the Tonkawa tribe in Texas, and the Seminole-Negro band in northern Mexico. In Arizona, the Army depended almost entirely on the Apaches, whom whites generally considered to be among the most malevolent people in the West. Although treacherous enough to kill even a blood relative with sufficient motivations, most Apache scouts showed themselves to be obedient, tireless, and efficient. They did not adjust well to military discipline, but would obey those persons in authority over them. Even if their own individual bands went on the warpath, the Apache scouts willingly tracked and fought alongside white soldiers. 19


Using a system of advance guards and flankers, two or three scouts would move ahead of a troop column, looking for a trail or signs of an ambush, while two or three other men followed behind to give warning of any attack by hostiles to the rear of the column. Five or more trackers acted as flankers on both sides of the column. Resting approximately every fifteen miles, Apaches could march as much as thirty-five to forty miles a day. Skillful at reading signs, they could tell the approximate time to within an hour how old signs were.²⁰

Cautious and often using camouflage, observers avoided exposing themselves to view. The ability of the scouts to trail and observe Indians undetected prompted General Crook, on several occasions, to order troops out on patrol only to wait at a secluded campsite while the scouts searched an area or watched for the approach of unfriendly Indians at waterholes. When making camp in the evening, they constructed their fires from dry wood to avoid making smoke and used the resulting coals for warmth after dark. The younger, inexperienced men took turns getting wood and water, making fires, and hunting wild game. When on patrol,

Apaches ate twice each day—early in the morning and late at night.\(^21\)

To make medicine insuring the success of the scouts against hostile Indians, a medicine man usually accompanied an Apache unit, and custom required that a war dance be held before each expedition set out. In addition to the preparation of war medicine, the dances provided a kind of war practice. As described by veteran Apache scout John Rope, a dance leader would call out the name of each warrior as the men chanted war songs. Taking turns, the trailers would dance around the fire, pantomiming how they would track and kill the enemy. The men would then dance together and in small groups. After the war dancing ended, the scouts and their friends held a social dance. If no women were present, some of the men would act as substitutes.\(^22\)

Saving their uniforms for ceremonial occasions, Apache scouts usually wore white or multicolored calico shirts, cotton pants and loincloths, leather moccasins, and identification tags. A cartridge belt was worn over one shoulder

\(^{21}\)George Crook to Assistant Adjutant General, Division of the Pacific, 13 June 1885, Crook Correspondence; Goodwin, Western Apache Raiding, pp. 108, 152.

\(^{22}\)Bourke, An Apache Campaign, pp. 33-34; Goodwin, Western Apache Raiding, pp. 116-118, 130.
and across the chest. Some individuals sported copper armbands. Often before combat, they would paint their faces red. A red cloth headband served as their insignia, and provided for soldiers and civilians alike a means of differentiating between Indian scouts and hostiles. Their equipment included a rifle, some ammunition, a canteen, a tin cup, an awl, a butcher knife, a pair of tweezers, a poncho, and a blanket. Frying pans, mess pans, camp kettles, and shelter tents used by scout detachments were the responsibilities of the corporals. The scout's most cherished possession was his rifle. Denied the use of weapons on the reservation and appreciating their importance for self-preservation, the Apaches took better care of their rifles than did most white soldiers. 23

First recruited in 1871, Apaches faithfully served the Army for more than four decades. Working to help subjugate their enemies and often their own people, Apache scouts made a valuable contribution toward the ultimate peaceful settlement of the Southwest. They received no greater praise from white officers than in the reports of

General George Crook. Evaluating their performance in his last campaign against Geronimo in 1886, Crook wrote:

The Apaches might retard pursuit or baffle it completely, and it happened that the faithful Apache scouts slowly and patiently led the troops for . . . miles over rocky stretches where a white man could not detect the faintest indication of a trail, until, on reaching more favorable ground, the unerring sagacity of the scouts was attested. ²⁴

A second Indian group that performed well in Army service was the Seminole-Negro band, a racially-mixed people descended from Seminole Indians and Negro slaves. Originally inhabitants of Florida, they migrated to Mexico in 1849 and 1850. Other kinsmen settled in Indian Territory, but loyalty to the Union during the Civil War brought trouble from factions of other tribes that supported the Confederacy. Fleeing southward, the Seminole-Negroes made their way to friends, relatives, and safety in Mexico. While residing there, the band assisted the Mexicans in protecting the United States-Mexico border from raids by marauding Comanches and Apaches. After the Civil War, the United States government set aside land in Indian Territory for the Seminoles residing in Mexico and freedmen. Apparently the Interior Department did not classify those

persons of mixed Seminole and Negro ancestry as freedmen or as Indians, and forbade the half-bloods to settle in Indian Territory. They remained in Mexico until recruited by the United States Army for service in Texas.  

In 1870 Major Zenas R. Bliss, commanding Fort Duncan in Texas, sent Captain Frank W. Perry of the Twenty-fourth Infantry to Nacimiento, Mexico, to contact the Seminole-Negroes living there and to discuss with them the possibility of enlisting in the Army. Serving as soldiers failed to interest the Indians, but working as scouts did.  

After considering Perry's report on his meeting with the group, Bliss submitted several recommendations concerning the half-bloods to H. Clay Wood, the Assistant Adjutant-General of the Department of Texas. Since the Seminole-Negroes lacked familiarity with the territory and did not know the location of waterholes or crossings used by hostile


Indians along the Texas side of the border, they would serve better as trailers than as guides. Bliss also recommended that an area of land on the military reservation situated five miles from Fort Duncan on Elm Creek be allocated for a village and farms.²⁷

One week after Bliss had submitted his recommendation, he received authorization from Woods to enlist twenty Seminole-Negroes as scouts with the pay and allowances of regular enlisted men for a term of six months which could be renewed if desired. The muster roll had to list each man by both an Indian and an English name. The new enlistees also could live on the Elm Creek site. To help secure the acquiescence of the Indians, the Army offered them future land grants.²⁸

Attracted by the terms of enlistment and the prospect of future permanent homes, the first group of Seminole-Negro Indians enlisted as scouts at Fort Duncan on 16 August 1870. The following year, the Army stationed additional recruits

²⁷Annual Report, Interior, 41st Cong., 3d sess., 1870, pp. 792-793. The site of Fort Duncan is located near the city of Eagle Pass in Maverick County.

at Fort Clark, which like Fort Duncan was located between the upper Nueces River and the Rio Grande.\textsuperscript{29}

Similar to the Apache scouts in Arizona, the Seminole-Negroes occasionally operated independently and attacked hostiles without the support of regular troops. Unlike the Apaches, the Seminole-Negroes were a sedentary, semi-civilized people for whom warfare was secondary to agriculture.\textsuperscript{30}

The officer who did the most to develop the men into highly effective scouts was Lieutenant John L. Bullis of the Twenty-fourth Infantry. From 1873 to 1881, Bullis commanded units on twenty-six patrols. The close, respectful relationship that existed between officer and men strengthened their effectiveness during the 1870's. Under the leadership of John Bullis, the Seminole-Negro trailers took part in campaigns along the Rio Grande and in the Red River War of 1874-1875.\textsuperscript{31}

\textsuperscript{29}Porter, "Seminole-Negro Scouts," p. 362. Fort Clark was located near Brackettville in Kinney County. Members of the Seminole-Negro band supported themselves and their families by serving as Army scouts from 1870 to 1914.

\textsuperscript{30}Ibid., pp. 358-359, 369; \textit{Annual Report}, War, 46th Cong., 2d sess., 1879, p. 97.

Colonel Ranald S. Mackenzie, who with the Fourth Cavalry in Texas earned a reputation as an excellent Indian fighter, often availed himself of the skills of the scouts. In May 1873 Lieutenant Bullis and his men accompanied Mackenzie and six companies of the Fourth Cavalry in a sudden, unannounced raid into Mexico against two villages belonging to Kickapoo Indians who had been committing depredations in Texas. In his report of 23 May 1873, Mackenzie commended their performance during the raid. The next year, the scouts who participated in Mackenzie's attack on a large Comanche camp in Palo Duro Canyon in the Panhandle included Seminole-Negro Indians. In 1874 and 1875 four scouts joined a small but highly meritorious group of Indians who received the Congressional Medal of Honor.\(^3\)\(^2\)

Despite their honorable record with the Army, the Seminole-Negroes encountered difficulties while living in Texas. Hoping to discredit them and gain possession of their farm land, civilian residents near Fort Clark accused members of the Seminole-Negro band of stealing and aiding horse thieves. In May 1876 unknown assailants ambushed two scouts near the fort. A Medal of Honor recipient, Adam

Payne, supposedly had killed a Negro soldier in Brownsville. Aware that the Brownsville authorities wanted Payne, a sheriff entered the Seminole camp near Fort Clark just after midnight on New Year's Day, 1877, and shot Payne in the back. Soon after the death of Payne, several men, including Medal of Honor recipient Pompey Factor, deserted and fled back to Mexico, where they served as trackers for the Mexican Army. 33

The scouts also encountered difficulties with the United States government in their efforts to obtain the promised federal land grants. Desiring a permanent home in the Southwest, they and their families came to the realization by the mid-1870's that the federal government had failed to keep its word to set aside land for them. The Department of the Interior stymied the search for a permanent home by ruling that the Seminole-Negro Indians had no legal right to settle on any reservation in Indian Territory. In 1884 Secretary of War Robert Todd Lincoln urged Congress to provide the group with a reservation carved from unoccupied land in the Territory, but Congress paid little attention to the suggestion. Adding to the worries of the

scouts was subsistence for their people. At one time numbering approximately two hundred persons, the entire band lived mainly on the pay and rations of the scouts. 34

In 1912 the War Department pondered the question of disbanding the last scout company in Texas. After some deliberation, the Department decreed that the Army would end further recruitments, but those scouts already in service could re-enlist. The detachment would gradually cease to exist. In July 1914 the Army hastened the end by completely disbanding the Seminole-Negro unit. No longer employed by the Army, those individuals affected left their homes on the Fort Clark military reservation, taking their families to find new homes wherever they could. 35

While the Seminole-Negro Indians served along the Rio Grande, a native Texas tribe, the Tonkawas, supplied Army scouts for the north and northwestern Texas areas. With a long history of friendliness toward whites, Tonkawas had served as trailers and guides in the years preceding the Civil War. In 1859, when Texas abolished its Indian

34 Ibid., p. 367; Annual Report, War, 48th Cong., 2d sess., 1884, pp. 5-6.

reservation system, the Tonkawas joined other Texas tribes in the exodus to Indian Territory. During the Civil War Delaware and Shawnee warriors, sympathizing with the Union cause, attacked the Indian agency at Fort Cobb, where the pro-Confederate Tonkawas had settled. Having lost one hundred and sixty-seven men, women, and children in the attack, the survivors returned to Texas. After the war, the Army assumed control of the tribe and settled it at Fort Belknap in Young County and then at Fort Griffin in Shackelford County. 36

Many of the men soon volunteered as scouts, enlisting for periods of six to twelve months under both English and tribal names. The Army supplied the recruits with the pay, arms, and rations of regular soldiers. An unofficial fringe benefit for the Tonkawas was the opportunity, when fighting hostile warriors, to procure "Comanche meat," a diet popular with the cannibalistic scouts. If any man lacked a horse, the Army provided one for him. A white officer commanded the unit. Considered by many officers to be excellent

scouts, the Tonkawas' participation in numerous patrols in the northern part of Texas contributed to the success of military efforts to bring peace to the state.\textsuperscript{37}

The most impressive demonstration of the ability of the Tonkawa scouts came in 1874 and 1875 during the Red River War against Comanche, Kiowa, and Cheyenne warriors who had bolted from their reservations in Indian Territory to roam freely throughout the Texas Panhandle. Time and time again the Tonkawas guided Colonel Ranald S. Mackenzie and the Fourth Cavalry throughout the Panhandle to the camps of renegades. When anticipating a battle with the hostile tribes, the scouts would often pause a few minutes to apply their war paint and adorn themselves with headdresses, animal horns, bits of red flannel, and brightly colored feathers, much to the amusement of the white soldiers. Following the decisive battle in Palo Duro Canyon, made possible by the scouts' discovery of the hidden Indian camp in the canyon, Mackenzie rewarded his Tonkawa trailers by giving them, as war booty, their choice of the best

captured Indian ponies before he ordered the herd of fourteen hundred horses destroyed.\(^{38}\) Expressing his admiration for the abilities of the Tonkawas, Captain Robert G. Carter, who served with Mackenzie in the early 1870's wrote:

> Without our own Indian scouts to beat the Comanches at their own native shrewdness, we would have undoubtedly lost the trail and hopelessly abandoned the task.\(^{39}\)

Although the Red River War assured a general peace in the northern part of Texas, the Tonkawas continued to serve as scouts until 1881, when the Army abandoned Fort Griffin. They remained at the site of the fort, however, until 1884. In that year the federal government moved the tribe back to Indian Territory.\(^{40}\)

In addition to the Apache, Seminole-Negro, and Tonkawa Indians, other tribes, some native to the Southwest, some not, supplied scouts for the Army during the Southwestern wars. During the 1870's and 1880's the Army recruited men from among the Navaho tribe residing on their reservation in New Mexico. A few Navaho scouts accompanied Major William Redwood Price and troops of the Eighth Cavalry from Fort


\(^{39}\) Ibid., p. 189.

\(^{40}\) Neighbours, "Tonkawa Scouts," p. 112.
Union in New Mexico Territory to fight in the Red River War. Much of the work of the Navahos, however, appears to have been against Apaches in southern New Mexico and Arizona.  

Although in the past the Navaho tribe had warred against whites and other Indians, they evidently feared Apaches. War Department reports reveal incidents during the 1880's when Navaho scouts faltered when faced with the imminent prospect of combat with Apache warriors. In 1880 troopers of the Ninth Cavalry with a group of Navahos searched along the southern boundary of New Mexico for members of an Apache raiding party led by a disaffected chief named Victorio. After losing several of their comrades in brief skirmishes with the patrol's quarry, twelve scouts deserted the patrol and sought safety at Fort Wingate where they were promptly disarmed.  

In November 1885 eleven Apaches launched a raid into southwestern New Mexico and southeastern Arizona during the

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progress of which they killed thirty-eight people, stole two hundred and fifty horses, and traveled approximately twelve hundred miles in a span of four weeks. Despite the many patrols scouring the area's mountains and valleys for the raiding party, the Apaches eluded capture. The Army lost its most opportune chance of apprehending the raiders when forty Navaho scouts, in the company of a troop of cavalry, firmly refused to follow the fresh trail made by the Apaches as they crossed from New Mexico into Arizona. As of 31 December 1885 sixty-six Navaho scouts were serving in New Mexico, but as of 1 March 1886 only a mixed group of thirteen Navahos and Mescalero Apaches were serving in the territory, General Crook having discharged the majority of the Navaho trailers. No doubt Navahos made acceptable scouts, but not against the fearsome Apaches.43

Delaware Indians, by serving as Army scouts in Texas during the early 1870's, upheld a tribal tradition which dated back to the latter years of the Texas Republic. Military and civilian authorities considered the multi-lingual Indians to be dependable trailers. During the early months

43 George Crook to Philip H. Sheridan, 30 December 1885; George Crook to Adjutant General, United States Army, 4 January 1886, 2 February 1886; 1 March 1886, Crook Correspondence; Annual Report, War, 49th Cong., 2d sess., p. 151.
of the Red River War, twenty Delawares joined fifteen white guides as trailers to form a scout company commanded by Lieutenant Frank D. Baldwin.  

John T. Marshall, a newspaperman who had volunteered as a civilian guide with the expedition of General Nelson A. Miles, recorded his observations of the Delawares in a series of letters published in the Kansas Daily Commonwealth. According to Marshall, they performed well, contrary to speculations by whites that they would run when faced by Comanche or Cheyenne warriors. In engagements against the Plains Indians, the Delawares frequently placed themselves in the forefront of the fighting. Surprisingly, in September 1874 the group requested to be relieved and returned to their homes. Marshall gave no reason for their action; he merely opined that whites made better scouts, guides, and couriers than did Indians.

Providing minor representation for their tribes, Lipan Apache, Pueblo, Cheyenne, Arapaho, Pima, Maricopa, Paiute,

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45 Marshall, Miles Expedition, pp. 17, 28.
and Hualapai warriors supplemented the number of scouts needed in Texas and Arizona during the 1870's and 1880's. Colonel Benjamin F. Grierson, directing the search for Victorio's band in the trans-Pecos region of Texas, employed Lipan Apache and Pueblo Indians. Led by interpreter-scout Charles Berger, they supplied essential information on the location and condition of Victorio and his followers which enabled Grierson's troops to prevent effectively the renegades from committing serious depredations in the western part of the state. Assigned to Fort Elliott, Cheyenne and Arapaho scouts assisted the Army in the maintenance of peace in the Panhandle in the late 1880's. In 1890, when the War Department ordered the abandonment of Fort Elliott, the Army transferred the unit to Fort Sill in Indian Territory. 46

In Arizona, Pima, Maricopa, Paiute, and Hualapai Indians tracked and fought the malevolent Apaches. In general, they lived up to the standards expected of Indian scouts. Conflicting reports by officers indicate that the Pimas were occasionally unreliable. On the other hand, reports reveal

consistently good performances by the Hualapais. Although unfamiliar with Arizona, Paiutes made proficient trailers.\textsuperscript{47}

In innumerable reports, Army officers lauded the ability and performance of Indians, but no greater praise could any scout receive than the bestowal of the Congressional Medal of Honor. In the course of the Indian Wars, Congress awarded four hundred and sixteen medals, over one-half of which were for deeds of courage enacted in the Southwest. Of the sixteen Indian recipients of the Medal of Honor, all but one served with the Army in Texas and Arizona. For their outstanding conduct in the 1872-1873 campaign against Apaches, General George Crook recommended that the Medal of Honor be presented to scouts Achesay, Blanquet, Chiquito, Elsatsoosu, Jim, Kelsay, Kosoha, Machol, Nannasaddie, and Nantaje. They received their medals in an impressive ceremony at Fort Bowie on 12 August 1875. Among the names of men recommended for the Medal of Honor by Colonel Ranald S. Mackenzie for gallantry in a fight with Indians on 20 September 1874 was the name of Seminole-Negro Adam Payne, whom Mackenzie described as a man of habitual courage and cool

daring. Three other Seminole-Negroes earned the Congressional Medal of Honor for their courageous actions in a battle with hostiles near the Pecos River on 25 April 1875. Exposing themselves to enemy rifle fire, Pompey Factor, Isaac Payne, and John Ward saved the life of Lieutenant John L. Bullis. The last Indian to receive the medal was Sergeant Rowdy, for bravery exhibited in a battle with Apaches in Arizona on 7 March 1890.48

Capable of outstanding feats of valor, Indian scouts could also commit acts of treachery. That auxiliaries might rebel and kill their white officers was a gamble taken by any white man who commanded a scout unit; tragically, a handful of officers and chiefs of scouts lost the gamble. Probably the best known instance of treachery in the Southwest, the incident at Cibicue Creek in the late summer of 1881, in all probability resulted from the unrest caused by the prophecies of a White Mountain Apache medicine man named

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Noche-del-klinne and the distrust of Indian scouts by a colonel in the Sixth Cavalry named Eugene A. Carr. Noche-del-klinne claimed the power to raise from the dead all Apaches killed by whites, but only after the whites had left Arizona. He further predicted that the white exodus would occur when the corn next ripened.  

The commander of the Department of Arizona, Brevet Major-General Orlando B. Willcox, ordered Carr to arrest the medicine man and thereby put an end to his influence among the Indians on the Whiteriver reservation. Believing that the scouts might join an outbreak which he thought to be imminent, Carr hesitated to take them to Whiteriver. In reply to Carr's request on 13 August for permission to discharge them, Willcox advised Carr to send the unit to Fort Grant and Fort Huachuca to be replaced by one more reliable. Instead of heeding the general's advice, Carr simply disarmed them. His decision to deprive the Indians of their rifles was unwise, for it caused them to feel distrusted. Toward the end of August, Carr rearmed the scouts and prepared to arrest Noche-del-klinne. Arriving on 30 August at

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the Whiteriver encampment thirty miles from Fort Apache with six officers, seventy-nine enlisted men, and twenty-three scouts, Carr arrested the medicine man without incident. 50

On the evening of the thirtieth, Carr's detachment rested for the night five or six miles from the Indian camp. For reasons unknown, several scouts began to approach Nochedel-klinne. Hoping to prevent them from reaching the medicine man, Captain Edmund C. Hentig reached for his rifle. The Apaches suddenly opened fire, killing Hentig and four enlisted men and wounding several others. Realizing what they had done, the Indians fled. Within a few weeks, several of the fugitives surrendered to military authorities. 51

In the fall of 1881 the Army initiated court-martial proceedings against the scouts then in custody. Charging the Indians with mutiny, murder, desertion, raising a gun


against a superior officer, and knowledge of and failure to inform superior officers of mutiny, a military court sentenced Dead Shot, Dandy Jim, and Skippy to death by hanging and the other Apaches to imprisonment on Alcatraz Island. Pursuit of culprits still at large continued through the summer of 1882. 52

Whether or not the scouts believed in the prophecies of Noche-del-klinne and planned to free him is speculation. Evidence indicated that they had not planned to shoot anyone. 53 Without doubt, Carr communicated his suspicions concerning the unit to his subordinates, leading them to interpret any approach of the scouts towards the medicine man as a treacherous attempt to free him. Living for weeks in an atmosphere of distrust, the Indians would have reacted instinctively to defend themselves when Hentig reached for his rifle. Whatever their reasons, under military law the men had committed mutiny, murder, and desertion. As for the actions of Colonel Carr, one may consider them as an example of what could happen when an officer failed to heed Crook's


admonition that officers should exhibit trust in their Indian auxiliaries.

Usually successful in apprehending and punishing renegade scouts, the Army in Arizona found itself thwarted by the Apache Kid. A protégé of civilian guide Al Sieber, the Kid enlisted in the Army in the early 1880's, and attained the rank of first sergeant within a few months. Possessing exceptional eyesight, he reconnoitered for Crook on the general's expeditions to Mexico in 1883 and 1886.54

In late spring 1887 the Apache Kid and four other scouts left the San Carlos reservation without permission and made their way to the San Pedro Valley, where the Kid killed the brother of his father-in-law's murderer. When they returned to the reservation four days later, Captain F. E. Pierce disarmed the miscreants and ordered them to the guardhouse. In the commotion that followed, the Kid shot and wounded Al Sieber. Soldiers relentlessly dogged the fleeing men, and by 23 June the fugitives capitulated.55


First tried, convicted, and sentenced to ten years' imprisonment by a military court, the outlaw scouts underwent a second trial in a territorial criminal court for the assault upon, with the intent to murder, Al Sieber. The jury returned a verdict of guilty, and the court sentenced the Indians to seven years' imprisonment in the Yuma Territorial Prison. While being transported to Yuma, the prisoners attacked and killed their guards, then fled into the mountains. For several years, people reported having seen the Apache Kid, but neither the military nor the civilian authorities could verify the reports. In 1894 an Indian woman stated that she had seen the Kid in the Sierra Madre Mountains in Mexico. From her description, the Kid appeared to be ill with tuberculosis. Determined to find the Apache Kid, the Army sent patrols out to discover his hideout as late as 1896. All efforts, however, had the same result—failure, and the fate of the Apache Kid became an unsolved mystery.

Proficient in skills inherent to their culture, Indians filled the Army's need for guides and trailers on a scale unattainable by whites. Their experiences extended beyond the range of mere trackers, and placed them in the roles of policemen, spies, and mediators. Being a scout created a feeling of usefulness for an Indian and appealed to his pride as a warrior. Although a few individuals betrayed their responsibilities and became outlaws and turncoats, other individuals compensated for the injury done to the reputation of enlisted Indians by exhibiting exceptional courage and daring in warfare. Most effective when treated with trust and allowed to do their job in their own way, Indian scouts did not guarantee success against unfriendly Indians, but they did increase a patrol's chances of engaging the enemy, thus helping to conclude the Indian domination of the American West.
CHAPTER IV

GENERAL GEORGE CROOK: UNCONVENTIONAL SOLDIER

As an Indian-fighter and a humanitarian, no man manifested more dedication to the cause of Indian scouts than did General George Crook. During his service as commander of the military department of Arizona from 1871 to 1875 and from 1882 to 1886, he developed and cultivated Indian scouts into the United States Army's most valuable asset in its quest to end Indian domination of the Southwest. To the general, the employment of Indians as scouts reaped benefits for both the Army and the Indians. The scouts supplied the talent in tracking needed by the white soldiers in the search for hostile Indians; the Army supplied a disciplined environment conducive to the transformation of the enlisted warriors from primitive into civilized men. Crook disagreed with the legendary frontier attitude that being a good Indian meant being a dead Indian. To him, being a good Indian meant being a civilized, peaceful Indian.

To achieve his dual goals of subjugating and civilizing Indians, General Crook studied their culture thoroughly and came to admire and understand them. John G. Bourke, who
served as Crook's aide-de-camp for fifteen years, noted the nature of the general's sympathy and understanding toward Indians in an account of his commander's exploits in Arizona.

But while General Crook was admitted, even by the Indians, to be more of an Indian than the Indian himself, it must in no wise be understood that he ever occupied any other relation than that of the older and more experienced brother who was always ready to hold out a helping hand to the younger just learning to walk and to climb.¹

Reassigned to the Department of the Platte in 1886, Crook kept informed as to the activities of his former native auxiliaries in the Territory. At the time of his death in 1890, he was endeavoring to secure justice for Chiricahua scouts defamed and mistreated by high-ranking officers and imprisoned with hostile Apaches in Florida.

George Crook's principles of Indian-fighting and his attitudes toward Indians determined his success with them as scouts. In twenty-five years of campaigning in the Pacific Northwest, on the northern Great Plains, and in the Southwest, the general developed a theory of combatting Indians which he successfully applied time and time again. Nomadic

tribes held the advantages in the Southwest. They knew the land and how to survive in it. Before a campaign, Crook learned as much as possible about the geography of the region into which he would soon send troops in order to plan troop movements and logistics. Adhering to the Army's basic strategy of Indian fighting, Crook hoped to pursue and surprise hostiles in their camps. Because the hunted kept hidden and the hunters, of necessity, exposed themselves, a surprise attack was next to impossible to achieve by troops alone. To overcome the Indians, he decided that he must utilize friendly Indians and their methods. Crook, therefore, enlisted as many Indian scouts as he could. 2

Ideally, scouts would travel in advance of troops, looking for Indian trails, yet not leaving a trail themselves to alert unfriendly warriors to their presence. To keep troop movements as secret as possible, soldiers would often march at night. Upon discovering a renegade camp, scouts would silently surround the camp to observe its occupants and gather information vital to a successful surprise attack by the soldiers. If the hunted unfortunately

discovered the presence of the hunters and fled, further pursuit would be futile. In such a situation, scouts and troops would return to their base, rest and regroup, then repeat the procedure until they completed their objective of placing the native inhabitants on reservations to be supervised.  

Under General Crook, Indian scouts served in two main capacities—as auxiliaries and as reservation police. As auxiliaries, they tracked hostile Indians and fought them, either in support of white soldiers or alone. In his eyewitness description of the campaigns against Geronimo in the 1880's, John Bigelow compared the use of native auxiliaries by the British Army and by George Crook. Bigelow noted that the British drilled and disciplined their auxiliaries with the aim of leading and directing them in battle. Conversely, the American commander dispensed with teaching discipline or tactics to Indians, activities which would lessen the individualistic value of the scouts. Borrowing a favorite Apache trick of outnumbering the enemy, Crook used scouts to outnumber the Apaches. Provisioned and armed by the military,

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Indian auxiliaries became what Bigelow described as "not soldiers, but more formidable Indians."\(^4\) They became so effective as solitary fighting units that cavalry operating with scout companies easily hampered their movement, but at the same time, rallied and boosted the morale of the scouts and protected the supply pack trains.\(^5\)

The work of Indian scouts as reservation police formed an integral part of Crook's program to civilize Indians by teaching them to administer the white man's justice among themselves. Crook preferred that a tribe handle the punishment of crimes by Indians against other Indians. If the tribe failed to arrest and punish offenders, the scouts assumed those duties.\(^6\)

At the same time that Indian scouts aided the civilizing process for the reservation tribes, they themselves were undergoing a civilizing process at the hands of the military. According to General Crook, serving in the Army produced a

\(^4\) John Biglow, Jr., *On the Bloody Trail of Geronimo* (Los Angeles: Westernlore Press, 1968), p. 44; George Crook to Adjutant General, United States Army, 24 February 1890, George Crook Letterbook I, Rutherford B. Hayes Memorial Library, Fremont, Ohio (hereafter cited as *Crook Correspondence*).


\(^6\) Ibid., p. 48.
beneficially moral and civilizing effect on an Indian. Essentially, scout duty helped to crumble tribal solidarity, thus rendering an Indian more adaptable to living on a reservation. Crook theorized that if influential members of a tribe enlisted, some of its members might come to favor the white man's government and the establishment of permanent peace. More than any gift or promise the government might make, allowing Indians to serve in the Army would convince them of the advantage of being friends with whites. Furthermore, treating a scout as the equal of a white soldier would demonstrate a lack of prejudice against the individual Indian. Living among soldiers would enable him to recognize the superstitions that governed tribal life, and to make his own decisions regarding his individual actions. Serving as a kind of hostage to insure the good behavior of their relatives, scouts reduced the number of men who might join the hostiles and relieved white soldiers of some hard and disagreeable work. 7

7Bourke, On the Border, pp. 202-203; George Crook, General George Crook, His Autobiography (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1946), p. 214; George Crook to Adjutant General, United States Army, 4 September 1871; George Crook to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 28 November 1887; Crook Correspondence.
George Crook's development of Apaches as effective scouts began in the summer of 1871, shortly after he had assumed command of the troops in Arizona Territory. Prior to his arrival, many Apaches had given way to constant military pressure and had gone to live on reservations. Troops continued to search for the small bands who still clung to their freedom. After unsatisfactory results with Mexican civilian scouts, Crook enlisted friendly Coyotero and White Mountain Apaches and gave command of the group to Captain Guy V. Henry of the Third Cavalry at Fort Apache, who took them with three troops of cavalry on patrol between Fort Apache and Camp McDowell. With the aid of the friendly Indians, the soldiers killed seven braves and captured eleven Indian women. Captain Henry reported enthusiastically that the combination of troops and Indian scouts worked well, even under unfavorable conditions of heat and rugged terrain.\(^8\)

Pleased with the results of Captain Henry's patrol, Crook organized five similar expeditions. At this time, however, the federal government chose to send two peace

commissions to urge the diehard bands to accept reservation
life, and the general suspended all activity against hos-
tiles. The leader of one of the peace commissions was a
well-meaning Easterner named Vincent Colyer. Displaying
the ignorance and lack of understanding characteristic of
persons living far removed from the scenes of Indian unrest
and depredations, Colyer objected to the employment of
Indian scouts. The incensed peace commissioner charged that
White Mountain Apache scouts commanded by Guy Henry had been
enlisted against their will. Diplomatically placating
Colyer, General Crook issued orders for the discontinuance
of enlistments. Colyer happily wrote the Commissioner of
Indian Affairs that the

. . . order of General Crook, abandoning the
practice of taking peaceable Indians from the corn-
fields and compelling them to go on the warpath
against their brethren, speaks much for his humanity
and good sense, and was a great relief to my mind.

Believing that his success in Arizona would depend on
the Indian scouts, Crook continued to organize and to become
acquainted with them during the following months until

9 James T. King, "George Crook, Indian Fighter and
Humanitarian," Arizona and the West 9 (1967): 340; U. S.,
Congress, House, Annual Report of the Secretary of the
Interior, H. Doc. 1, 42d Cong., 2d sess., Serial No. 1505,
1871, pp. 465-466; Annual Report, War, 42d Cong., 2d sess.,
1871, p. 78.
September 1872 when he resumed field action. From 1872 to 1874 numerous patrols, guided by Apache trailers, systematically crisscrossed Arizona, harrying and attacking small groups of hostiles. In April 1873, harassed by the Army to the point of starvation and exhaustion, the last of the warring Apache bands surrendered. Cha-lipun, a minor Apache leader, confessed to General Crook that for the fugitives to cook or to use rifles would have alerted the soldiers hunting them. Seeking refuge in the snow-covered mountains had proven fruitless; the scouts had found them. Although Cha-lipun's warriors did not fear the soldiers, the revelation that their own tribesmen had taken up arms against them disconcerted his men.

The new peace in Arizona lasted only a few weeks when trouble broke out on the reservations. Again, patrols, guided by the loyal Indian scouts, hunted the various groups that had left the reservations. Most of the runaways soon

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10 Soon after Colyer's commission left Arizona to return to the East, General Crook lifted the ban on scout recruitment.

wandered back onto the reservations, and Arizona became quiet once more.12

After a seven-year absence, George Crook returned to Arizona in 1882 under orders to control the restless reservation tribes and to subdue Geronimo, who had led the Chiricahua Apaches off their reservation and back to their Sierra Madre stronghold. As his first task, the general investigated the worsening situation on the reservations. Taking advantage of an arrangement between the Departments of War and the Interior which gave him nominal control over the reservations, Crook eliminated as much graft and corruption from the administration of the agencies and reservations as possible.13

As conditions began to stabilize on the reservations, Crook turned to the problem of the renegade Chiricahuas, who frequently crossed the Mexican border from their stronghold in the Sierra Madre Mountains to rob and kill in Arizona. In preparation for his move against the Chiricahuas, the general reorganized the Indian scouts. He established five


companies, each having approximately thirty men and designated by the letters A, B, C, D, and E. To command the scout companies, Crook detached Lieutenant Charles Gatewood, Captain Emmet Crawford, and Lieutenant Britton Davis from their regiments and placed them on his staff. As staff officers, the three men reported directly to the commander rather than through regular channels, thus cutting the time necessary for communication. This arrangement placed the companies under the control of Crook and gave him sole authority in their management. In October Crawford took Companies A, C, and D on patrol, while Davis settled Company B near the San Carlos agency, and Gatewood took Company E to Fort Apache. The general also employed seven secret observers to report any unrest or hostility among the reservation Indians.14

A long sought-after agreement between the United States and Mexico concerning the international boundary simplified the task of ferreting out the Chiricahuas in their mountain stronghold. Prior to the summer of 1882, Crook could not have ordered American soldiers to cross the border in

pursuit of Indians without violating the national sovereignty of Mexico. In July 1882, after more than ten years of stormy negotiations, the United States and Mexico signed an agreement to allow troops from either country to enter the national territory of the other in hot pursuit of hostile Indians. During the winter and spring months of 1883 the general waited for Chiricahua to enter Arizona. 15

In March, Chato, an important Chiricahua leader, and twenty-six braves came out of the Sierra Madre Mountains to raid in Arizona, New Mexico, and the Mexican states of Chihuahua and Sonora. Traveling seventy-five to one hundred miles a day on horseback, the raiding party covered approximately eight hundred miles, often through settled areas patrolled by Mexican or American troops. The renegades killed twenty-five people and lost two of their own men. Troops searched everywhere, but the pursuit and the capture of these Indians eluded the soldiers. The renegades traveled rapidly by stealing fresh mounts and living off the land,

while the soldiers lacked replacement horses and depended on slow-moving supply trains.\textsuperscript{16}

Chato's incursion into American territory gave Crook the necessary excuse to cross into Mexico and to search for the Chiricahua stronghold. Soldiers had arrested one of Chato's men who had deserted the raiding party to return to the San Carlos reservation. Pa-nayo-tishn, nicknamed "Peaches" by the soldiers, described to the general the conditions in the renegade camp. When asked to serve as a guide, Pa-nayo-tishn agreed.\textsuperscript{17}

General Crook immediately organized an expedition consisting of forty-two men from the Sixth Cavalry and one hundred and ninety-three scouts. On 1 May the expedition crossed the international boundary near San Bernardino Springs in the southeastern corner of Arizona and soon entered the rugged Sierra Madre Mountains. The Chiricahuas had chosen an ideal stronghold with plenty of water, grass, and timber. From the high mountain ridges, lookouts watched for the approach of enemies. The deep canyons enabled the Indians to retreat easily, but presented difficulties for


\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., pp. 31-33; Crook, \textit{Autobiography}, p. 246.
pursuers. To reach the stronghold, the expedition had to penetrate deeply into the mountains along trails so narrow and sloping that several pack mules lost their footing and plunged down the precipitous slopes.  

After several tedious days of ascending and descending the mountains along the narrow trails, the scouts received permission from Crook to travel one day's march ahead of the cavalrmen and pack train. Led by Crawford, Gatewood, and Lieutenant James O. MacKay of the Third Cavalry, the scouts intended to find and attack small groups of hostiles and then wait for the remainder of the expedition to catch up. On 15 May Crawford's unit surprised and attacked Chato's camp. Crawford learned from one of the captured Apache women that most of the men were away on raids. The few Apaches who had escaped capture spread the news of the attack on Chato's camp to others in the area. Less than a week later, Geronimo cautiously entered Crook's camp and indicated a willingness to return to San Carlos. The Apache chief, who had a reputation for ruthlessness and courage, candidly admitted that, although his warriors could easily frighten and elude Mexicans, they could not do likewise with Americans.

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especially since members of their own tribe were assisting the soldiers.19

The responsibility for watching approximately six hundred Apaches, including Geronimo's people, devolved onto Lieutenant Britton Davis and Scout Company B at Turkey Creek on the San Carlos Reservation. Davis's men did their job, but they failed to prevent Geronimo's band from bolting the reservation and returning to the Sierra Madre stronghold in May 1885. The peace following Geronimo's 1883 capitulation had lasted exactly two years.20

Setting out in pursuit, General Crook stationed Indian observers and soldiers at waterholes from the Rio Grande in New Mexico along the international border to western Arizona to prevent hostiles from re-entering the United States. In order to keep from alerting hostile Apaches, the troops remained hidden, while the scouts watched for any activities in the vicinity of the waterholes. Early in June Crook received authorization from General Sheridan to enlist two


20 Davis, Truth About Geronimo, p. 106.
hundred additional scouts from the San Carlos and Fort Apache agencies. 21

Two scout companies, under Crawford and Captain Wirt Davis of the Fourth Cavalry, tracked the runaways into the Sierra Madres and managed to capture several women and children, but the braves, alerted to the presence of the soldiers, kept out of sight. The movements of the trackers forced the Apaches to move in a northerly direction and back into the United States by the end of September. 22

The hostiles proceeded to lead Crawford's and Davis's patrols on a chase through the mountains and valleys of southeastern Arizona. The Apaches first took refuge in the Chiricahua Mountains to the northeast of Tombstone. Leaving their old mountain stronghold, they next fled northwest across the Sulphur Springs Valley into the Dragoon Mountains, constantly pursued by the scouts. Eluding Crawford's patrol in the Dragoon Mountains, the fugitives slipped back into the valley and headed south toward the Mule Mountains. Suddenly, the band turned east toward the Chiricahua Mountains.

21 George Crook to Assistant Adjutant General, Division of the Pacific, 13 June 1885, Crook Correspondence; U. S., Congress, House, Annual Report of the Secretary of War, H. Doc. 1, 49th Cong., 2d sess., Serial No. 2461, 1886, p. 149.

22 Crook, Autobiography, pp. 254-255.
Stealing fresh horses to replace exhausted mounts, the Indians outdistanced their pursuers. At one point in their circular flight, the band could not find horses and struck out on foot. Capture seemed imminent until the fugitives discovered some horses corralled in White Tail Canyon on the eastern slope of the Chiricahua Mountains. Taking the horses, the Apaches dashed back into their Sierra Madre stronghold.  

The scouts' terms of enlistment having expired, General Crook paused to recruit more Indians and restructure the companies into battalions. As an example, Crawford's command, designated the Second Battalion of Indian Scouts, consisted of two companies of fifty men each. Lieutenant Marion P. Maus of the First Infantry, and Lieutenant William E. Shipp of the Tenth Cavalry, led each company. Civilian chiefs of scouts Tom Horn and William Harrison assisted the company commanders. The transfer of New Mexico Territory from the Department of the Missouri to the Department of Arizona by the War Department gave Crook the

authority to utilize troops and scouts stationed in both territories against the Apaches.24

On 27 March 1886, in the Cañon de los Embudos, twenty miles southeast of San Bernardino Springs, Geronimo reluctantly and with misgivings surrendered to George Crook. Events seemingly had justified the general's strategy of reliance upon Indian auxiliaries, but a garrulous, troublesome trader and his bad whiskey unwittingly triggered a series of events leading to Crook's reassignment and a reassessment of the role of Indian scouts in Arizona. Escorted by their enlisted tribesmen, the Chiricahuas began the journey back to the San Carlos reservation. On the night of the twenty-ninth of March, a trader named Tribolett gave them liquor and convinced the drunken Indians that the soldiers planned to punish them severely once the band had returned to San Carlos. Believing that the American general intended to betray them, Geronimo and thirty-six of his people quietly slipped away before dawn. Upon discovering what had transpired, Lieutenant Maus and the scouts went

after Geronimo, and Crook notified his superior, General Philip Sheridan, of Geronimo's escape. 25

On 2 April, at his subordinate's own request, General Sheridan relieved George Crook from command. Correspondence between the two generals concerning the role of the scouts prompted Crook to ask for a transfer. In the past Sheridan had approved of Crook's utilization of friendly Indians, but now doubted the native auxiliaries' reliability. While not doubting the scouts would help the Army to capture hostiles or would try to persuade them to surrender, Sheridan seriously questioned whether they would kill their own people. Geronimo's escape, accomplished practically under the noses of the Apache scouts, puzzled Sheridan. In his initial reply to his subordinate's report, Sheridan inquired pointedly as to how the Indians could have escaped without the trailers either discovering or knowing about it. Rising to the defense of the scouts, Crook maintained their loyalty and asserted his belief that they would have restrained the Chiricahua if

possible. Geronimo had slyly located him camp in such a way that his men could watch the movements of the scouts and avoid being surprised or easily surrounded by soldiers or vengeful Arizona citizens. 26

On 1 April Sheridan expressed his belief that Crook's offensive strategy of using Indian scouts against Geronimo had failed. Urging him to try a defensive strategy, Sheridan strongly recommended the use of cavalry and infantry to protect the citizens of Arizona. The commander should station the infantry in populated areas and have the cavalry patrol in between those points. Crook found Sheridan's evaluation and suggestions difficult to accept. He readily admitted the scouts had not been as effective as had been expected because of the nature of the enemy and the terrain over which they must be hunted and fought. Rejecting the idea of defensive strategy, the departmental commander reaffirmed his conviction that only an offensive strategy, especially one based on the large-scale participation of native guides and trailers, offered any chance of a rapid end to the fighting in Arizona. Crook asserted that regular

26 George Crook to Philip H. Sheridan, 31 March 1886, Crook Correspondence; Annual Report, War, 49th Cong., 2d sess., 1886, pp. 71-73; Apache Indians, 51st Cong., 1st sess., 1890, p. 4.
troops were no match against the Apache scouts, who knew
the country and could live off the land. His reliance on
Indian trackers and mule pack trains as the two essential
tools in fighting hostiles had made possible three success-
ful campaigns in different areas of the West. If Sheridan
preferred that another strategy be used, then Sheridan would
have to find someone else to implement it. Acceding to
Crook's request, Sheridan transferred him to the Department
of the Platte and named General Nelson A. Miles as his re-
placement.27

Upon his arrival in Arizona, Miles faced the formidable
task of hunting a small band of self-sufficient Indians in
a region approximately twenty-four thousand square miles in
area. He knew little about the troops under his command,
the topography of Arizona, or the Indians. Willing to do
what Crook would not, Miles planned a campaign in which
troops would take the leading role. He divided southern
Arizona and New Mexico into sections with troops to patrol
each section, guard waterholes, and pursue any hostile
Indians that might enter the sections. Considering the

27 Crook, Autobiography, pp. 263-264; Davis, Truth About
Geronimo, pp. 216-217; Annual Report, War, 49th Cong., 2d
sess., 1886, pp. 71-73; Apache Indians, 51st Cong., 1st
sess., 1890, pp. 6-7.
Chiricahua Apache scouts as untrustworthy and lacking integrity, Miles discharged them. The few auxiliaries that Miles did use belonged to Apache bands antagonistic toward the Chiricahuas and worked as trailers only. 28

For almost five months, troops under Captain Henry W. Lawton of the Fourth Cavalry chased Geronimo over two thousand miles without a major confrontation. Lawton had at his disposal a company of San Carlos and White Mountain Apache scouts under the command of Lieutenant Leighton Finley of the Tenth Cavalry, who were later relieved by fresh trailers under the command of Lieutenant Robert A. Brown of the Fourth Cavalry. Lawton permitted Brown's unit to operate two days' travel ahead of the troops. On 14 July Brown's trackers discovered a hostile camp. Sending a scout back to Lawton with a request for infantry support, Brown and his men prepared to attack the camp. Unfortunately, the hostile Indians discovered their presence and fled. One should give credit to Brown for reverting to Crook's technique

of using scouts not only to trail, but also to fight. Brown's success in such a venture would have partially vindicated the general's reliance on Indian auxiliaries. Lawton's expedition kept Geronimo's band constantly on the run, yet, in spite of their determined efforts, the soldiers failed to capture Geronimo.²⁹

Informed by spies that the hostiles were exhausted and might surrender, Miles sent Charles Gatewood, accompanied by Chiricahua scouts Ki-e-ta and Martinez and interpreter George Wrattan, to contact Geronimo and initiate peace negotiations. Gatewood's entourage marched with Lawton's expedition until a fresh trail was discovered and then followed the trail alone. On 24 August the two scouts entered Geronimo's camp and persuaded him to listen to Gatewood's proposals. Two days later Gatewood and Wrattan met with the Chiricahua leader. Geronimo's subsequent surrender ended the Apache wars in Arizona. Ironically, in the excitement generated by the surrender, the American press and public overlooked the contribution of Gatewood and the scouts

and acclaimed Miles and Lawton as heroes for securing the surrender of Geronimo.  

Although George Crook's Indian fighting career effectively terminated with his transfer to the Department of the Platte in 1886, he continued his involvement with his former Arizona scouts. In 1883 the citizens of Arizona had begun requesting the removal of the Apache Indians from the Territory, and by August 1886 approximately five hundred Chiricahuaas, including the trailers, had been sent to Fort Marion, Florida by the Army. The band went willingly, believing that their stay would be temporary. They were unaware that the government had previously decided in favor of their permanent residence in the East. Crook possibly felt ashamed of his role in their removal, since he had deliberately let the Indians expect a temporary exile in Florida while he had known the situation to be otherwise. Even if his conscience remained undisturbed by the deceptive

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removal, the treatment of the former scouts particularly angered him. 31

The two men most responsible for the unfair treatment of the Chiricahua scouts were Philip H. Sheridan and Nelson A. Miles. Sheridan, in order to secure a change in policy and strategy in Arizona, readily agreed to transfer George Crook to another department. Prompted by his mistrust of the enlisted Chiricahuas, Sheridan ordered Miles to rely on cavalry and infantry rather than on auxiliaries. Miles believed the trailers would give information and supplies to the hostiles. A number of officers in Arizona shared his opinion of the Chiricahuas and expected them eventually to join Geronimo. When the government moved the band to Florida in August, the discharged scouts went also. In October General Miles sent nineteen Apaches, including Ki-e-ta and Martinez, to join the exiles in Florida. 32


Late in 1889, Crook participated in a War Department investigation into the possibilities of moving the Chiricahua out of Florida. The report of the investigating committee influenced Congressional action. On 13 January 1890 Senator Henry L. Dawes, chairman of the Committee on Indian Affairs, introduced Senate Joint Resolution 42, which called for the immediate transfer of the Apaches to Fort Sill, Indian Territory.\(^{33}\)

Working actively for the passage of the bill, George Crook interviewed several Chiricahua leaders and former scouts. In his discussions with the Indians, he learned that they had lost homes, farms, and livestock in the move to Florida, and contrary to promises that they would be compensated for their losses, the exiles had received nothing. When they had left Arizona, the scouts had expected to be sent to another reservation where they would continue to serve as trailers, but found themselves confined with Apaches they had tracked and fought. Ki-e-ta and Martinez complained that instead of rewarding them as he had promised for helping Gatewood find Geronimo, General Miles had placed them in confinement with the men whose surrender they had helped to

\(^{33}\) Crook, Autobiography, pp. 291-292, 294.
negotiate. Apaches belonging to other bands also fell victim to the removal of the Chiricahua from Arizona. Gout-kli, a San Carlos Apache, and To-klanni, a White Mountain Apache, both married to Chiricahua women, accompanied the band. 34

Joining the forces opposed to the bill, General Miles branded the scouts as disloyal and accused them of providing the renegades with arms and ammunition. He also claimed that in July 1886 the Chiricahua on the reservation had been planning an outbreak with the cooperation of the scouts. 35 Crook denied the accusations vigorously and lavished praise on the Indians for their service in the campaign against Geronimo. He proudly pointed out that Gatewood and two Indian trackers, having entered the enemy camp and persuaded Geronimo to meet with Miles, deserved as much or more credit for Geronimo's surrender than did Nelson Miles. 36

34 Governor's Island, 51st Cong., 1st sess., 1890, pp. 6-8; and Treatment of Apaches, 51st Cong., 1st sess., 1890, pp. 52-53.


36 Ibid.
Forced by critics to defend the reputation of the scouts, Crook also had to defend his own reputation. Several of his letters, written after his transfer to the Department of the Platte in 1886, reveal a deep concern over what he believed to be deliberate misinterpretations by journalists of his official reports regarding events in Arizona. To facilitate Miles's familiarization with the Arizona situation, General Crook had generously allowed his successor temporarily to borrow personal copies of his official and private correspondence. A person or persons unknown, having access to the papers, had issued extracts to journalists writing for newspapers controlled by men reputed to be unfriendly towards Crook. The extracts, Crook complained,

... in their garbled form suppress facts, distort the truth and convey false impressions, in every instance, and with evident design to misrepresent my acts and injure me. ... 37

Crook also accused Lieutenant-General of the Army Philip H. Sheridan of publicly making disparaging remarks. In a letter to Webb C. Hayes, the son of President Rutherford B. Hayes, he maintained that Sheridan had told both a

37 George Crook to Adjutant General, United States Army, 22 December 1886, 16 May 1888, Crook Correspondence.
newspaper reporter and another of Crook's friends that the general had disobeyed orders and had failed to catch the renegades by relying on Indian scouts. What certainly must have incensed Crook was Sheridan's avowal that he was upset because Miles had caught Geronimo with white troops. 38

In December 1886 Crook submitted to the War Department a report entitled *Resume of Operations Against Apache Indians, 1882-1886* in an attempt to clarify the distorted picture created by the newspapers of his activities in Arizona. Two months later he inquired of the Adjutant General if the War Department would publish the *Resume*. If not, the general would like privately to distribute copies. 39

After consulting with General Sheridan, the Secretary of War decided that publication by either the Department or by the author was inadvisable at the time. Notifying Crook of the decision, the Assistant Adjutant General listed four reasons offered by the General of the Army against publication. First, the *Resume* contained no information hitherto unknown by the War Department. Second, in the report, Crook

38George Crook to Webb C. Hayes, 2 April 1887, *Crook Correspondence*.

39George Crook to Adjutant General, United States Army, 10 February 1887, *Crook Correspondence*.
primarily set forth arguments to support his belief in the efficacy and reliability of Indian scouts. Third, as military authorities already knew his views on Indian fighting, the report lacked any new ideas of value to the Army. Sheridan finally observed that publication would expose a matter to public scrutiny for which no military justification existed, and would re-expose matters no longer of public importance. Angered by Sheridan's pronouncements, George Crook protested the decision against publication. Seeing no reason whatever for the suppression of the Resume, he asserted his right to defend himself publicly. Evidently Crook's protests had some effect, for the Government Printing Office published the Resume later in 1887.\textsuperscript{40}

In 1889 George Crook's obsession with his public image placed him in the role of literary critic. After reading historian Hubert H. Bancroft's volume on the history of Arizona and New Mexico, he wrote Bancroft a flattering letter praising the book as a whole, but criticizing one

\textsuperscript{40}George Crook to Adjutant General, United States Army, 16 March 1887; Assistant Adjutant General, United States Army to George Crook, 8 March 1887, Crook Correspondence. The Government Printing Office published a limited edition of the Resume, therefore existing copies are rare and difficult to obtain. After many months of searching, the author has been thus far unsuccessful in locating a copy for purposes of research.
sentence which he judged to be an inaccurate assessment of his experiences with the Apaches. The general expressed the hope that Bancroft, after reading an enclosed copy of the Resumé, would correct the unfortunate error.\textsuperscript{41}

On 21 March 1890 George Crook died of heart failure. Stunned by the news of the general's death, former scouts, living near Fort Apache, sat on the ground in a circle and cried, mourning the loss of their old commander. With the leading spokesman for Senate Joint Resolution 42 gone, support for the bill waned. The Chiricahuas languished in the East until the Army Appropriation Bill, passed on 6 August 1894, authorized the War Department to transfer the group to Fort Sill.\textsuperscript{42}

Unlike many of his contemporaries in the Army, George Crook did not limit Indian talents to the job of trailing hostiles; he also utilized the talents of Indians as warriors trained to fight and to kill. Devoid of hate or dislike for Indians, Crook was a compassionate individual

\textsuperscript{41}George Crook to Hubert H. Bancroft, 25 October 1889, Crook Correspondence.

who saw them as less fortunate creatures who badly needed civilizing. His interest and loyalty to his scouts continued even after he ceased being their commander. The general easily could have mismanaged his Indian auxiliaries if it were not for one vital element in his military philosophy. George Crook treated his scouts as he wished to be treated--as individuals whose success depended on being at liberty to do their job as only they knew how best to do it.
APACHE WARS
1871–1886

ARIZONA TERRITORY

MAP 3

0 50 100

Gila River
Camp Verde
Camp McDowell
San Carlos
Ft. Apache
Tombstone
Mule Hills
San Bernardino Springs

Dragoon Mountains
Sulphur Springs Valley

Turkey Creek
CHAPTER V

INDIAN SCOUTS: AN INTERNATIONAL CONTROVERSY

On 29 July 1882, after twelve years of intermittent negotiations, Frederick T. Frelinghuysen, American Secretary of State, and Matias Romero, Mexican Minister to the United States, signed an agreement for the reciprocal military pursuit of hostile Indians across the international border.  

As a solution to the frustrating problem of apprehending renegade Indians from the United States who sought a haven in Mexico from American soldiers forbidden by international law from arbitrarily crossing the boundary, the so-called hot pursuit agreement facilitated the pacification of the Chiricahua Apache band in the 1880's by Generals George Crook and Nelson A. Miles and the search for small numbers of Apache renegades in the 1890's.

Although he questioned the ease and efficacy with which the Army could use its newly acquired freedom to cross the

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border, to hunt Geronimo in the Sierra Madre Mountains. Two expeditions in particular, one led by Crook himself in 1883 and the other led by Captain Emmet Crawford of the Third Cavalry in December 1885 through January 1886, raised questions regarding the American employment of Indian scouts as part of regular forces acting under the hot pursuit agreement.

According to the agreement, regular federal troops could exercise the right of hot pursuit in unpopulated or desert territory, which, as defined in Article Two, was any area a minimum distance of two leagues from an encampment or town in either country. Before or at the time of crossing the border, the troop commander had to give notice of the intended action to the nearest military or civil authority of the host country. Immediately after engaging hostiles in battle or upon losing the trail, troops would return to their point of origin. When in the role of either host or visiting nation, each country had the responsibility of

2George Crook to Assistant Adjutant General, Division of the Pacific, 28 September 1882, George Crook Letterbook I, Rutherford B. Hayes Memorial Library, Fremont, Ohio (hereafter cited as Crook Correspondence).
punishing its citizens and soldiers who molested the citizens and soldiers of the other nation.\textsuperscript{3}

Achieving satisfactory results against renegade Apaches through the implementation of the hot pursuit agreement, the United States and Mexico renewed the 1882 compact three times, negotiated a new one in 1890, renewed it once, and concluded a final agreement in 1896. With the exception of an article concerning Indian scouts included in the 1890 and 1896 agreements, the terms remained basically unchanged.\textsuperscript{4}

George Crook's doubts concerning the hot pursuit agreement were well-founded, for problems quickly arose out of its implementation. One of the problems, the restitution of stolen property, directly related to the general and his Apache scouts. In the summer of 1883, Crook led an expedition into Mexico's Sierra Madre Mountains to hunt and to capture Geronimo. A detachment of Apache trailers seized an Indian camp in which they discovered a large quantity of

\textsuperscript{3}Malloy, Treaties, 1: 1144-1145.

goods and livestock stolen from Mexican citizens. Cayetano Romero, the Mexican Secretary for Foreign Affairs, suggested that the lawful owners of the recovered property be summoned to reclaim their possessions. He also suggested that a new term be added to the 1882 agreement requiring notification of civil and military authorities of goods recaptured from hostile Indians. 5

General Crook, informed of the Mexican request, refused to aid in the restoration of the goods in question. Because an Indian scout's pay was only thirteen dollars a month, and possibly in recognition of the traditional Apache dependence on stolen goods for partial economic subsistence, Crook had promised any goods and livestock recaptured during the campaign to his trackers. To return the property at that time would create the feeling among the Indians that his word was unreliable, thus endangering his influence with them. Just as important was the probability of fraudulent claims and general ill-will resulting from measures taken to restore stolen property. The matter of the restoration of

the stolen goods ended when Romero, concurring with the general's position, so notified his government. 6

Although the question of the stolen goods appropriated for the scouts was of relatively little importance in the long run and did not affect the Army's use of Indian auxiliaries, it did make the Mexican government aware that friendly Apaches accompanied American patrols penetrating Mexico from Arizona. Furthermore, the Mexican government issued no protest through diplomatic channels against the use of Indians under the hot pursuit agreement in 1883. Not until the tragic conclusion of Emmet Crawford's expedition in 1886 did Mexico evidence any concern with the activities of Apache scouts in relation to the terms of the 1882 agreement.

A difficulty of prime importance in hunting hostile Indians with the aid of friendly tribesmen was how to distinguish between the two groups. On his expedition into Sonora in 1883, Crook required the scouts to wear red headbands as identification, a stratagem often used by the Army. The prospect of being mistaken for hostiles and attacked by

civilians, soldiers, and even other trackers was an ever-present spectre for the enlisted Indians.7 On 11 January 1886, for the Second Battalion of Indian Scouts, the spectre became frighteningly real.

On 3 December 1885 Captain Emmet Crawford, Lieutenants Marion P. Maus of the First Infantry, and William E. Shipp of the Tenth Cavalry, civilian chiefs of scouts Tom Horn and William Harrison, Private Frank Nemeck, and the scout battalion crossed into the Mexican state of Sonora. On New Year's Day, almost a month after stepping foot on Mexican soil, Crawford notified the prefect of the district of Sahuaripa of the battalion's presence and mission in Mexico. The prefect, as requested by Crawford, sent what intelligence he possessed on the whereabouts of hostile Apaches.8

7 Robert G. Carter, On the Border With Mackenzie or Winning the West From the Comanches (New York: Antiquarian Press, Ltd., 1961), pp. 161-162; George Crook to Charles B. Gatewood, 11 June 1885, Crook Correspondence; Goodwin, Western Apache Raiding, pp. 123, 154.

8 Marion P. Maus to C. S. Roberts, 23 February 1886; A. F. Perchos to Emmet Crawford, 2 January 1886; Ignacio Mariscal to J. L. Morgan, 10 June 1886; Foreign Relations, 49th Cong., 2d sess., 1886, pp. 577, 584, 690. The War Department's investigation of the Crawford episode was not extensive in comparison to the Mexican investigation. Only the officers and civilians leading the scouts gave testimony. The American account of the events transpiring in January derives from the two detailed reports submitted by Lieutenant Marion P. Maus, Crawford's second-in-command.
On 4 January the unit discovered a Chiricahua trail north of Sahuaripa and followed it for six days in an easterly direction along the Rio Aros. In the pre-dawn hours of the tenth the scouts, divided among the officers and chiefs of scouts, surrounded the hostile camp. About sunrise, some burros, sensing the approach of strangers, began braying, thus awakening the camp to danger. The ensuing battle lasted two hours. The hostiles escaped, leaving their camp, supplies, and horses in the possession of Crawford's men. Convinced that they could no longer find a safe refuge from the scouts, the Chiricahuas arranged a conference with Captain Crawford for the next day.9

About noon, the battalion camped near the site of the captured Chiricahua encampment. Exhausted after approximately thirty hours with little food and no sleep, the scouts rested. Believing the hostiles would not attack them, they relaxed their usual precaution of posting guards around the camp during the night.10

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About seven o'clock the next morning, both the battalion and hostiles awoke to the sound of rifle shots. A group of one hundred and fifty-four irregulars from the state of Chihuahua had opened fire on the friendly Apaches. At first the Americans thought Captain Wirt Davis's expedition, which had been on patrol in Chihuahua, was attacking Crawford's command by mistake. Captain John G. Bourke, General Crook's aide, later asserted that the irregulars were Tarahumari Indians enlisted by the Mexicans because of their wildness and hatred of the Chiricahua. It soon became clear, however, that the assailants were Mexicans. The officers and several scouts shouted "soldados Americanos" for several minutes before the Mexicans ceased firing. ¹¹

As Captain Crawford, Lieutenant Maus, and a Mexican delegation advanced towards one another in an open area among the surrounding rocks, the officers renewed their efforts in limited Spanish to identify themselves and the trailers as friendly Americans. Crawford and Maus were partially dressed in uniforms. Ordered by the captain to

rejoin their men, Maus had started for the cover of the rocks when he heard a single shot. The Mexicans and the Apache scouts exchanged volleys for over half an hour as the hostile Chiricahuas watched from a safe distance. Both sides suffered casualties. Emmet Crawford, severely wounded in the head by the first shot, died seven days later.\footnote{Ibid.}

After the second round of fighting ended, Lieutenant Maus succeeded in conversing with several Mexicans who claimed that the attack was an honest error. In the faint pre-dawn light, they had assumed the scouts to be hostile Apaches. While pretending to accept the Mexican explanation, the American officer believed the Mexicans had deliberately attempted to overwhelm the battalion and capture the American camp in the second attack. Because the situation had stabilized to some extent and he wanted to avoid further altercation between the scouts and the Mexicans, Maus generously offered to loan the Mexicans several horses to carry their wounded.\footnote{Marion P. Maus to C. S. Roberts, 21 January 1886, Foreign Relations, 49th Cong., 2d sess., 1886, p. 572.}
On 12 January, as the American expedition prepared to leave, the unstable truce between the battalion and the Mexicans almost collapsed. The Mexicans, dissatisfied with the Indian ponies sent by Maus, lured the officer into their camp and detained him and an interpreter named Concepcion under an armed guard. Realizing their white leader's predicament, the scouts openly readied themselves to fight the Mexicans again and to rescue Lieutenant Maus. The irregulars promptly released Maus, who, upon returning to his camp, sent six mules to replace the rejected ponies. The Mexicans then released Concepcion. Without further interference by the irregulars, the battalion began the return journey to Arizona the next day.¹⁴

Immediately upon the arrival of the expedition from Mexico, the War Department initiated an investigation into the incident. Testimony given by Maus, Shipp, Horn, Harrison, and Nemeck revealed that the initial Mexican attack on the battalion, in all probability, was a tragic mistake. Both groups had encountered difficulty in recognizing each other in the half-light of early morning. The scouts who had first discerned the approach of the Mexicans had thought

¹⁴Ibid.
they were the Apaches commanded by Wirt Davis and had called out to them in the Apache language. Hearing someone shouting in Apache was, in itself, enough to have convinced the Mexicans that here was a group of the renegades who had recently been raiding in Chihuahua.\textsuperscript{15}

The American eyewitnesses, however, viewed the killing of Crawford as a deliberate, unprovoked assassination. The Americans' efforts to identify themselves in Spanish had appeared to have succeeded, and the Indians, as instructed by the officers, had held their fire and had behaved in no way likely to provoke more shooting. Crawford, in uniform, had stood under a flag of truce. Disregarding the protestations and obvious identity of the American officers, an unknown Mexican irregular had fatally wounded Emmet Crawford.\textsuperscript{16}

The assault by the Mexican irregulars, regardless of motives or circumstances, constituted a violation of the hot pursuit agreement in that Mexican citizens had attacked an American military force on Mexican soil. As instructed by the Secretary of State, on 15 February 1886 the United States

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Minister to Mexico, Henry R. Jackson, formally requested an investigation into the incident by the Mexican government. Briefly outlining what had occurred on 11 January in Sonora, Jackson stated the American belief that Crawford's death had been intentional. He also expressed the desire of the United States government that future incidents of a similar nature would be avoided by Mexico. Three days later, Ignacio Mariscal, the Mexican Secretary for Foreign Affairs, assured Henry Jackson of his government's desire to ascertain the truth concerning the loss of Captain Crawford and to determine the responsibility for the incident.17

The Mexican government promptly began its investigations. Three separate inquiries took place in February, and two in April with no apparent progress being made. State Department officials became concerned by the delay but had their dissatisfaction allayed by Mariscal, who said that President Díaz had decided to prolong the investigation because of new information forwarded by the American government. Finally, in May the Mexican Secretary presented the findings of four inquiries to J. L. Morgan, the American

charged d'affaires in Mexico City. The fifth report arrived in June. 18

Before the conclusion of the investigations, Mexican President Porfirio Diaz intimated in a speech before the national Congress what his countrymen and the United States could expect in the government's report. Diaz declared that the irregulars from Chihuahua had believed the trail they were following to have been made by hostile Apaches. Since only regular troops could pursue Indians across the border, the Mexican detachment obviously would not have expected to encounter Indian scouts. That the irregulars had mistaken friendly Apaches for hostiles was understandable. The death of Captain Crawford was most regrettable, but Mexican citizens should not shoulder the blame. Furthermore, he said that American newspapers, by distorting the

18 J. L. Morgan to Thomas F. Bayard, 14 April 1886, Ignacio Mariscal to J. L. Morgan, 21 April 1886, 19 May 1886, 10 June 1886, Foreign Relations, 49th Cong., 2d sess., 1886, pp. 585, 587, 589, 660. Ignacio Mariscal's communication to J. L. Morgan on 19 May 1886 not only contained Mariscal's summary of the conclusions reached by the Mexican government as a result of investigations, but also included copies of testimony and documents pertaining to the Crawford incident which were collected during the investigations. Mariscal's letter of 10 June 1886 contained copies of testimony related to crimes alleged to have been committed by the scouts in Sonora. References to the Mexican account come from the copious testimony included in the two communications from Mariscal to Morgan.
events of 11 January, had created unnecessary excitement in both countries.  

On 19 May Ignacio Mariscal sent to J. L. Morgan the Mexican government's official report, which lacked only the findings of an inquiry into charges of misconduct by the scouts in the district of Moctezuma in Sonora. Based on the testimony of the irregulars and residents of Sonora and Chihuahua, the Mexican version completely exonerated the Chihuahua irregulars and accused the American officers of laxity in controlling the behavior and the criminal acts of the scouts against Mexican citizens. The report written by Mariscal and the testimony of witnesses dealt with three general issues: the circumstances surrounding the attack on 11 January, the forced detention of Maus and an interpreter by the irregulars, and accusations against the scouts of criminal activities in Chihuahua and Sonora. 

On several important points concerning the circumstances contributing to the incident on 11 January, American and

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19 Matias Romero to Thomas F. Bayard, 13 April 1886; J. L. Morgan to T. F. Bayard, 14 April 1886, Foreign Relations, 49th Cong., 2d sess., 1886, pp. 585, 724-725.

20 Ignacio Mariscal to Thomas F. Bayard, 19 May, 10 June 1886, Foreign Relations, 49th Cong., 2d sess., 1886, pp. 589-652, 658-691 passim.
Mexican accounts differed markedly. Essentially, the American version maintained that after trailing the hostile Chiricahuas for several days, the scouts had attacked and had captured the Indian camp shortly after dawn on 10 January. Setting up camp on the site of the Apache rancheria, the battalion had rested to await the meeting planned for the following day between Captain Crawford and Geronimo. Mexican participants in the assault insisted that they themselves had been following the trail of hostile Indians for several days, when they had sighted the rancheria on 10 January. To facilitate a surprise attack on the camp, they had remained hidden and had watched it during the entire day.\(^2\)

Having noticed no signs of unusual movement or any indications of a battle, Mexican observers denied the American attack had taken place. Furthermore, on the following day the American officers had said nothing of any attack on the hostiles. On this point, the Mexican account is weak. Supposedly the irregulars had observed the Apache camp all day. Some witnesses, however, stated that they did

not discover the Indians until about noon or later. Their
denial of the American assault would be logical since the
attack occurred before the advent of the volunteers from
Chihuahua. What the Mexicans assumed to be the camp of
hostile Indians was in reality the camp of friendly Apache
scouts. 22

The trail itself became a point of contention. The
Mexicans picked up a trail on 9 January, followed it, and
discovered the Apache camp in the mountains near the Rio
Aros. Lieutenant Maus denied the assertion. He believed
the Mexicans had been following the scouts' trail instead.
In his second and more detailed report of the entire affair,
Maus described how the hostiles' trail had run from west to
east. After sighting the camp, the battalion had approached
it from the north. The Mexicans also had approached the
camp from the north. Following the irregulars' trail on
part of the return journey, Maus perceived that the Mexicans
had indeed followed the American trail. 23

22 Ibid.

23 Marion P. Maus to C. S. Roberts, 23 February 1886; Ignacio Mariscal to J. L. Morgan, 19 May 1886, Foreign Rela-
tions, 49th Cong., 2d sess., 1886, pp. 577, 591.
Conceivably, with the irregulars traveling about a day behind the scouts, both groups could possibly have known of each other's presence in the area. The American reports, however, lack any references to knowledge of the movements of the irregulars prior to 11 January. The Mexican reports likewise lack references to any knowledge of the whereabouts of the battalion. Mexican witnesses, on the other hand, swore under oath that the Americans were aware of their proximity as early as 8 January. They based the assertion on what they interpreted as obvious preparations to resist their approach, but when pressed for specific details, the witnesses responded with only vague impressions.

Contradicting the allegation is Lieutenant Maus's statement that the scouts, tired from several days' marching, did not post their usual guards on the night of the tenth. If they had planned any belligerent actions against the Mexicans, surely they would have kept watch during the night for their approach. Moreover, why should the Americans not welcome the help of Mexican citizens in securing the surrender of the renegade Apaches? How could the irregulars have known for certain that the American detachment had prepared a resistance in light of their sworn statements
that they believed the camp to be occupied by hostiles? The Mexican statements denying the battalion's attack on the tenth and asserting its knowledge of the presence of another force in the area prior to the eleventh had to have been founded on hindsight. Otherwise, if based on observations made on the tenth, the Mexicans would have known the men they attacked on the following day to be friendly Indians serving in the United States Army.

Of much interest to the United States were the circumstances leading to the death of Emmet Crawford. Here again, both accounts conflicted on essential points. Lieutenant Maus stated that the Mexicans had attacked the scout camp about dawn. When the shooting appeared to have died down, the American officers had approached the irregulars. A sudden resumption of the attack brought about Crawford's fatal wound. Some Mexican witnesses indicated the attack had taken place in full daylight. Maus related how, after the second attack, the irregulars had justified the assault on the basis of the poor light of early morning.24

When questioned by Mexican officials, the witnesses swore that the scouts had fired first. Maus shed little

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light on this allegation. He merely mentioned that he had heard shots being fired at the commencement of the attack. Depositions taken from the other American officer and civilians accompanying the Indian trailers reveal their consensus that the Mexicans had fired the first shots. The Army did not question the Apaches, whose observations could have cleared up the problem of who had initiated hostilities. 25

The behavior of the scouts during the attack evoked critical comments from Mexican witnesses. The American officers and civilians agreed that they had behaved commendably, firing only in self-defense and with restraint. Several Mexican irregulars claimed they had seen some of the Indians beginning to run from the battle, but the American officers had managed to stop them. That Apaches would run from a battle against Mexicans, whom the Indians hated but did not fear, and in which they had a more advantageous position on the rock-strewn mountainside than did the attacking force, seems unlikely. 26

25Ibid.

26Marion P. Maus to C. S. Roberts, 23 February 1886; Ignacio Mariscal to J. L. Morgan, 19 May 1886, Foreign Relations, 49th Cong., 2d sess., 1886, pp. 597, 601.
Mexican testimony revealed a poor comprehension of the finer points of Apache warfare. The irregulars estimated the composition of the battalion at a number ranging from seven to forty whites and from two hundred and fifty to three hundred Indians. The Mexicans reported their own number as one hundred and twenty-eight men. Why should the scouts have run, if they had outnumbered the Mexicans as claimed? According to Maus, the battalion consisted of three officers, one enlisted man, two civilians, and seventy-nine Apaches. That either side could accurately estimate the size of the opposing force at an early morning hour and during the excitement of battle exceeds credibility. To outnumber the enemy and fight from a secure position was a prerequisite of Indian tactics. From the description by the Mexicans, the scouts had held the required tactical advantages.27

Overshadowing lesser points of disagreement was the controversy concerning Emmet Crawford's death. The question of Crawford's demise as an accident or as an assassination hinged on how many times the Mexicans had assaulted the

American force and if the American officers could have been identified as such by their clothing. The Army's five leading witnesses accused the irregulars of deliberately resuming the offensive after they recognized the whites as American Army officers. Mexican witnesses persisted in their story of only one attack having been launched, and insisted that Crawford had sustained his fatal wound in that attack. Only after the single skirmish had the irregulars learned the identity of the scouts.  

Several days after the incident, Casimiro Grajeda, a police official at Nacori, reported his conversation with Tom Horn when the battalion paused on the homeward journey to Arizona to bury Crawford. Horn's description of the battle indicated to the police official that he and Crawford had attempted to halt the shooting by climbing onto some rocks, shouting, and waving a white cloth. He went on to describe how the firing had continued in intensity. At this stage in the conflict, the Mexicans had wounded the two men.

The chief of scouts' story, as related by the police official, 

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supported the Mexican account; however, Horn's testimony in the American military inquiry supported Maus's account.29 A brief lull may have occurred in the exchange of fire, one definite enough to have appeared to be a cessation as the lieutenant maintained. Taken at face value, the Mexican version would appear to have been a determined concealment of culpability.

The veracity of the Mexican defense relied on the question of what Captain Crawford and Lieutenant Maus had worn on the morning of 11 January. Maus asserted that Crawford was wearing a uniform and he himself had donned an Army overcoat. Lieutenant William Shipp and Private Frank Nemeck testified that dressed as they and the two other officers had been, the Mexicans could not have mistaken them for Indians or civilians. The Mexican witnesses insisted the American officers had not worn uniforms or any insignia.30 If Crawford and Maus did not wear clothing identifiable as American military attire, recognition of the two men as


officers would have indeed been difficult, especially in the early light of a winter sunrise. If the two men did wear portions of their uniforms, enough to be recognized as soldiers, and if the Mexicans conducted only one assault, the shooting of Emmet Crawford could still have been accidental. If two distinct assaults actually occurred and the captain was wearing his uniform when making efforts to identify himself and the scouts, he could have fallen victim to an intentional Mexican bullet. Carefully analyzing the evidence, one can only conclude that the initial assault on the American camp constituted a comprehensible error. As for the death of Emmet Crawford, the testimony presented by both governments is so diametrically opposed that one must either remain in doubt as to the nature of the killing or simply choose sides.

Another question raised during the investigation was if the irregulars did make a second assault on the camp, and knew that they were attacking United States Army scouts, what motive prompted them to do so? In his report of 21 January 1886, Lieutenant Maus theorized that the irregulars had desired to secure for themselves the goods and livestock captured by the battalion the previous day. In May the Mexican minister in Washington, Matias Romero, wrote the
Secretary of State, Thomas F. Bayard, regarding the motives suggested by American military reports and public newspapers. Interestingly, Romero refers to the second attack in such a manner as to imply that some ranking Mexican diplomats accepted the story of a second assault by the irregulars. Romero, however, dated the letter on 5 May, two weeks before his government released its judgment based on the first four inquiries.  

In his letter, Matias Romero discounted the two motives suggested by the United States for the Mexican assault. He dismissed Maus's theory, saying that such a venture would have been foolish and would have involved unnecessary risk to the lives of the irregulars in an attempt to overwhelm the scouts in their highly defensible position. The other motive dismissed by the Mexican diplomat involved a bounty reported to have been offered by his government for hostile Apaches, captured or killed. While denying that such a federal bounty existed, Romero did admit that a Chihuahua state law, dating from 1849, provided a bounty for hostile Indians. The bounty applied only to "wild" Indians;  

31 Matias Romero to Thomas F. Bayard, 5 May 1886, Foreign Relations, 49th Cong., 2d sess., 1886, pp. 728-729.
therefore an attempt to capture or kill the scouts would have been pointless. 32

Unwittingly, Matias Romero contradicted this point in earlier paragraphs of the letter. The Mexican minister asserted his belief that the irregulars from Chihuahua did not become convinced they were attacking members of the United States Army until long after the commencement of the second assault and possibly not until the following day. In refutation of the bounty motive, he argued that Indian scouts were friendly Indians, and the Mexicans, knowing of their presence, would not have attacked them to secure a bounty for wild Indians. As yet unknown to Romero, in the testimony of the Chihuahua irregulars existed various references to the enlisted Apaches as wild Indians. Finally, the Mexican government determined to its own satisfaction that the men from Chihuahua had remained ignorant of the identity of the scouts until after the one and only assault made on the camp. 33 In light of Romero's antithetical arguments and his government's verdict, the prospect of a generous bounty for captured and killed hostile Indians could

32 Ibid., pp. 729-731.

33 Ibid.
easily have motivated one or more attacks on men believed by the irregulars to be wild Indians.

The second major issue examined during the investigations concerned the charge of illegal detention by the irregulars of Lieutenant Maus and Concepcion, an interpreter with the Apache scouts. The issue evolved out of a Mexican request for mules on which they could transport their wounded men. Maus reported that he had sent several captured Indian ponies, but the Mexicans had rejected the horses as unsatisfactory. The lieutenant and the interpreter then entered the Mexican camp to negotiate an agreeable settlement concerning transportation for the wounded Mexicans. Belligerant in demeanor toward the officer and interpreter, the Mexicans had refused to allow either man to depart from the camp. Only when the scouts had commenced discernible preparations to free him and Concepcion could Maus persuade the irregulars to allow him to return to his own camp. Concepcion remained with the irregulars as a hostage until an offer of six mules and equipment by Maus had placated the irregulars.34

Denouncing the detention of Maus and Concepcion as a blatant violation of the hot pursuit agreement, the United States government held the Mexican government responsible for the punishment of the offenders as stipulated by the terms of the agreement. In examining witnesses on 22 April 1886, Mexican officials sought to determine the veracity of the American charge. Ignacio Mariscal reported that the detention had not taken place. Of the nine witnesses questioned, however, six revealed that Maus and the interpreter had involuntarily remained among the Mexicans for approximately half an hour until the mules arrived at the Mexican camp. Ignoring the testimony of the six eyewitnesses, the Mexican government nonetheless denied that the irregulars had held the two men against their will.\textsuperscript{35}

Augmenting its defensive stance, the Mexican government accused members of the Second Battalion of having committed depredations in the states of Chihuahua and Sonora during a five-month period beginning in September 1885 through January 1886. The alleged raids in western Chihuahua occurred in September, October, and November near the towns of Dolores,

Yepome, and Las Varas. Several irregulars, questioned in February, identified the scouts as the same Indians who had stolen livestock in Chihuahua. The witnesses, however, based the accusation on circumstantial evidence. Following the assault on the American camp, several individuals had recognized mules and horses owned by residents of Dolores in the possession of the trailers. Mere possession of the animals sufficiently convicted them in the minds of the Mexicans.36

Supported by their assertion that the scouts had not fought the hostile Apache band on 10 January, the witnesses repudiated the American claim that the men had gained the livestock through combat with Geronimo's warriors. Throughout the months of investigations and diplomatic wrangling, the Mexican government conveniently forgot that Crook permitted his Indian auxiliaries to keep goods and livestock captured from hostiles, a practice unquestionably pointed out to the Mexican government in 1883.37


The State Department placed little credence in the charge of crimes committed in Chihuahua by the Apache scouts, but could not ignore the complaint of depredations in Sonora. The first news of the indiscretions of Crawford's scouts arrived in the form of a communiqué from Governor Luis E. Torres of Sonora to General George Crook. In answer to the governor, Crook stated that he had sent orders to Crawford to investigate the matter. If the scouts were guilty as charged, the Army would punish them severely. Ironically, Crook's message to Torres was dated 11 January 1886.38

In April General Crispin S. Palomares of the Mexican Army carried out the tedious task of gathering evidence in the district of Moctezuma. According to those persons who testified, some of the scouts, during the months of December 1885 and January 1886, had killed livestock near the towns of Nacosari, Capadehuache, Granados, and Bacadethuache, had been drunk and disorderly, had stolen some sugar cane and killed two men near Gueverache, and had assaulted three men on the road between Nacosari and Cumpas, all in the district

38 George Crook to Luis E. Torres, 11 January 1886, Crook Correspondence; J. L. Morgan to Thomas F. Bayard, 25 May 1886, Foreign Relations, 49th Cong., 2d sess., 1886, p. 589.
of Moctezuma. The most convincing element in the testimony was the presence of Captain Crawford and the Apaches in the vicinity of each town on the days when the crimes had taken place. 39

Although the evidence supporting the accusation of crimes in Sonora was circumstantial, it possessed strength lacked by the accusation relating to Chihuahua. The scouts had been present in the right locations on the right dates. Local officials in the various towns stated that on several occasions Emmet Crawford had restrained them from further indiscretions and violations of the Mexican laws. Furthermore, little possibility existed that hostile Apaches could have been the culprits in each case. Witnesses made no mention of their presence in the district of Moctezuma in December and January. Also, communications by officials indicate the hostiles had gone south into the mountains near the Rio Aros in the district of Sahuaripa in early November and remained there until overtaken by the American expedition in January. As in the case of the earlier allegations concerning the trailers' presumed activities in Chihuahua, the

39 Miles, Personal Recollections, p. 452; Ignacio Mariscal to J. L. Morgan, 19 May, 10 June 1886, Foreign Relations, 49th Cong., 2d sess., 1886, pp. 594, 595, 612, 660-690 passim.
United States government and the Army failed to pursue the issue. By the time Mariscal released the testimony to the chief American diplomat in Mexico City, General Nelson A. Miles, having assumed George Crook's duties in Arizona, had discharged the majority of the scouts and had sent them back to their reservations.  

In retrospect, a careful examination of the testimony of American and Mexican participants in the events in Mexico related to the Crawford expedition in 1886 clarifies some of the issues raised and fails to clarify others. Noting the circumstances leading up to the attack on 11 January and the difficulties of recognition encountered by the United States Army when employing friendly Indians against hostiles, one can justifiably accept the premise of the Mexican assault based on the irregulars' faulty identification of the Apache battalion. Whether Crawford died from a wound accidentally sustained in the initial assault or in a deliberate second attack remains unsatisfactorily resolved because of contradictory evidence. In spite of the Mexican

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40 Sergio Quezada to Secretary of Supreme Government of the State, Chihuahua, 11 November 1885; A. F. Perchos to Emmet Crawford, 2 January 1886, Ignacio Mariscal to J. L. Morgan, 10 June 1886, Foreign Relations, 49th Cong., 2d sess., 1886, pp. 612, 660-690 passim.
government's assertions to the contrary, the testimony of six Mexican irregulars proves that Maus and Concepcion had been detained forcibly in the Mexican camp on the morning of 12 January. Finally, although the charge that the scouts had rustled livestock in Chihuahua lacks sufficient credibility for acceptance, one can do little else but accept the veracity of the allegation that at least some trailers violated Mexican laws in Sonora.

In 1886 Mexico demanded reparations for damage caused by the scouts in the two northern states, but received nothing from the United States. The following year, however, the Mexican government replaced the mules and equipment loaned by Lieutenant Maus to the irregulars and paid $500 for damage to the equipment.41

After George Crook's transfer out of Arizona, the extensive employment of Indian scouts diminished remarkably. Distrusting them, General Nelson A. Miles limited their military activities and reduced the number of trailers accompanying cavalry patrols. His actions effectively prevented any recurrence of incidents between Mexican citizens

and Indian scouts during the remainder of the Army's campaign against Geronimo's band in Arizona and northern Mexico.42

In the spring of 1886 American and Mexican diplomats exchanged notes concerning the employment of Indian scouts under the hot pursuit agreement. The restrictions placed on the trailers by General Miles by no means satisfied the Mexican government. Initially, the Mexican diplomats pointed out the obvious danger to the Indians of being mistakenly attacked by Mexican citizens and soldiers. A second objection to the practice centered on the belief that the scouts often raided in Mexico.43

The attack on the Second Battalion and the evidence of probable depredations by some of its members sufficiently justified Mexican protests, but the argument favored most by

42 Miles, Personal Recollections, p. 495; U. S., Congress, Senate, Letter From the Secretary of War, Transmitting, In Response to Resolution of February 11, 1887, Correspondence With General Miles Relative to the Surrender of Geronimo, S. Doc. 117, 49th Cong., 2d sess., Serial No. 2449, 1887, pp. 2-3 (hereafter cited as Surrender of Geronimo, 49th Cong., 2d sess., 1887).

43 U. S., Congress, House, Message From the President of the United States Transmitting a Communication From the Secretary of State, With Accompanying Papers, Relative to the Employment of Indian Scouts, H. Doc. 299, 51st Cong., 1st sess., Serial No. 2750, 1890, pp. 4-6 (hereafter cited as Employment of Scouts, 51st Cong., 1st sess., 1890).
Mexican diplomats concerned the legality of the Apache scouts entering Mexico under the terms of the hot pursuit agreement. Under the articles agreed upon in 1882, argued Ignacio Mariscal, Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Indian auxiliaries could not cross onto Mexican soil. Although no specific reference to them existed in the articles, the agreement mentioned regular troops only. Under international law, Mariscal defined regular troops as members of a nation's standing or permanent army, not troops enlisted for short-term service as were the scouts. Mariscal further argued that unlike disciplined regular soldiers, the Indians were uncivilized and unable to accept military discipline, thereby posing a threat to the safety of the citizens of Mexico and to the cooperative efforts by the United States and Mexico to end Indian depredations along the border.  

Challenged by their Mexican counterparts to defend a military practice proven effective against hostile Indians, American diplomats presented their own arguments for the continuation of the use of Indian scouts under the hot pursuit agreement. Secretary of State Bayard asserted that

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44 Ignacio Mariscal to J. L. Morgan, 19 May 1886; J. L. Morgan to Thomas F. Bayard, 25 May 1886, Foreign Relations, 49th Cong., 2d sess., 1886, pp. 589, 596.
Indian trailers, paid from Army appropriations and classified as part of the regular army, constituted a military force acceptable under the articles. Furthermore, the Mexican government had known of the authorized activities of Indian trackers in the Southwest for several years. If the Mexican government had harbored a desire for their exclusion from its national territory, it had failed to act in this regard in 1883, 1884, and 1885 when both countries renewed the original agreement. Hired to facilitate the pursuit and capture of hostile Indians, the scouts had proven themselves necessary for tracking renegades through rugged territory unfamiliar to white soldiers. In summation, Bayard expressed the official attitude of the United States government on the issue of native auxiliaries:

To abandon the employment of Indian scouts for this especial service would appear to be to relinquish the best known means of giving peace to the border land between Mexico and the United States, and safety to the inhabitants of both countries.  

In the weeks following the Mexican government's release of the results of its investigation into the Crawford incident, American public and government attention focused...

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on the United States Army's final campaign against Geronimo's small band of Chiricahua Apaches. Unlike George Crook, General Nelson A. Miles relied on the cavalry as the major weapon against the renegades and enlisted a small number of Indians to serve as trailers only. The ultimate surrender of Geronimo to Miles in August 1886 overshadowed the issues raised in previous months. With the end of the Apache wars in the Southwest, the United States and Mexico allowed the hot pursuit agreement to expire. 46

In 1887 an emergency in Arizona prompted the State Department to solicit permission for troops to cross the border. Since the third extension had expired the previous year, the Mexican envoy in Washington reminded the Secretary of State that, under the Mexican constitution, only the Senate could authorize permission. The Senate, unfortunately, was not then in session. Also, the Mexican government would insist on the prohibition of the use of Indian scouts in any extension of the original agreement or in a new convention. Secretary of State Bayard offered a limitation on

the number of trailers used, but Matias Romero, the Mexican envoy, lacked authority to agree to Bayard's proposal.47

Having reached an impasse in negotiations for a renewal in 1887 and the emergency in Arizona having ended, the State Department suspended its efforts to that end for a few years. In November 1889 nine Indian convicts overpowered and escaped from their guards while being escorted to Yuma Penitentiary in Arizona. Army troops went on patrol to apprehend or to kill the escapees, but without results.48 This seemingly unimportant incident and several minor raids by Indians on both sides of the international boundary helped to bring about a new reciprocity convention in 1890.

The first public knowledge of the new agreement emerged in an article in a Mexican newspaper, the Diario Oficial, which denied rumors that Mexico and the United States had or were about to negotiate a new hot pursuit convention. Yet that same day, 25 June 1890, in Washington, D. C., Secretary of State James G. Blaine and Matias Romero signed the

47 Thomas F. Bayard to Matias Romero, Matias Romero to Thomas F. Bayard, Thomas F. Bayard to Matias Romero, 10 June 1887, Employment of Scouts, 51st Cong., 1st sess., 1890, pp. 6-8.

protocol of a new reciprocity agreement effective for one year. The provisions of the document remained basically the same as those of the 1882 agreement, with one major exception. Article Two restricted the utilization of Indian scouts. Two Indians could cross the border with each separate command or company of regular army troops and could act only as guides and trailers.49

Efforts to capture the Apache Kid, one of the Indians who had escaped in 1889, proved to be futile. General Alexander McDonald McCook, commanding the Department of Arizona, feared that the Kid's small band of outlaws, if joined by more renegades, would endanger the peace and relative security of the border area. Therefore, upon the request of the United States, diplomats of both nations signed an extension of the agreement for an additional year.50

On 4 June 1896 Secretary of State Richard Olney and Matias Romero signed the last agreement for reciprocal passage of troops in pursuit of Indians. Designed specifically

49 Thomas Ryan to James G. Blaine, 25 June 1890, Diplomatic Despatches, Mexico, 104: Microfilm Roll 98; Malloy, Treaties, 1: 1170-1171.

50 C. A. Dougherty to Ignacio Mariscal, 17 November 1892, C. A. Dougherty to John W. Foster, 17 November 1892, Diplomatic Despatches, Mexico, 114: Microfilm Roll 108; Malloy, Treaties, 1: 1171-1174.
for the search for the Apache Kid, the convention contained some articles different from those of the 1890 agreement, but the articles restricting the utilization of Indian scouts remained unchanged.  

The events which transpired in Arizona and Mexico in the 1880's reveal three important facts in relation to the use of Indian auxiliaries by George Crook under the hot pursuit agreement of 1882. First, although the Mexican government was clearly aware of Indian participation in American military expeditions operating in Mexico, it voiced no objections to their inclusion until 1886. The blunder committed by the Chihuahua irregulars created an embarrassing situation for Mexico from which the government endeavored to extricate itself by repudiating the responsibility for the incident and placing it fully on the American practice of using friendly Indians to hunt and to fight hostile Indians under the authorization of the agreement. The American government, in turn, ably defended the scout policy, which, even in American military circles, was in dispute.

Second, American and Mexican testimony exposed violations of the terms of the hot pursuit agreement by both the

51 Malloy, Treaties, 1: 1177-1178.
irregulars and the scout battalion. In the Crawford incident, a Mexican force killed an American field commander and forcefully detained his second-in-command and an interpreter. Both actions constituted violations of the terms prohibiting maltreatment of visiting military contingents by citizens and soldiers of the host nation.

The Second Battalion of Indian Scouts should not escape criticism. Although Captain Crawford notified the civil officials in the district of Sahuaripa of the expedition's presence in Mexico, evidence indicates that he failed to notify the civil or military authority nearest the point of transit across the border as required by the agreement.\footnote{J. M. Torres to Crispin S. Palomares, 21 March 1886, \textit{Foreign Relations}, 49th Cong., 2d sess., 1886, p. 664.} If the Mexican assertion that scouts did not qualify as regular troops under international laws was valid, the United States Army violated yet another requirement of the agreement. In light of the evidence presented, the depredations perpetrated by the Apaches in Sonora in December and January qualify as a third violation of the hot pursuit agreement.

Finally, happening when it did, the incident in Mexico would appear to have been the cause of the subsequent
reduction by the Army of Indian scout activities under the hot pursuit agreement, but in reality the Crawford affair had little effect. The reduction actually stemmed from two important factors: the transfer of General Crook from Arizona to the Department of the Platte in April and the surrender of Geronimo to General Miles in August. George Crook's transfer did not result from the Crawford incident, but from his refusal to change his Indian fighting policy in which enlisted tribesmen played a vital role.

As long as Crook commanded the Army in Arizona, the Apaches would track, fight, and perhaps kill their own tribesmen for the white soldiers. Before the Mexican government released the results of the investigations, Nelson Miles had dispensed with the services of all but a limited number of Indian scouts. Thereafter those who did accompany American patrols into Mexico acted as trailers only. Indian scouts soon ceased to be an important adjunct to the Army in the Southwest because serious Apache raids along the border ended as of August 1886 with the surrender of Geronimo to General Miles.

By the time conditions brought an end to their services, Indians in the Southwest produced a remarkable and praiseworthy record in the United States Army. The repercussions
from the Mexican assault and the death of Emmet Crawford briefly focused international attention on the auxiliaries near the end of their most productive period of military service. With the end of the Apache wars in 1886, the scouts' use in the pacification of hostile Southwestern tribes terminated, and they began a new role as participants in the peaceful development of the Southwest.
CHAPTER VI

ARMY SCOUTS: SOME OBSERVATIONS

To meet the need for guides and trackers to aid the United States Army in its program of Indian subjugation in the Southwest, the military secured the services of civilians and friendly Indians. Accounts of the Indian wars cite the contributions of these men, most of whom never received public recognition or praise during their lifetimes for voluntarily relinquishing peaceful pursuits to accept a job often fraught with danger and death.

Initially, the Army relied on Anglo and Mexican scouts. It was a logical choice, since the majority of these hardy individuals had lived in the Southwest for many years and had acquired some knowledge of the native inhabitants. Also, the military naturally tended to trust non-Indian civilians over friendly Indians when dealing with local tribes. Ironically, the Army changed its opinion when the service of friendly Indians became indispensable. While some truly outstanding scouts emerged from among the civilians, most possessed average ability and produced mediocre results in guiding troops and tracking hostiles.
Although preferring to rely on civilian guides and trailers, many Army officers realized that Indians far excelled whites in the art of scouting. In addition, more Indians qualified for such activities than did non-Indians. While technically part of the regular army establishment, native auxiliaries enjoyed privileges reserved especially for them—freedom from military drill, freedom to choose Army or native dress or a mixture of both,¹ freedom to confiscate captured goods and livestock as a supplement to their meager pay, and freedom to live away from forts with their own people.

The employment of civilians and Indians presented difficulties. In the case of Anglos and Mexicans, supply simply could not satisfy demand. While utilizing the Indians as the additional needed scouts, Army officers harbored a basic Western distrust of them. Many doubters warned repeatedly that enlisted natives would turn on their white commanders. Certainly the threat of treachery existed, but it is interesting to note that despite such

¹The Army did not adopt an official standard uniform for the scouts until 1890. For details and illustrations, see Fairfax Downey and Jacques Noel Jacobsen, Jr., The Red/Bluecoats (Fort Collins, Col.: The Old Army Press, 1973), pp. 160-164, 175-179.
incidents as that at Cibicu Creek when scouts fired upon soldiers, Indians served loyally and had a remarkably low desertion rate as compared to that of white soldiers.\textsuperscript{2}

Ranking trust as a guiding principle in the proper utilization of Indian scouts, General George Crook succeeded in employing their combat and hunting abilities to the greatest extent accomplished by any high-ranking Army officers. To lead the units, he preferred subordinates who shared a portion of his faith in the Indians and could elicit obedience and respect from their men. Although the general brought about innovations within the scouting service through his own determination and direction, he could not have done so had the highly unstable conditions requiring the abilities of natives guides and trackers not existed.

The risks inherent in employing individuals to aid in the defeat of their own people became a debated topic within military circles partly as a result of Crook's dependence on Indian scouts. An ideal illustration of such problems, the Crawford incident in Mexico in 1886 placed the debate over native trailers on an international plane and proved to some military commanders the validity of their belief that

\textsuperscript{2}Ibid., pp. 131, 136. Of the 4672 Apaches enlisted from 1871 to 1886 only 113 deserted.
no Indian, not even a friendly one, could be trusted. The controversial nature of Indian scouts, however, did not lead to the eventual curtailment of their activities. Only with the advent of permanent peace in the Southwest did Indians as trailers and fighters become unnecessary.

In comparison to the limited number of civilians available for employment as scouts, the Indian auxiliaries benefitted the Army to a greater extent, yet how many people today could name a well-known Indian guide or trailer? If asked to name a famous Army scout, most people would respond with the name of Kit Carson or William F. Cody. Writers of fiction have romanticized the civilian guide while portraying the Indian tracker as a silent, inconspicuous figure in the background.

Much of the notoriety of the civilian scouts has come through their own writings. Motivated by a desire to share their experiences through a need to earn money, a sense of their participation in history, or just simple human conceit, many former guides and trailers published their memoirs. One can accept most of these accounts as being honest, but a minority did exaggerate their importance or make some false claims. In his autobiography, Tom Horn emerges as a chief figure in the efforts to persuade Geronimo to surrender
to General Nelson A. Miles, when in fact, Horn acted as an interpreter for Charles Gatewood's delegation to the Apaches.\textsuperscript{3} William F. Drannan claimed to have been a chief of scouts for George Crook in Arizona during a period in the 1870's when the general was actually campaigning against the Sioux in the Wyoming and Dakota territories.\textsuperscript{4}

Being uneducated, the Indian scouts did not record their experiences and impressions of Army life. Much of what is known about them comes from Army records and the writings of officers and civilians who had personal acquaintance with the activities of the Indian auxiliaries. Perhaps best known among this group of writers is John G. Bourke, who provided valuable information about George Crook and the Indians who served under the general. In recent years, historians, anthropologists, and journalists such as Eve Ball, Grenville Goodwin, and Dan Thrapp have preserved fragments of the scouts' stories through research.


\textsuperscript{4}William F. Drannan, \textit{Thirty-One Years on the Plains and in the Mountains or, the Last Voice From the Plains} (Chicago: Rhodes and McClure Publishing Company, 1908), p. 543.
and interviews with the dwindling number who survived well into the twentieth century.

Multitudinous volumes devoted to the Indian wars in the United States fill private and public bookshelves, but few are devoted exclusively to Army scouts, civilian or native. Voluntarily aiding the Army, and while doing so often forfeiting their lives in the harsh environment of the Southwest against implacable native foes, these men deserve greater recognition than that accorded to them in the past.
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