

INDIAN FIGHTER AND INDIAN FRIEND  
GENERAL GEORGE CROOK 1853-1890

by 1050 710

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## INTRODUCTION

Major General George Crook died unexpectedly of heart failure at the Grand Pacific Hotel in Chicago on March 21, 1890. Ironically, at the time of his death the main thrust of his efforts was a struggle against what he considered to be an injustice to his old adversaries, the Chiricahua Apache. Several of these Indians had been enlisted as scouts by Crook for his expeditions against the hostile Apache bands during his two campaigns in the Department of Arizona, in the 1870s and 1880s. These scouts had been loyal and brave allies; however, the government had removed them from their homes and sent them to Indian Territory along with those who had fought the Army. Crook was involved in a campaign to have his former Apache scouts returned from exile to their homes in Arizona.<sup>1</sup>

It may seem strange that this man who was declared by many as the greatest Indian fighter of all times had spent his last months crusading against the callous treatment of a race he spent most of his military career fighting.<sup>2</sup> Yet this was typical of Crook. This man, who had devoted his life to the protection of the American Frontier, had also displayed a compassion toward Indians that was unique among his peers. Stephen Longstreet, in his book Warcries on Horseback, summarized:

He was a remarkable man of stringent principles, this General Crook, and he has been too easily forgotten. Lesser figures like Custer and Buffalo Bill Cody, have captured the attention of the makers of myths who seem impervious to the reality.<sup>3</sup>

The purpose of this paper is to re-examine the obscure and often maligned soldier, General George Crook, in order to place him in his proper place in the history of the American West. It attempts to reveal Crook's attitudes and to bring attention to the fact that, unlike most of his contemporaries, he was not interested in merely defeating the Indians, but also in saving their race from humiliation and destruction. Crook considered the Indians human beings as well as his enemies. This approach to the Indian problem differed from the prevailing mood in the nation and is worthy of note.

It has been stated and fairly well documented that there was a notable change in Crook's feelings toward the Indians during the later stages of his career.<sup>4</sup> Yet little has been done to examine the reasons why Crook's philosophy changed.

Military leaders during the American Indian Wars were not noted for their benevolent attitudes toward their enemies. Occurrences such as the Sand Creek Massacre and the Battle of the Washita are evidence of the common sentiment among the Indian-fighting Army, as well as the vast majority of western settlers.

On November 29, 1864, Colonel John M. Chivington, commanding elements of the First and Third Regiments of the

Colorado Volunteers, attacked a village of Cheyenne and Arapaho situated along Sand Creek in eastern Colorado. Under the leadership of Chief Black Kettle, these Indians were flying an American flag over their encampment and assumed they were safe under the jurisdiction of Fort Lyon, Colorado.<sup>5</sup> Chivington encouraged his troops to kill women and children as well as warriors. Torture and mutilations were numerous. Chivington scorned the Indians and "believed it to be right and honorable to use any means under God's heaven to kill Indians that would kill women and children and damn any man that was in sympathy with Indians."<sup>6</sup>

In late November, 1868, George Armstrong Custer led eleven companies of the Seventh Cavalry and elements of the Nineteenth Kansas Volunteers against the Southern Cheyenne village of the same Black Kettle, who a few years before had escaped death at Sand Creek. This time, however, the Chief along with numerous women, children, and warriors died along the Washita River in southwestern Indian Territory. This battle gained the Seventh Cavalry Regiment and its commander a reputation for Indian fighting. As well as being examples of the common attitude toward the Indians, these incidents caused irreparable damage to relations between the U.S. Government and the Plains Indians.

It was not only at the level of the field commander that an attitude of "Social Darwinism" toward the Indians prevailed. General William T. Sherman, commander of the

Division of the Missouri, also held such views. In 1868 he stated: "We have now selected and provided reservations for all, off the great road. All who cling to their old hunting grounds are hostile and will remain so till killed off."<sup>7</sup> Sherman was even more direct in a letter to his brother John, a United States Senator from Ohio:

The more we can kill this year, the less will have to be killed the next war, for the more I see of these Indians the more convinced I am that all have to be killed or maintained as a species of pauper. Their attempts at civilization are simply ridiculous.<sup>8</sup>

These views were dramatically opposed to those of Crook. He felt that to reduce the Indians to wards of the U.S. Government was the wrong approach. He established a successful system of farming and cattle raising among the Apache and purchased their products to provide for his army.<sup>9</sup>

There have been eight books, and several articles, written about General Crook. He was not a brazenly reckless campaigner like the ill-fated Custer, nor was he a gaudy showman in the mold of Cody. He was unflamboyant and not involved in any singularly spectacular battles such as the one on the Little Big Horn River; therefore, he has not warranted a "textbook image" in our public schools.

Crook was born September 8, 1828, to Thomas and Elizabeth Matthews Crook, on a farm near Taylorsville, Ohio. George was one of ten children born to this pioneer family who had moved from Maryland to Ohio in 1814 shortly

after his father had been discharged from the War of 1812. The Crooks were temperate and industrious, and from them George and the other children learned the value of knowledge. In an era when such was rare, four of his brothers graduated from college and became professional men.<sup>10</sup> It appeared as though young George would follow in his father's footsteps as a farmer until Ohio Representative Robert P. Schenck appointed him to the United States Military Academy in 1848.

Cadet Crook did not offer his classmates much intellectual competition, finishing thirty-eighth in a class of forty-three. His conduct and self-discipline were his strong points at the Academy, and he was consistently ranked in the upper half of his class in these areas.<sup>11</sup> It is obvious that, although Crook was only an average student in the academic environment, he was strides ahead of all of his classmates when actually in the field. There were seven graduates of the 1852 West Point class who became general officers in the Army of the United States. Of these seven, only one other besides Crook reached the rank of major general. Alexander McDowell McCook was promoted to brigadier general in 1890, and major general in 1894.<sup>12</sup> These promotions were seventeen and six years, respectively, behind Crook.

With the exception of the years spent in the Union Army during the Civil War (1861-1866), General Crook spent his entire career in the American West. In addition to

being a brilliant tactician and leader of men, he was respected by the Indians for his truthfulness and fairness.

When he made a promise to Indians, it was to fulfill it. When he waged war against them, it was not to exterminate, but to compel obedience and bring peace. Instead of making Indians his enemies, he made them his friends.<sup>13</sup>

Hostile tribes of Indians were the greatest obstacle to settlement and development of the Trans-Mississippi West. George Crook, called "The Gray Wolf" by the Apache, was more instrumental than any other general in subduing these hostile natives.<sup>14</sup>

Crook is best known for his successful campaigns against the American Indians on the Western Frontier from 1866 to 1886. The accounts of his tactical ability and professional competence are well documented. Crook was an innovator, employing highly mobile pack trains, winter campaigns, native informers and native clothing--all of which proved very successful during the Indian Wars.

Probably no other Indian-fighting general enjoyed such successes and yet has been the object of as much criticism as George Crook. His superiors recognized his outstanding abilities as an Indian fighter. Yet they were unsympathetic toward his attempts to rehabilitate the Indians. The press and public were quick to forget his successes and objugate his questionable actions.

Much of the printed praise of Crook came from three persons who were with him during operations. One of his



greatest admirers was Captain John Gregory Bourke, his aide-de-camp and long time intimate. His most famous work on Crook was the lengthy On the Border with Crook. Captain Charles King, also a graduate of the Military Academy, accompanied Crook during the Sioux campaign of 1876. His book, Campaigning with Crook, resulted from this expedition. John F. Finerty, who had a distinguished career as a newspaperman with the Chicago Times, also accompanied Crook on the 1876 campaign against the Sioux. He published an account of it in his War-Path and Bivouac. All three of these men regarded George Crook with the highest esteem as an Indian fighter, professional soldier, and humanitarian.

James T. King has criticized Bourke's writings as "Idol Worship."<sup>15</sup> King also stated that Frank Dobie, in his introduction to Bourke's An Apache Campaign in the Sierra Madre, was too generous to Bourke and too credulous of his admiration for Crook. However, there is validity in what Dobie said, and it is worth quoting:

You can always judge a man by what he admires. Bourke admired General Crook enormously and must have been distinctly influenced by him. Crook was about the only Indian-fighting general of the West worthy of admiration. Self-righteous O. O. Howard, glory-seeking Custer, Chivington who was only a colonel but who excelled in pretenses to piety and in brutalizing, puffed-up Miles, who betrayed good Apaches and Crook both and who lied to the nation--these and some others of their kind seem trivial and base compared to Crook, who was noble and who looms noble in Bourke's book.<sup>16</sup>

This thesis also examines the years Crook spent

in the Civil War in an attempt to gain some insight into his attitude toward the Indians. It has not been established that Crook's approach to Indian fighting was cruel or ruthless prior to his entry into the Civil War nor that it changed dramatically after the war. As a junior officer, he spent little time considering Indians as other than opponents on the field of battle. He had a mission to subdue hostile Indians in his area of operations, and as a true professional he set about his duties with all available knowledge and skill.



General Crook  
in  
Full Dress Uniform

## CHAPTER I

### THE EARLY YEARS AND THE CIVIL WAR

The relentless westward expansion of the United States produced inevitable conflict between the native Indians and the expanding settlers. From almost the first day Europeans landed on the shores of North America, there was steady pressure against the Indians until all organized resistance ceased with the massacre at Wounded Knee, South Dakota, on December 29, 1890.

The Indian wars fought in the United States were a logical outcome of a clash between two diametrically opposed cultures. The ethnocentric Anglo-Saxon culture with its insatiable appetite for land and mineral wealth had been on a collision course with the red man since 1607. For the most part, Indians were hunters and gatherers and required the freedom to move when necessary, depending upon a good supply of wild game for food. Honor was the most prized possession of the male Indian and was won as a great hunter and warrior. Stealing from an enemy, capturing slaves and livestock (especially horses), and even murder were not looked upon as deeds of wrong-doing among most Indians but rather as great acts of bravery. Naturally, these same acts infuriated white settlers who then clamored for

protection. Nor did the Indians understand the white man's desire for ownership of land. They had no concept of deeds of title or permanent ownership. They would gladly accept the items offered by a treaty but fully expected to be able to use the land if they felt like it. Of course, the settlers and governments considered this a violation of the treaty agreements. The Indians were not without blame for other treaty violations as well. Many of them did not accept the treaty arrangements their chiefs and tribal councils made with the whites. The political and social organization of the Indian tribes allowed the individual much freedom over the group.<sup>1</sup> When a warrior disagreed with his tribe or chief, he often acted independently without punishment. This autonomy also extended into battle. Most warriors had a sacred talisman or omen which they felt gave them superior power and skill on the battlefield. If, for some reason, this omen was bad on a given day the warrior simply did not join the battle. No ridicule or punishment of any type followed this refusal.

The tide of western settlement continued to create additional problems for both whites and Indians. Treaties became outdated or were ignored (often by both sides). The government maintained a flexible Indian policy and changed it according to political pressures. The Indian policies of the United States were grounded on extermination, removal, separation, or any combination of the three. The earliest

white arrivals to the New World tolerated the natives out of necessity. Once the Indian's usable knowledge and assistance had been gleaned however, they were no longer useful and, in fact, were considered a nuisance. Many tribes of Indians were deliberately crushed until certain groups were classed as the "Vanishing American." The tide of immigration was so rapid that extermination became impractical and a series of containment policies was initiated.<sup>2</sup>

In 1825, Indian Territory was established and used to relocate those tribes removed from the East under the policy of removal. A permanent Indian Frontier was established in 1830, during the administration of Andrew Jackson. As white civilization continued to push westward, this "frontier" became a hindrance, so a reservation system was established in 1850.

In the beginning, the reservations were established as near the Indians' home territories as possible, and they were fairly adequate. As settlement in and around these areas increased, however, there were many complaints that Indians occupied much of the prime land. Political pressures put the wheels of government into motion, and the size and shape of many reservations were changed. In some cases the reservations were completely relocated. Much of the new land was poor, the water was bad, and the climate much different than in the earlier home. Soon the wild game was gone and the Indians, as yet unacquainted with farming for

a livelihood, were completely dependent upon the government for food.

Originally, the War Department had the responsibility for the administration of the Indian affairs as well as for enforcing the policies of the government. The Army's basic policy called for total military victory over the Indians, followed by their containment on a reservation and subjugation as government wards. In 1849, the War Department relinquished much of the Indian problem to the Department of Interior. This department's basic policy was to confine all Indians to reservations separating them from the white men. They believed that the Indians could be coaxed and educated into civilization so that they could begin earning an "honest" living.<sup>3</sup> This shift from the War Department to the Department of Interior represented a decision that the Indians were no longer considered as foreign peoples, but rather as domestic insurrectionaries. Once reservations were established, all Indians not physically on the reservations were considered hostile.

After the containment system was adopted, greed and mismanagement on the part of some Indian agents and other government officials aggravated the poor conditions found on the reservations. Rather than slowly starve to death or die of disease, the Indians often left their confines. Sometimes these "hostile" bands left on the warpath, but more often they were searching for better living conditions.

Such bands often stole horses and raided nearby farms and settlements for food and supplies. Naturally, the settlers responded in alarm and took defensive measures which often resulted in bloodshed for both races. As the proportions of the situation grew, the Army moved in to represent the federal government. The Indians were usually brought back to the reservation, and the cycle began again. With a seemingly unending stream of wagons, settlers, miners, and soldiers moving into, through, and around the reservations, the Indians' position was weakened even further. Buffalo and other wild game were shot or driven away. Whisky was easy to obtain. Venereal disease and other white man's sicknesses took a terrible toll. War parties became larger and more desperate. War lost its role as a path to glory, and was no longer a deadly game. It became the Indians' only hope for freedom and return to the "old life," but in reality it became the path to defeat and sorrow.<sup>4</sup>

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Following his graduation in 1852, Crook was assigned to the Fourth Infantry, stationed in California. There were three major factors which directly influenced Crook's attitude and mission accomplishment when he began his career as an Indian fighter.

First were his personality traits and leadership qualities. Crook was both morally and physically fearless, and accepted responsibility, hardship, and personal danger



as part of his chosen profession. He was cautious of speech and a good listener. Modest and retiring almost to the point of shyness, he had a sympathetic and kindly disposition and was easy to approach. He shunned profanity, did not use tobacco, and rarely drank intoxicating liquors.<sup>5</sup> Crook was an officer who shared the hardships and dangers of army life with his men; and, although a stern disciplinarian, he was honest and fair with everyone.

While many officers and men manning the frontier posts were unhappy with their assignment, Crook viewed it as an interesting and challenging opportunity. Martin Schmitt, in his preface to Crook's autobiography, emphasized this difference between Crook and most of the frontier soldiers:

To the discerning, however, the frontier assignments offered a challenge beyond Indian fighting. The Indian was, to a few, not merely a nuisance to be eradicated or an exciting quarry to be run down, but a human being to be understood, studied and guided.<sup>6</sup>

Also unlike many of his contemporaries, Crook was not interested in using the battlefield as a stepping stone into politics, rather he was totally dedicated to the military profession.<sup>7</sup>

The second major influence on Crook's conduct of the Indian campaigns was the attitude of the United States Army and of civilians toward their common enemies: the Indians and the Frontier. The normal life of a soldier

serving in a remote frontier post in the 1850s was severe and dangerous. Living conditions at the forts were primitive at best. Barracks were inadequate even by standards of the day, and most married quarters were ramshackle. Troops and their families led a semicloistered life, generally forgotten by the public and nearly shut off from friends, relatives, and the comforts of civilization.<sup>8</sup> The Indians bore the brunt of the frustration and anger felt by the frontier soldier, and became the manifestation of all the causes of discontent. Consequently, the frontier Army was eager to engage the Indians.

Several prominent government leaders and humanitarians in the East had a completely different view of the Indian problem than did the frontier Army, and raised great furor when the Army campaigned against the Indians. Another source of frustration to the Army was that they often found themselves facing hostile Indians who were equipped with weapons superior to the government issue. Thus the soldiers felt they were hindered by popular opinion and handicapped by inferior equipment.<sup>9</sup>

Civilians on the frontier, for the most part, shared the Army's attitude toward the Indians. Often the frontiersmen's feelings were justified, but just as often they were magnified by the intense dislike they held for the Indians. Because Army operations spent federal money, there were suspicions that some Indian troubles were manu-

factured to increase federal bounty in the West.

The vast emptiness and loneliness of the Far West was an additional enemy of the soldiers. Relatively few posts were located near settlements which offered much in the way of recreation and some release from the boredom which prevailed when they were not on patrol. One easy way to escape this nemesis was to numb the senses with alcohol. Drunkenness was a common affliction of both officers and enlisted men. Alcohol-sodden brains coupled with an intense dislike for all Indians resulted in some very serious and nasty situations.

Crook was a young, eager, and impressionable lieutenant when he reached the frontier. His first contacts with the Army were disillusioning. The quality of officers and men serving in the frontier posts was questionable. Soldiers and civilians alike were for the most part brutal in their treatment of the Indians. Crook was often frustrated by his inept and drunken commanders and the popular attitude that ". . . the only good Indian is a dead Indian."<sup>10</sup>

Naturally, the tactics used against the Indians evolved from this attitude, and Crook initially was taught that total destruction of the Indian was the correct method of waging war against them. There is no conclusive evidence available, however, to indicate that Crook fully accepted this advice and engaged in the wholesale slaughter of Indians as did some of his contemporaries.

The nature of the enemy was the third factor influencing Crook's methods. Contrary to most popular beliefs, the Indians had highly developed societies with rigidly enforced laws and high moral and family values. Although not usually Christian, they were deeply religious. They lived in close harmony with nature, and for survival, depended heavily on the freedom to hunt and move their villages whenever and wherever they chose. The prevalent attitude of the white was to expect the Indian to adapt to his society. The white man's ways were alien and hard for the Indians to understand.

War for an Indian was an art rather than a science as it was for the white man. There was much more glory in counting coup, or touching a live enemy, than in killing him. During the course of a battle, the Indians gave no thought to intricate fire and maneuver, or to the possession of terrain. Small, highly mobile war parties fighting only when they felt they possessed a tactical advantage characterized Indian warfare. The warriors were superb horsemen who took full advantage of the horses' speed and protection. Indian military leadership positions were held by great warriors who had proven their courage and skill in battle. Personal charisma was their only leadership tool, as there was no type of punishment available to them. Because of the Indians' speed and mobility and lack of adequate supplies of ammunition, intense battles were seldom fought. Rarely

would the tribes be together in such groups as to give them numerical advantage over the Army, and almost never would the Indians attack unless they enjoyed either this advantage in numbers or the element of surprise.

The normal life led by the natives was the perfect molding ground for the warriors. They were tough, independent, physically fit, and able to live in harmony with their environment. From birth an Indian boy was trained to be a warrior. His entire life style was centered on the battlefield.<sup>11</sup>

It was into this situation that the young Lieutenant George Crook was placed. The United States government was concerned primarily with disposing of the public domain, the economic progress of the country, and other foreign and domestic problems.<sup>12</sup> The Indians had little commercial value and their future was placed in the hands of an inept and corrupt government agency.

Crook's first assignments on the Pacific Coast did not gain him much experience as an Indian fighter. Benicia Barracks was generally a supply installation and surrounded by relatively heavy white population. Crook later spent short periods of time at Forts Lane, Humboldt, and Jones. Official reports show that the Indian population in the vicinity of these posts was not large, and they were fairly peaceful.<sup>13</sup> His first battles were small, meeting engagements with little fighting.



There has often been criticism of the fact that Crook usually destroyed the villages when he attacked. This was not a needless act but rather a tactical one. Crook knew that the Indians' survival during the winter depended upon their ability to gather and store food supplies during the summer. If he could destroy their existing supplies and keep them busy preparing for winter, they would be less able to fight. Additionally, there is no evidence that the troops under Crook's command indulged in indiscriminate killing of women and children.

During the period 1861 to 1866, Crook was absent from the frontier while he participated in the Civil War. Up to that time, he had spent nearly eight years participating in Indian campaigns. To that point his success had been limited and he was generally in subordinate positions.

Crook's first Civil War assignment was as a captain in a Regular unit; however, he chose to take service in the volunteers instead. The probable explanation for this was the possibility of achieving rank at a faster rate than by remaining with the Regulars.<sup>14</sup> Crook moved through various command positions, progressing from regimental commander to corps commander during the course of the war. He successfully led his troops through many battles including the major conflicts at Antietam and Chickamauga.

It was evident from the tone of his autobiography when he recalled the Civil War that there was a great deal



of conflict and resentment between Crook and his various commanders. In the early stages of the war, Crook served under Brigadier General Jacob D. Cox and held him in low esteem. His dislike for Cox probably stemmed from a feeling of contempt for senior commanders who did not possess a military background. Cox, for example, was a Senator from Ohio who entered the Army as a general officer with the Ohio Volunteers in 1861.<sup>15</sup> Crook also developed a strong dislike for General Philip Sheridan. The conflict between these two officers continued throughout their post-war careers, and was instrumental in Crook's dismissal in 1886.

While Crook had little affection for his commanders, he was complimentary of his troops, a feeling which was reciprocal. Two future presidents, Rutherford B. Hayes and William McKinley, served for Crook during the war. Both of them held him in high regard, and Hayes was especially complimentary of Crook.<sup>16</sup>

Crook was promoted to major general of volunteers in October, 1864. At the end of the war, he was a cavalry division commander in the Army of the Potomac. On January 22, 1866, he was mustered out of the volunteers and was appointed a lieutenant colonel in command of the Twenty-third Infantry Regiment assigned to the District of Boise, Idaho.

The study of Crook's Civil War years does not provide a direct insight into the influence of that conflict on his later career. Crook's attitude toward these years



was likely influenced by his reduction in rank at the close of the war. Sheridan had finished West Point a year later than Crook, yet he had ended the war as a major general.

The Civil War did not noticeably change George Crook as a soldier or a man. He entered the war a tough-minded, courageous, and clear thinking professional who was dedicated to his missions, and expected all other officers to perform in a like manner. When he emerged from the war, he retained these characteristics but developed an attitude of resentment toward the officers corps in general. Perhaps the tremendous carnage and suffering he had witnessed at places like Antietam and Chickamauga had increased his compassion for his fellow man and caused him to treat his future enemies more humanely. Perhaps the wisdom and benevolence which often accompanies maturity shaped his attitudes.

George Crook was well equipped for his later successes on the frontier. His antipathy for senior officers certainly inclined him toward isolation and freedom of action in the West, and his character traits and professional dedication enabled him to operate with minimum guidance in a harsh and hostile environment.



General Crook

about

1865

## CHAPTER II

### RETURN TO THE FRONTIER AND THE PAIUTE WAR

In November, 1866, Crook was ordered to the West, this time as commander of the District of Idaho, Department of Columbia, Division of the Pacific. The most serious threat the Army faced following the war was from the Indians in the West. The Indian problem after 1865 differed considerably from that before the war.

During the time the massive armies of the Union and Confederacy were battling each other, the Indians were unchecked in the West. Naturally, as troops were siphoned off the frontier to the Eastern fronts, the Indians had much less pressure on them and they were much bolder in their actions. While the Indians did not make spectacular gains in numerical strength, they were able to nullify most of the accomplishments the Army made between 1848 and 1861 with regard to safety in the West. With most of the Regular units gone from the frontier, the settlements of the Plains and mountain West had to rely on volunteer units for protection.<sup>1</sup> An additional problem or handicap was the attitude of the federal government and the public toward maintaining an army. They refused to consider the Indian problem seriously. In his 1866 State of the Union message,

President Johnson stated that the Indians who had renewed their opposition to white expansion in the West during the Army's absence from the frontier had unconditionally submitted to the government's demands and maintained an earnest desire for peace.<sup>2</sup> Nothing could have been further from the truth. The Indians who roamed the plains at this time were far from docile. They numbered approximately 178,000, which meant there were an estimated 71,000 males capable of bearing arms.<sup>3</sup> By 1869, the Army had been reduced from the Civil War levels to 25,000 men, and of that total there were approximately 1,200 cavalry and 1,400 infantry troops on frontier duty.<sup>4</sup> This was a larger army, however, than was available during the pre-war period.

Except for minor small arms and tactical and equipment improvements, the Army was left to win the Indian Wars in much the same condition as it emerged from the Civil War.<sup>5</sup> Troop strengths and appropriations were reduced and the number of command positions was decreased, creating fierce competition among ambitious officers. Since an important stepping stone to success in those times was an impressive record of Indian-fighting, within the Army there was a great surge of officers seeking combat assignments to the frontier even though this type of duty was normally considered odious. Although most of these officers had been relatively successful commanders in the Civil War, they were now facing a completely different type of enemy.

Those generals who were engaged against Indians during the Civil War were no longer in command positions in the post-war period. As a whole, the officers who were to move into the prominent positions during the Indian Wars had very little frontier experience. In addition to their inexperience at counter-guerrilla warfare, many of these officers were overly eager to engage the Indians just to compile a record, and most of them considered the Indians little more than filthy savages.<sup>6</sup>

The post-Civil War Army was under constant pressure from the guerrilla-like tactics employed by the Indians. The typical officer in the West had been schooled in classic European tactics and "blooded" in the Civil War using such tactics. Massed armies, with the infantry conducting frontal attacks and bayonet charges or defending fortified positions, were common during the Rebellion. Both offensive and defensive tactics were supported by massed cannons. Cavalry was used to locate the enemy, then report his position and occasionally used in the attack. The Indians of the West, however, had a different concept of warfare. Their normal tactic was to operate in small mobile war parties, raiding and harassing, but seldom massing to fight a pitched battle. These groups of warriors conducted lightning-fast attacks often many miles apart on the same day. They fought only when the situation suited them; for, unlike most whites, they felt it was foolish rather than courageous to fight

against superior numbers. Also, a limited supply of ammunition hindered the Indians when conducting protracted battles. In the Plains Indians, the Army confronted what has been called "the world's finest light cavalry."<sup>7</sup> These warriors, on their fleet war ponies, were elusive and difficult to pin down. They were masters at raids and ambushes. The Apache of the Southwest did not use horses in battle, however, they were in complete concert with their harsh and rugged surroundings, and the heavily equipped and slow moving Army troops could not penetrate their strongholds or surprise them.<sup>8</sup>

Another factor which made the Indians difficult to combat was the incredible mobility of their villages. In a matter of minutes, an entire village could go from inactivity to complete mobility and be on the march.<sup>9</sup> A resupply of rations for the people was unnecessary, and their hardy ponies thrived on the short native grasses, never having eaten corn.

The major weakness in the Indians' ability to protract war was that they were not capable of conducting their operations in the winter. This season became one of survival for the Indians. They had to live off the rations stockpiled and prepared in the summer. Their war ponies became weak and scrawny in the winter, due to a lack of forage.

Most Army leaders were unable to make the changes necessary to conduct effective operations against these

highly mobile natives. Whether they were mentally incapable of adjusting or not willing to make the necessary changes is unclear. For the most part, they clung almost frantically to large unit movements and attempted to conduct massed frontal attacks, only to find that in many cases the enemy had merely moved to the next position just out of the range of the Army weapons.

After a few years of conducting operations against the Indians, some of the leaders became relatively skilled at counter-guerrilla operations. George Crook became the most skilled leader in the West. He studied the tactics, religion and life style of the Indians and began to anticipate their actions. He was an innovator in tactics, and he refined and perfected methods that others had used. His first realization was that the United States Army was not equipped, trained, or mentally and physically prepared to meet the Indians on their own terms. His idea was that:

The white Army of the United States is a much better body of officers and men than a critical and censorious public gives it credit for being. It represents intelligence of a high order, and a spirit of duty worthy of unbounded praise; but it does not represent the acuteness of the savage races. It cannot follow the trail like a dog on the scent. It may be brave and well-disciplined, but its members cannot tramp or ride, as the case may be, from forty to seventy five miles in a day, without water, under a burning sun. No civilized Army can do that. It is one of the defects of civilized training that man develops new wants, awakens new necessities,-- becomes in a word, more and more a creature of luxury.<sup>10</sup>

As a result of this belief, Crook became the leading exponent

of enlisting natives to fight against their own kind. He made extensive use of this concept during both campaigns against the Apache and had over two hundred Crow and Shoshone allies during the Sioux Campaign of 1876.<sup>11</sup>

Crook's second axiom was to emphasize mobility. Good horses were the pride of every Army officer especially the cavalrymen. One of Crook's virtues, however, was that he was not vain, especially when it came to choosing his mounts. He had a fondness for mules both as pack animals and for riding on campaigns. His favorite was a mule named Apache which he rode at the head of his column.<sup>12</sup>

During the Bighorn and Yellowstone Expedition of 1876, Crook mounted his infantry on mules to give them extra mobility.<sup>13</sup> Another of Crook's specialties was the use of well-trained, highly-mobile mule pack trains. By disposing of the normal heavily-loaded and slow-moving Army supply wagons, Crook was able, to a degree, to match the speed of the elusive Indians.

By dropping the supply wagons from his column, Crook also did away with many of the accouterments of luxury which were burdensome. He set the example and was such a hardened campaigner that he afforded himself no comfort not possessed by the common soldier.

An example of this was the comparison Bill Cody made of Crook's and General Alfred Terry's camps during the summer of 1876:



General Terry had his wagon train with him, and everything to make life comfortable on an Indian campaign. He had large wall tents and portable beds to sleep in, and large hospital tents for dining rooms. His camp looked very comfortable and attractive, and presented a great contrast to that of General Crook, who had for his headquarters only one small fly tent; and whose cooking utensils consisted of a quart cup--in which he boiled his coffee himself--and a stick, upon which he broiled his bacon. When I compared the two corps, I came to the conclusion that General Crook was an Indian fighter; for it was evident that he had learned that to follow and fight Indians, a body of men must travel lightly and not be detained<sup>14</sup> by a wagon train or heavy luggage of any kind.

Crook, like all the other officers, was smarting at his reduction in grade. His sense of duty and his compassion were what set him apart from his contemporaries. When he returned to the West, his ambitions were to clear up the Indian problems and offer protection to the settlers in the most expeditious and efficient manner. He did not undertake this mission with a feeling of superiority over the Indians, either as a man or as a soldier. Crook respected them as human beings and knew they were worthy opponents. As seen in his writings, the only feeling of vindictiveness Crook felt was toward the hierarchy of the Army.

There have been charges that Crook was a "publicity hound," who attempted to keep himself surrounded with newspapermen and literary lackeys in order to improve his own image and position.<sup>15</sup> Whether it was fate or design that brought these people of literary talent to Crook is a good

question. It was most probably fate that John Gregory Bourke was assigned to Crook's headquarters in the Department of Arizona early in the fall of 1871.<sup>16</sup> Bourke did not have a reputation at that time as a writer. His first published work appeared in 1874; and not until a year after Crook's death, in 1890, was the famous On the Border with Crook published.

Similarly, Charles King was a first lieutenant in Company "K" of the Fifth Cavalry Regiment, which was stationed at Fort Riley, Kansas, in June, 1876. General Sheridan ordered this regiment to join Crook's command for the upcoming Big Horn and Yellowstone Campaign. King's account of this expedition was also published in 1890.<sup>17</sup>

Robert E. Strahorn, war correspondent for the New York Times, Chicago Tribune, and Rocky Mountain News of Denver, and John F. Finerty, war correspondent for the Chicago Times, both accompanied Crook's column during the summer of 1876. It was, however, a common practice for correspondents to travel with military units in those times, just as was the case later. It is no surprise that they chose to follow Crook during the expedition, rather than Custer or Terry, as he had the reputation of being the most proficient among the Indian fighting generals.<sup>18</sup>

These four men--Bourke, King, Strahorn, and Finerty--had a common talent for writing and the good fortune to become familiar with General Crook and his actions. It



is unjust to suggest that Crook arranged to have them accompany him. Such correspondents, in any case had much action to cover, and Crook did not disappoint them.

During the period 1861-1866, the Northern Paiutes had taken advantage of the absence of troops and aggressively attacked miners and settlers around the mineral discoveries in southwestern Idaho and southeastern Oregon. These Indians, commonly known as the Snakes, caused such difficulty that a unit of Oregon and Nevada Volunteers was organized and conducted operations against the Indians from 1864 to 1866. The volunteer units were unsuccessful and initially, so were the Regular units which replaced them. The District of Idaho had been commanded by Colonel L. H. Marshall who had failed in his mission, and the citizens of the area were extremely agitated with the Army's incompetency.<sup>19</sup>

Crook's arrival in Idaho in December, 1866, was unheralded for he was not yet identified as a great Indian fighter or as a "comer" in the Army ranks. However, he had emerged from the war as a recognized cavalry leader, and any leader was welcomed over the incumbent. Crook found his command lethargic and stalemated and soon assigned the reason to the previous commander. He stated in his autobiography:

There was much dissipation amongst a good many officers, and there seemed to be a general apathy amongst them, and indifference to the proper discharge of duty.<sup>20</sup>

As a strict disciplinarian, Crook would not tolerate such

performance from an Army unit. His pride and professionalism would not allow him to permit the continuing Indian depredations, and so he immediately began to correct both situations. His previous Indian-fighting experience provided him with a starting point, and he added to his knowledge by intently studying the habits and psychology of the Paiutes. Soon he perceived the special conditions of this situation and began developing tactics for combating them.<sup>21</sup>

He wasted no time in shocking his troops out of their stupor with a series of patrols against the marauding Paiutes through the bitter winter storms, aggressively pursuing them after each attack they made. He fired the ineffective civilian scouts and hired Archie McIntosh, who was loyal and extremely capable.<sup>22</sup> For the next two years, Crook stormed through the country of the Paiute and Pit Indians. In a series of rapid campaigns, he instilled purpose and vigor in the troops, always leading the way, exhibiting the perfect picture of leadership. He drove his troops and himself with a passion. It was as though he continually felt the sting of his reduction in rank. Crook was ruthless in his pursuit of these Indians; however, his insistence on honest and humane treatment of them was almost an obsession.<sup>23</sup>

By mid-1868, the Paiutes could no longer resist the relentless pressure of the Army; and their Chief, Weawea,

met Crook at Fort Harney, Idaho, on July 1, to discuss the terms of surrender. Uncharacteristically, Crook donned his seldom used full dress uniform for the occasion. He was blunt and curt with the Chief, as was his manner in all negotiations with Indians, and he expressed a great reluctance to stop fighting. He told the Indians that he had hoped they would continue fighting because his fallen soldiers were easily replaced, but new warriors were available only as their children grew into men, and for that reason he could have easily destroyed them and ended the government's trouble. His understanding of the Indians' mind allowed Crook to take this approach in his negotiations. He knew a show of force and courage were much more impressive to the Indians than a mild and courteous manner. This anticipation of the response of the Paiutes led to terms of surrender which effectively ended hostilities with that tribe.<sup>24</sup>

The unorthodox tactics and the relentless campaigning by General Crook were highly effective in ending the Paiute problems. General Henry Halleck, then commanding the Division of the Pacific, was impressed with Crook and so happy to have the civilians in that area placated that he rewarded Crook with the command of the Department of the Columbia, even though he was a junior lieutenant colonel.

This was a great achievement for Crook, as this giant department encompassed the State of Oregon and the

territories of Washington and Idaho, some 275,000 square miles. Within the boundaries of this area were 130,000 whites, and 35,000 Indians. Crook had under his command twenty companies of infantry and cavalry combined, scattered throughout fifteen posts. Halleck's successors, Generals George H. Thomas and John M. Schofield, were also appreciative of Crook's actions.<sup>25</sup> Not only had his immediate commanders realized his potential, but the War Department also marked Crook for positions of paramount importance within the disappointingly mediocre, Indian-fighting Army.

In June, 1871, Crook was sent to command the Department of Arizona with headquarters at Tucson. His star had been launched, and he was riding on a wave of popularity. The Army had serious Indian problems in the mountains and deserts of the Southwest, and its hopes rode with Crook. It was a fitting test for the Army's latest hero, as his adversaries were to be the wily and ferocious Apache who were veterans of over 250 years of guerrilla warfare and had resisted the efforts of both the Mexican and American armies to subdue them.

## CHAPTER III

### FIRST APACHE CAMPAIGN

The public clamor for forceful subjugation of the Indian tribes and a personal interest in Indian reform were the basis of President U. S. Grant's new Peace Policy of 1869, sometimes referred to as Grant's Quaker Policy.<sup>1</sup> This policy ended the treaty system. Natives were treated as wards of the government rather than as members of sovereign nations, and a reservation system was organized for controlling the Indians.<sup>2</sup> The objective of this policy was "to civilize and Christianize the degraded, backward red, infidels instead of exterminating them by the simpler means of starvation and warfare."<sup>3</sup> Grant belatedly favored a policy such as his peace proposal. As acting Secretary of War in 1867, he reported to President Johnson that the Apache were the most hostile of American Indians and that they would observe no treaties or agreements. He recommended that the government make war on these Indians until they were destroyed or detained as prisoners of war.<sup>4</sup>

Throughout the turbulent history of Indian-white relations, there was persistent inconsistency in the policies established by the government. This lack of firm and fair dealings with the Indians had caused a very serious condition



to develop in southern Arizona and New Mexico, where the war-like Apache raided and plundered, almost with impunity. Additionally, dishonest Indian agents, swindling contractors, encroaching settlers and miners, and self-centered military officers all contributed to the chaotic situation.<sup>5</sup>

In all parts of the country, except the Southwest, Grant's policy was viewed as the panacea for Indian problems. In that section of the country, the Apache were considered as little more than wild animals, and the white citizens had a strong dislike for them. Additionally, the Army was having an extremely difficult time with the Apache in both Arizona and New Mexico, and most commanders considered it a waste of manpower and money to continue operations there. In fact, in January, 1870, General Sherman, in a letter to Secretary of War William W. Belknap, stated: "The best advice I can offer is to notify the settlers to withdraw and then to withdraw the troops and leave the country to the aboriginal inhabitants."<sup>6</sup>

General George Stoneman, the commander of the Department of Arizona, felt that the Apache could be controlled and contained by judicious allocation of food-stuffs to the Apache. He recommended that all Apache who surrendered be fed and protected, and that those who did not, be treated as hostiles.

Stoneman's policy was as unpopular with the white citizens of Arizona as was Grant's Peace Policy; they were

both considered too lenient, as neither method stopped the Apache attacks. The local newspapers, with the full support of the populace, made Stoneman and the Army the object of a series of bitter and scathing attacks for not controlling the Apache. The roots of the problem lay in a long history of warfare that was perpetrated by a few Indians who felt that there could be no compromise with the whites and a group of whites who realized profit from the conflicts. In Tucson, there was a large group of merchants and other citizens whose livelihood depended upon poor Indian-white relations. This group, known as the "Tucson Ring," made considerable profits by providing supplies and other services to the Army troops stationed in Arizona. They feared that if peace should come to the Department of Arizona, the troops would be withdrawn and their own incomes curtailed. This group controlled nearly all the commercial enterprises in the territory and made it their business to create and maintain friction between the Apache and the whites.

The Army continued its attempts to control the Indians, although it had little success. However, in February, 1871, an Apache chief called Eskiminzin brought his small band to the vicinity of Camp Grant, as he was tired of running from the Army and he had heard that Lieutenant Royal E. Whitman was friendly and would be sympathetic to them. He stated that he wanted to make a lasting peace and

requested permission for his group to settle along Aravaipa Creek. Whitman did not have the authority to grant this request. However, he told the Chief he would permit them to camp in peace near the fort if the Indians surrendered their weapons. These Indians, as well as other bands, had been lured into the vicinity of Army posts by General Stoneman's policy.

Other Apache bands continued to raid throughout the territory near Tucson and Tubac. The settlers became more frantic with each raid and blamed them on the nearest source of Indians, those encamped along the Aravaipa. General Stoneman was short of troops and told the people of Tucson they would have to defend themselves. This was all the leeway the militant leaders of the Ring needed, and on April 30, 1871, William S. Oury led six other white men from Tucson, forty-two Mexicans and ninety-two Papago Indian warriors on a raid of the village of Eskiminzin. The conduct of the raid with its slaughter of men, women, and children placed it along side the infamous massacres at Sand Creek and Washita.

Eskiminzin escaped this tragedy. His fragile attempt at peace had been shattered and he left the bodies of freighters, miners, and settlers in the wake of his flight to the wilderness. The Camp Grant Massacre brought furious reaction from humanitarian factions throughout the nation.

The Governor of the Territory of Arizona, A. P. K. Safford, wanted Crook to take charge of the operations

against the Apache. He convinced friends of his in the United States Senate to help him urge President Grant to assign Crook to Arizona. Grant promised to consider the proposal, but Secretary Belknap and General William T. Sherman were opposed because they felt it unfair to many officers who were senior to Crook.<sup>7</sup>

President Grant recalled General Stoneman and, overruling the objections of Secretary Belknap and General Sherman, replaced him with Lieutenant Colonel George Crook. Crook was now on his way to becoming a general by virtue of the fact that he had jumped over several lieutenant colonels and all colonels claiming the rare opportunity to obtain a command position. The brevet promotion added fuel to one of the bitterest feuds in the Army, that between Nelson A. Miles and George Crook. Miles took the 1871 promotion of Crook extremely hard and complained to General Sherman about it. Miles had seniority over Crook as a lieutenant colonel, and felt that Grant had shown favoritism to Crook because he was a West Pointer.<sup>8</sup>

Crook did not want the position in Arizona. Yet upon receiving his assignment instructions, his sole purpose became the expeditious accomplishment of his missions. He left San Francisco with only his immediate superiors knowing of his departure. His arrival in Tucson in June, 1871, was a complete surprise for not even the stage driver knew who the plain, quiet passenger was. It was not Crook's style to

surround himself with pomp and parade. "His whole idea of life was to do each duty well, and to let his work speak for itself."<sup>9</sup> Crook spent the first day in Tucson with Governor Safford, and before nightfall, he had sent word for all commanding officers to report to him personally in Tucson, as soon as possible. His second action was to issue orders moving the headquarters of the Department to Prescott, Arizona, from Los Angeles, California, which was some 500 miles away from the Apache problems.<sup>10</sup> Soon the various commanders began to arrive; and Crook met each one individually and held long conferences with them, asking endless questions in an attempt to gain as much insight as possible about the status of supplies, equipment and rations, condition of men, horses and mules, and the location and characteristics of the enemy. From the accounts of his officers and men, he realized that the typical Apache was a great specimen of physical endurance who was completely at home anywhere in his forbidding territory and that, like other Indians, he would fight only when he had the advantage. Crook gained much information without divulging any of his plans. He did have plans, but they were different from what his officers suspected.

Within two weeks after arriving in Arizona, Crook was in the field at the head of five companies of cavalry on what ostensibly was labeled an inspection tour of the department. In reality, it was a shakedown exercise during

which Crook had the opportunity to observe the conduct of his troops in the field and to learn as much as possible about the terrain and his enemy. This field exercise was a series of exhausting marches designed to push his men and animals to the limits of physical and mental endurance. Throughout this punishing experience, Crook was the picture of a seasoned campaigner. He rarely wore a uniform, and in the field he invariably wore a cork helmet and a canvas suit like those used by soldiers on stable duty. He appeared indefatigable, and was always the first man up in the morning. Clad in his canvas and mounted on a sturdy mule, Crook, armed with rifle or shotgun, rode at the head of the column.<sup>11</sup>

During the course of this march, Crook observed everything possible and arrived at several tactical decisions, some of which were unorthodox and all of which were to help achieve success. He first observed that it was folly for his troops to attempt to carry the offensive to the Apache when they lacked the knowledge of the enemies' habits and terrain. Therefore, he concluded:

To fight savages successfully one of two things must be done--either the savages must be divided into hostile bands and made to fight each other, or the civilized soldier must be trained down as closely as possible to the level of the savage.<sup>12</sup>

Crook felt the obvious approach to take was to attempt to create a partial tribal disintegration so that one portion of the tribe was combating the other. From previous

experience, Crook was aware that in view of the extremely rugged terrain occupied by the Apache, his final defeat or victory would depend upon his transportation system.

Crook created small units of Indian soldiers led by highly skilled and physically capable whites, supported by efficient, self-supporting mobile pack trains, operating in converging columns and maintaining constant pressure of the Apache. He chose mid-November, 1871, for the start of his campaign. This was the beginning of winter, and Crook hoped his strategy would force the hostile bands to retreat into the higher elevations, thus causing them much suffering and discomfort. He believed that relentless pursuit would not allow them to build semipermanent camps and would deny time for rest and gathering food. Faced with such adversity, the Apache were to seek terms of surrender rather than protracted war, thus saving many lives.

Crook's plans were interrupted when, in September, Vincent Colyer, Secretary of the Board of Indian Commissioners, arrived in Arizona. He was armed with authority from President Grant to make peace with the Apache and establish a reservation system for controlling and civilizing them. Crook was disturbed that he had to countermand his orders for the offensive, as he was not in sympathy with Colyer's procedures and did not believe they would be successful for two reasons. First, he felt the Apache could not be subdued without force; second, he felt the people of Arizona would not accept such

methods.<sup>13</sup> Colyer had limited success and most of the bands began to assemble at four reservations he had established. Crook did not openly criticize Colyer; that was accomplished by the citizens of Arizona. Expecting the Peace Policy to fail, he continued to train his troops.

In October, Colyer departed for Washington and shortly thereafter the attacks on freighters, stages, and ranches were resumed. In December, 1871, Crook received orders which put the military back firmly in charge of Indian policy in the Southwest. These orders said, in effect, that Crook was in control of Apacheria (southern and central Arizona and southwestern New Mexico). This policy provided basically that all Apache must return to a reservation and those that did not would be punished as outlaws. Once again Crook began preparations for a campaign against the Apache. He set the date February 15, 1872, as the deadline for all Indians to report to an agency.<sup>14</sup>

On December 5, 1871, the trial was held for the 108 defendants of the Camp Grant Massacre. The civilian jury returned the expected verdict after only a short delay: not guilty. This decision of the court pleased the citizens of Arizona, but it destroyed any remote faith the Apache may have had for justice under the white man's law. As February 16 approached, many Apache were not on the reservations, and once again Crook's well trained



command was poised for the offensive. At the eleventh hour, Washington again sent word to hold and that another proponent of the Peace Party was en route to Arizona. Again Crook delayed taking the field while the list of Indian attacks steadily increased. This time the emissary of peace was General Oliver Otis Howard. Howard had little success in pacifying the Indians; however, he did succeed in allowing the Indians almost another complete year in which to continue their raids and depredations. He also provided Cochise and his band the protection of a treaty, which allowed them to live, unmolested by the Army, off the reservations.

Finally, in November, 1872, Crook's well planned offensive began. He believed that the Indians could be contained in the cold, high country of the Tonto Basin, where a larger and more powerful force could be sent in to subdue them if necessary.<sup>15</sup> Characteristically, Crook gave his troops detailed instructions prior to the start of the campaign as reported by his aide, Captain John Bourke:

Briefly they directed that the Indians should be induced to surrender in all cases where possible; where they preferred to fight, they were to get all the fighting they wanted, and in one good dose instead of in a number of petty engagements, but in either case were to be hunted down until the last one in hostility had been killed or captured. Every effort should be made to avoid killing women and children. Prisoners of either sex should be guarded from ill-treatment of any kind. When prisoners could be induced to enlist as scouts, they



Source: Robert M. Utley, Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indians 1866-1890 (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1973), p. 202.

should be so enlisted, because the wilder the Apache was the more he was likely to know of the wiles and stratagems of those still out in the mountains, their hiding-places and intentions. No excuse was to be accepted for leaving a trail; if horses played out, the enemy must be followed on foot, and no sacrifice should be left untried to make the campaign short, sharp and decisive.<sup>16</sup>

These instructions sounded very demanding. Yet every trooper, officer, or scout who had been on previous exercises with Crook knew they would not be asked to accomplish any task the General himself would or could not perform, and they knew he would be in the vanguard when the enemy was encountered. Crook had nine columns in the field, each hammering at the Apache and slowly, efficiently closing the ring around the bands and pushing them toward the Tonto Basin. On April 6, 1873, Cha-lipun and more than one hundred of his followers surrendered unconditionally to Crook at Camp Verde, Arizona. These Indians represented more than 2,300 hostiles who returned to the reservations.<sup>17</sup> This left only the Chiricahua, under Cochise, living off the reservations.

Crook, the brilliant military leader, had been successful. For the first time in nearly three hundred years there was peace in Apacheria. Crook once again was a hero of the Indian Wars. The War Department, other military headquarters, and newspapers all responded to his success with congratulations. Crook optimistically claimed that his command had "finally closed an Indian War that has been

waged since the days of Cortez."<sup>18</sup> Now Crook the humanitarian began his endeavors to improve the lot of the reservation Apache. He knew it would take time for the Indians to adjust to life on the reservations, so he cautioned the military officers he had put in charge of agencies that the natives:

should not be judged harshly for acts which in the civil codes would constitute minor offenses, but care should also be taken that they do not succeed in deceiving their agents and the officers in matters of greater import, being careful to treat them as children in ignorance, not in innocence.<sup>19</sup>

The General knew the Indians' nature well enough to know that, if they sat idly at the reservation, they would soon grow restless and troubles would begin anew. He began a program of providing the Apache some degree of self-sufficiency. In a letter to his senior headquarters, he outlined his policy:

I earnestly recommend as the great means by which the future of the tribe can be assured, that they be liberally supplied with means to get, as it were a start in their new sphere. I have advised them to turn their attention to stock raising as well as to the cultivation of the soil, and have done all I could to encourage them in making themselves homes and surrounding them with stock--horses, cattle and etc.--and it requires but little knowledge of human nature, whether in white man or Indian to see that when they shall become owners of such homes and property, which war will deprive them of, it will require more than the ordinary inducements heretofore prevailing to induce them to go upon the war path.<sup>20</sup>

While on the surface the peace appeared to be holding, there were smoldering problems which would soon shatter that

fragile condition. Crook was agitated by the fact that Cochise was still at large and outside his control. It irked Crook to have a competitor within his territory who vied for the Indians' control. Additionally, at the first prospects of peace, the administration dusted off the old Peace Plan which opened the door for many unscrupulous Indian agents and contractors to begin their dishonest practices, again at the expense of the Indians. Finally, all the Apache at Camp Grant were transferred to the huge San Carlos Reservation, and here internal dissension began among the various leaders. This situation boiled over with the killing of First Lieutenant Jacob Almy, the military agent at the San Carlos Agency, and the flight of some of the renegades from the reservation. By December, 1873, five hostile leaders, Eskiminzin, Chunz, Cochinay, Chan-deisi, and Delshay and their bands were again raiding the countryside.<sup>21</sup> During this outbreak, Crook mounted an offensive nearly as large as the previous one. By July, 1874, he had successfully stopped the Indian raids, killing all the leaders except Eskiminzin who had surrendered shortly after the outbreak.<sup>22</sup>

Until the arrival of George Crook, the Apache of the Southwest had never been subdued. When he assumed command of the Department of Arizona, the area was seething as a result of the Grant Peace Policy and numerous Apache depredations.

The Apache were even more hostile than normal following the massacre at Camp Grant. Had Crook not had the interference of Colyer and General Howard, the Department of Arizona would have been spared two additional years of hostilities. It is possible, although not probable, that another general would have had the success Crook enjoyed. Some of his contemporaries were more harsh in dealing with Indians and others were more humane, but not one of them had the correct mixture of these traits as did Crook.

In later years, Crook considered the Apache as the most fierce, most courageous, most cunning and most skillful in war of all the North American Indians.<sup>23</sup> It was appropriate that as a reward for his excellence as a commander during this campaign, President Grant ignored the old and honored tradition of seniority in the Army, and promoted Crook to brigadier general.<sup>24</sup> In recognition of his outstanding contributions, the Arizona legislature published a resolution of thanks to General Crook, stating that his policy was the only means available to bring the first peace to Arizona. They praised his ability to wage a successful and just campaign.<sup>25</sup>

In 1875, General Crook was transferred to the Department of the Platte. As he departed, he issued a strong protest against the policy of consolidating all the Apache at the San Carlos Agency, because he knew the ways

of this tribe. They were not a united people. Each band had its own leader and territory. Almost the only thing these bands had in common was their hatred for the white man. Crook felt that if they were all herded together, serious internal conflict would arise, thus leading to a potentially serious condition. Crook's fears were reality in less than a year and would lay the foundations of war which would beckon his return to Arizona within seven years.<sup>26</sup>

## CHAPTER IV

### THE SIOUX WAR OF 1876

In 1875, the Plains Indians were nearing the end of their golden years and were making one last death rattle before they were forced to abandon their traditional way of life. There had been a great deal of unrest among the tribes of the Plains for several years. There were numerous occurrences of violence, the major ones being the Sioux uprising in Minnesota in 1862, the Sand Creek Massacre in 1864, and a general uprising of Plains tribes in 1868. While these were widely separated conflicts, they did show a continuous pattern of confrontation between the Indians and whites on the Plains. The government, several bands of the Sioux Nation and the northern Arapaho entered into a treaty on April 29, 1868. It was ratified February 16, 1869, and designated the western two-thirds of the present-day state of South Dakota as Sioux territory.

A tentative peace prevailed on the Northern Plains for a short while. Then the familiar pattern of deterioration of Indian-white relations began. In the spring, Red Cloud led one thousand Sioux to Fort Laramie to trade, thinking the Agency was to be there. Actually, it had been established at Fort Randall on the Missouri over three hundred miles to



the east.<sup>1</sup> The Sioux were extremely angry at this, and Red Cloud later traveled to Washington to confer with Secretary of the Interior J. D. Cox in an attempt to rectify the problem. When Cox read the treaty to him, Red Cloud claimed he had been tricked and that the treaty had been changed after it had been signed. More likely the problem was a result of poor work by the interpreter. In any event, the Indians felt the government had not fulfilled their treaty obligations and they were very resentful.

The actions of fraudulent Indian agents had long been a source of friction between the natives and the government. Unscrupulous agents in collusion with mercenary traders frequently issued poor quality rations and supplies to the Indians which caused unrest. Additionally, these men made considerable profit by supplying the Sioux with large quantities of the latest weapons. This practice met with strong Army protest; however, the illicit trade was not stopped.<sup>2</sup>

Encroachment by the whites was another major cause for poor Indian-white relations. To the people of the Sioux nation, "Paha Sapa, the Black Hills, was the center of the world, the place of gods and holy mountains, where warriors went to speak with the Great Spirit and await visions."<sup>3</sup> These hills had been confirmed to the Indians by the Treaty of 1868. Four years later, miners in search of gold were violating the treaty, an event which would trigger another

Sioux War and bring General Crook to the Northern Plains.

There had been rumors of gold in the Black Hills since a reported discovery by Jim Bridger in 1859. The Indians were aware that a definite find of the precious metal would bring thousands of fortune seekers to their sacred ground. The Sioux were prepared to defend their sacred lands and issued a warning to the whites to stay out.<sup>4</sup> Realizing how impossible was the task of keeping the gold-crazed miners out of the Black Hills, the government considered the possibility of purchasing the area from the Indians. On July 2, 1874, in direct violation of the 1868 treaty, a column of cavalry under the command of Lieutenant Colonel George Custer marched out of Fort Lincoln and entered the Paha Sapa, for the purpose of determining if the area contained gold and was worthy of purchase.<sup>5</sup> The results of this expedition signaled the end of any hope the Sioux had of keeping the Black Hills, since gold was discovered and a messenger was hurried to the nearest telegraph. This intrusion enraged the Indians. Several small incidents were blown out of proportion by the Indians' fury, and in the autumn of 1874 many of the young hot-bloods who were disgusted with the administrator-like position that Red Cloud had resigned himself to packed their belongings and headed north to spend the winter off the reservation. Red Cloud lost some credibility for signing the 1868 treaty and leadership was slowly transferring to

Sitting Bull, the Unkpapa mystic, who was becoming the most influential leader among the Sioux and their Cheyenne allies. The young Oglala, Crazy Horse, a skillful and indomitable warrior, was the head War Chief.<sup>6</sup> These leaders had in common a strong dislike for the white man, and their alliance gave the U.S. Army its most serious Indian threat.

The Indians did not usually group together for purposes of warfare; but throughout the Sioux and Cheyenne nations a fierce hatred for the whites gave them a common rallying cause. Evidence of this was that between 1868 and 1876 over two hundred engagements were fought with the Army, and soon the largest Indian battles ever fought in the West would be concluded.<sup>7</sup>

Crook received orders transferring him to the Department of the Platte in March, 1875, succeeding Brigadier General E. O. C. Ord as the Commander.<sup>8</sup> Command of this Department was a choice assignment, and again overly ambitious officers such as Miles were irate that Crook should be advanced over his seniors to another command, however, there can be no question that he was equipped for the position. Crook took the field in July for the purpose of moving whites out of the Black Hills. His effort was partially successful, and he reported upon his return that he had persuaded many of the miners to file their claims and leave for the winter while the government attempted to negotiate with the Indians.<sup>9</sup> The government's next move was to send

out a group of men, dubbed the Allison Commission, in an attempt to purchase the disputed area; however, they failed in their mission.<sup>10</sup> The government was now faced with two possible courses of action, both unsatisfactory. First, they could use sufficient armed force to keep the whites out of the Black Hills. This plan had very low priority, since it would have been political suicide for the administration. Second, the Black Hills could be seized under some pretense and the Army used to protect the miners, which would have sparked strong political reaction from the peace party. Obviously, neither of these solutions was acceptable; so one of lesser immediate consequence was chosen. Yet it resulted in a large-scale Indian war and ultimately in the loss of freedom for the Sioux and Cheyenne.<sup>11</sup> The Indian Bureau decided that the Indians outside the agencies were in fact living better than those still confined and posed a threat to the entire reservation system. Therefore, on December 3, 1875, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs sent word to the Sioux and Cheyenne that a military force would be sent against any band of Indians which was not on a reservation by January 31, 1876.

The timing of this order, in mid-winter, made it nearly impossible to obey even if the Indians had been so inclined. The bands were split into small groups and widely dispersed in various winter camps, heavy snows made travel difficult, the Indian ponies were weak from lack of forage,

and to move women and children through freezing weather to agencies which in many cases had no food would have been foolish. Few chiefs took the order seriously.<sup>12</sup>

General Sheridan, Commander of the Military Division of the Missouri, had long been in favor of a winter campaign against the Indians for the very reasons that made it impossible for the tribes to comply to the December order. As soon as the Indian Bureau issued the demand to return, the Army began plans for an offensive. The deadline approached and expired with nearly all the Indians still in the winter camps. On February 8, 1876, Sheridan gave the order to take the field to Generals Crook and Terry, and the Winter Campaign of 1876 began. Crook and his command departed Fort Fetterman, Wyoming, on March 1, 1876. His intended route of march was to the north along the Powder, Yellowstone, and Bighorn Rivers where the camps of the Sioux were reported. The weather made the journey extremely difficult, for it snowed much of the time and the temperature was recorded as low as thirty-nine degrees below zero. On March 17, the column attacked a mixed village of northern Cheyenne and Oglala Sioux, under the leadership of Crazy Horse.<sup>13</sup> The attack was initially successful; however, errors in tactical judgment on the part of Colonel J. J. Reynolds allowed most of the Indians to escape with most of their pony herd. The Indians had been dealt a severe blow as their supplies and winter rations had been

destroyed. But Crook also faced a critical situation. Low on rations, soldiers suffering from wounds and cold, Indians gone and other encampments forewarned, Crook made the decision to return to Fort Fetterman. This was a disappointing beginning for Crook in his campaign against the Plains Indians. He had hoped for quick and decisive victories in order to force the Indians back to the reservations. Yet the twenty-six days of campaigning during sub-zero weather had been unsuccessful, and the Indians would not be molested again until spring.

When he arrived at Fort Fetterman, Crook pressed court martial charges against Colonel Reynolds and two other officers. There was much acrimonious debate reference Crook's actions against Colonel Reynolds. Some believed Crook was using Reynolds as a scapegoat to protect himself. However, the accounts of the battle on March 17, show that Reynolds in fact did make tactical decisions which were questionable. Crook had a close personal relationship with Reynolds and wanted to give him the opportunity to gain a reputation on the Plains, in order to rectify some past difficulties experienced in the Department of Texas.<sup>14</sup> However, as the senior commander, Crook found the court martial necessary in spite of his friendship with Reynolds. Captain Anson Mills, who was part of Reynolds' command on the Powder River, stated specifically that Reynolds disobeyed Crook's order to hold the village and that his age

and feebleness were reasons for his failure. As a result of the court martial, Colonel Reynolds was suspended from duty for one year.

Plans were started immediately for continuing the campaign in the spring. The second operation became known as the Bighorn-Yellowstone Expedition of 1876. This was a unique experience for the Army, as it was one of the rare occurrences in which many bands of Indians from different tribes joined to fight pitched battles with the Army. Moreover, the Army was to suffer its worst defeat at the hands of the Indians, since battles of the early 1790s in Ohio. Although the Indians achieved successes in battle, the final outcome for them was a disaster.<sup>15</sup> For Crook personally, it was to be a difficult campaign. The actions he took during this expedition became the subject of great discussion that has split students of the Indian Wars into two camps.

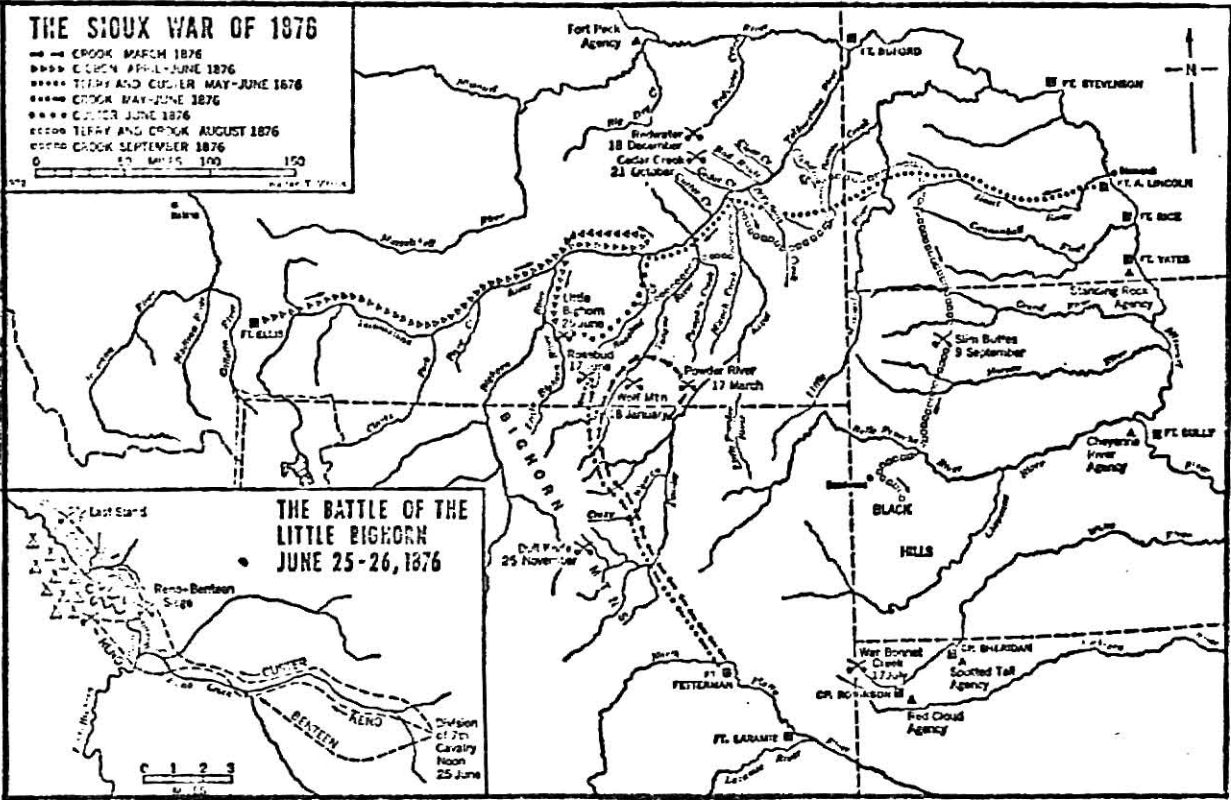
The strategy of the summer expedition involved three distinct columns marching from different directions toward the reported Indian camps along the Rosebud and Bighorn Rivers. This three-pronged pincer was co-ordinated to trap the Indians and deliver them a crushing blow. Brigadier General Alfred T. Terry, Commander of the Department of Dakota, had under his command two of the columns. He personally led one of the units consisting of the Seventh Cavalry under George Custer containing six hundred men and

approximately four hundred infantry out of Fort Abraham Lincoln, Dakota territory, moving from the northeast. Terry's other column of approximately 450 infantrymen moving to the east from Fort Ellis, Montana, was commanded by Colonel John Gibbon. Crook led his column, numbering approximately one thousand men north out of Fort Fetterman on May 29, 1876.

Reports from the Indian Bureau stated that no more than eight hundred warriors were off the reservations; however, estimates from survivors of the Seventh Cavalry placed the estimate at from twenty-five hundred to three thousand warriors.<sup>16</sup>

Generally following a route which was the old Bozeman Trail, Crook reached Goose Creek, near present-day Sheridan, Wyoming, on June 15. Approximately two hundred Crow and ninety Shoshone scouts joined Crook's column the day before, so it then numbered close to twelve hundred men.<sup>17</sup> There were Indian signs, and Crook was well aware that the Indians knew of his presence and that he would have no opportunity for surprise. On the morning of June 17, Crook's scouts proceeding in front of the column reported seeing Indians. The column halted in a small valley while an extensive reconnaissance of the area was made. Shortly the scouting party returned followed closely by several hostile Indians. As Crook deployed his forces, it became apparent that this was no ordinary Indian encounter





Source: Robert M. Utley, Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indians 1866-1890 (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1973), p. 257.

but rather a well planned and carefully executed attack. The fighting raged over six hours with numerous deeds of gallantry displayed by both sides. Crook knew from the ferocity of the attack that the village of Crazy Horse must be near, and he wanted to attack and destroy it in order to erase some of the embarrassment over the failure of his winter campaign. As the fighting appeared to slacken somewhat, he ordered Captain Anson Mills and a column of troops down the Rosebud valley with instructions to attack the village. It became apparent to Crook, however, that Mills was not meeting any resistance on his way down the valley. He suspected a trap and recalled Mills. The soldiers camped that night on the battlefield and returned the next day to the supply camp at Goose Creek. Crook had suffered nine soldiers killed and twenty-one wounded, including one of his cavalry commanders, Captain Guy V. Henry. There were thirteen Indian bodies counted at the site.<sup>18</sup>

It was difficult to assess which side had attained victory; in a sense both claimed the advantage. Crook's forces had been stopped and had to fight aggressively to prevent the Indians from overrunning them; and the mission of destroying the village was not accomplished. It must be recognized, however, that Crook's well-disciplined forces fought valiantly against a well armed and numerically superior force.

Crook's actions at the Rosebud and his subsequent return to the supply camp at Goose Creek drew severe criticism from the press, especially the Daily Independent of Helena, Montana. An unknown reporter for that paper stated that Crook had suffered disastrous defeat and also accused him of cowardliness, suggesting that Custer or Terry should have had command of the expedition. Custer was to disprove the reporter's judgment of military commanders nine days later at the Little Big Horn.<sup>19</sup> Contemporary historians have also taken Crook to task for his leadership during the entire summer campaign of 1876.<sup>20</sup> His alleged retreat to his supply camp has been condemned as a mistake. First of all, this is technically inaccurate, for a retreat, as defined in military dictionaries, is a retrograde movement before an enemy.<sup>21</sup> The Indians had broken off the contact at the Rosebud, and Crook withdrew voluntarily rather than under pressure. Moreover, Crook's movements made sense in terms of military tactics. He was outnumbered or at least equalled in strength by the enemy and was over forty miles from his supply train. He realized that further pursuit toward the village would have placed his forces in a precarious position. Also encumbered with several wounded, Crook had no choice but to return to his base camp. It was apparent to him that there were many more Indians off the reservations than had been reported. Having expended more than twenty-five thousand rounds of

ammunition, it would have been foolish to continue without resupply.<sup>22</sup>

Upon reaching the camp, a heavily escorted supply train was returned to Fort Fetterman for more ammunition. Crook was obliged to wait until supplies could be brought from Wyoming, for, under the Treaty of 1868, all the forts from the Missouri to the Bighorn had been abandoned. According to several sources, Crook received dispatches from General Sheridan ordering him to await the arrival of reinforcements, which consisted of ten troops of the Fifth Cavalry and several detachments of infantry commanded by Colonel Wesley Merritt.<sup>23</sup> There were critical comments at the time, that Crook and his men spent all their time hunting and fishing in the vicinity of Goose Creek rather than pursuing the Indians. With more than one thousand men in the field and a shortage of rations, it appears rather reasonable that wild game and fish would be taken to supplement the meager fare of bacon and hardtack. Moreover, while in camp, Crook drilled his troops every day, a procedure that was rare even in garrison on most posts.<sup>24</sup>

Not until July 10 did Crook receive word of Custer's fate. Almost a month later, on August 3, his reinforcements arrived and his command was on the move by the morning of the fifth. As the column moved back through the site of the June 17 battle, it was apparent to everyone that, had Crook pursued the Indians toward their camp, his command could have

easily met the same end as the Seventh Cavalry. Bourke stated in his book that, upon discovering the Indian plans for a possible trap, the troops' "confidence in Crook was increased tenfold by the knowledge that he had outwitted the enemy on that occasion."<sup>25</sup>

As his command moved in search of the Indians, Crook was charged with not accepting advice of the more experienced personnel, such as the romanticised Buffalo Bill Cody. While Crook may have ignored Cody, who had never been in that part of the country, he had as his scout, Frank Grouard, who was intimately familiar with the territory and the terrain.<sup>26</sup> Crook also noted in his official reports that he respected the knowledge of his Indian allies and followed their advice.<sup>27</sup> A recent article incorrectly stated that Cody was the chief scout of the expedition. While it is correct that he was head scout for Merritt's Fifth Cavalry, that unit was subordinate to Crook. Don Russell, biographer of "Buffalo Bill," stated that Cody was the head scout. Yet this is the only source supporting the article.<sup>28</sup> On the other hand, several accounts indicate that Grouard was the head scout.<sup>29</sup> It has also been charged that Cody left the column in disgust over Crook's actions; however, Charles King, who was actually with Cody, stated that he left reluctantly because he had to return to the East and his theatrical commitments.<sup>30</sup>

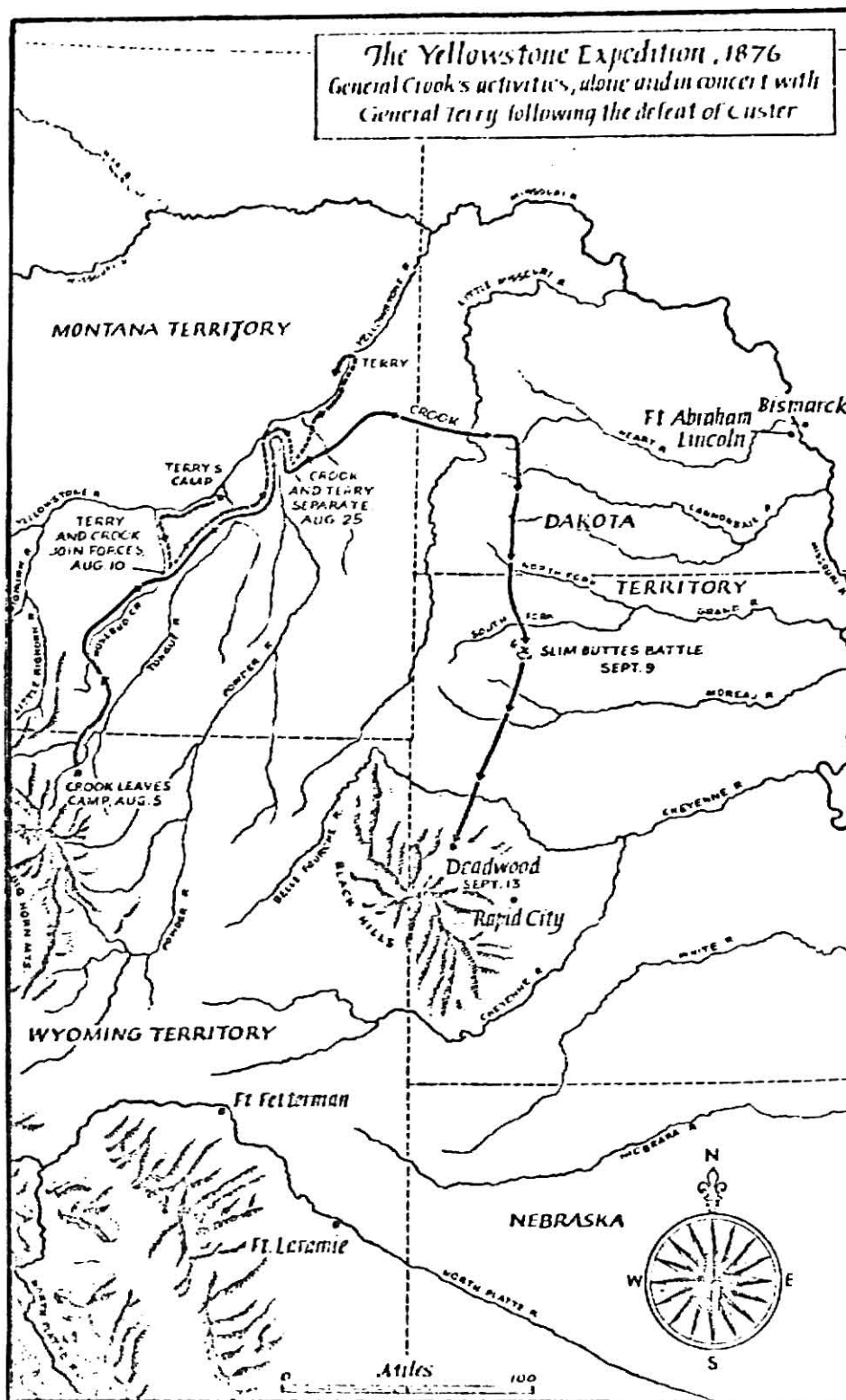
After receiving his reinforcements and supplies,

Crook continued up the Rosebud and met Terry's column on August 10. The large body of Indians had skillfully slipped between the forces without a contact. Indications at this time were that the bands under Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull and the other chiefs had not separated.<sup>31</sup> Reports from scouts estimated the number of Indians on the trail at between eight and ten thousand.<sup>32</sup> The trail headed to the south across the Yellowstone, then down the Tongue River, and across to the Powder. After following the trail for several days, it split. Crook took his force to the east toward the Little Missouri River. On September 5, the trail Crook was following scattered and became impossible to follow farther.<sup>33</sup> At this time, he had only two days rations, so he made the decision to head straight for the Black Hills in order to resupply and also to offer some protection to the settlements there.<sup>34</sup> Thus began a punishing march of fifty-two days to Deadwood in the Dakota Territory. During this march, Crook's forces had a minor engagement at Slim Buttes, which was only the second battle of the entire campaign. After reaching Deadwood, Crook wanted to continue the expedition with the Black Hills as the base. But General Sheridan made the decision to terminate the operation.

The results of the Bighorn-Yellowstone Expedition and the actions of its commanders has produced much speculation. If Crook had pressed the attack at the Rosebud, if

he had continued on to link up with Terry, and if he had split his command into several small units to follow the Indians' trail, he might have been successful or, on the other hand, the worst defeat suffered by the Army at the hands of the Indians might have been known as Crook's Last Stand.<sup>35</sup> Estimates of the numbers of warriors between Crook and Custer run from 1,500 to 6,500.<sup>36</sup> Custer did not reach the Little Bighorn battlefield for nine days after the Rosebud battle. Whether or not Crook's command, with a shortage of ammunition and hampered by its wounded, could have survived to link up with the Seventh Cavalry has often been debated by historians. A military analysis of the situation, however, favors the course of action taken by Crook.

The Sioux problem was far from over. Sitting Bull escaped with his band into Canada. The great war chief, Crazy Horse, who had stopped Crook at the Rosebud and annihilated Custer at the Little Bighorn, was still free and was a rallying force for all the Indians. Crook argued for continuing the expedition into the winter, for he knew this was the Indians' most vulnerable period. Sheridan agreed, and the Powder River Expedition was formed. Operations began in November, 1876; and, throughout the winter, continuous pressure was maintained against the Indians. Crook found an additional asset in the warriors of the Northern Cheyenne who had turned against the Sioux when



Source: Ralph K. Andrist, The Long Death: The Last Days of the Plains Indians (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1964), p. 296.



Crazy Horse had refused them sanctuary after their camp had been attacked and destroyed.

Crook hoped desperately to end the war without another summer campaign. He promised the Indians who had surrendered that he would try to get them a reservation near their homelands. They believed him and spread the word to those hostiles still out. Crook was under pressure from Sheridan to fight as much as possible before July, since the Army was facing a 2,500 man reduction. Crook resisted earlier engagements, however, because he felt the offer of the more favorable reservation would prevent further bloodshed. Pressure in the field from Colonel Nelson Miles was also a factor which moved the Indians toward surrender. Yet it was Crook's promise of a better reservation and his honest approach to the Indian problems that finally brought the hostiles in. Crazy Horse surrendered to Crook's representative at Fort Robinson on the Red Cloud agency, May 6, 1877, an event which signaled the end of Indian power on the Northern Plains.<sup>37</sup>

General Crook's philosophy had evolved to one of increasing benevolence toward the Indians. He had been fighting them for nearly twenty years. He sat with them in councils, extracted promises from them, and in return gave them his word. He realized that often he could not keep his commitments due to the existing bureaucracy. He admitted admiration for Indian courage and felt respect and

sympathy for his old enemies. He began to use his position and influence to help them when he could.<sup>38</sup> He could see that the barren, unhealthy conditions in Indian territory were forcing more and more of the Indians to flee northward. He had hoped that he could fulfill his promise to the Plains Indians for a more favorable reservation on the Tongue River. He failed. The Cheyenne were sent to Indian territory, and the Sioux were sent to Nebraska.

In 1879, Crook became deeply involved in attempts to transfer the Bureau of Indian Affairs to the War Department. He was convinced that the vast majority of Indian troubles were the result of the inept and dishonest administrations of the Bureau. Crook felt that there were two prerequisites for successfully administering Indian affairs. The first was absolute honesty on the part of the administrator, and the second the power to enforce control of the Indians. The dichotomy of responsibility between the Department of the Interior and the Department of War made this control extremely difficult. Crook's effort to unify Indian affairs failed, and the graft and corruption continued.<sup>39</sup>

General Crook became increasingly more vocal in his criticism of the treatment of the Indians by the government. He was especially upset over the treatment of the Cheyenne at Fort Robinson. In his official report, he felt the government's continued efforts to send these Indians back to Indian territory was an abuse of power.<sup>40</sup>

One of the most historic events of the Indian Wars was the Standing Bear vs. Crook trial. The Ponca Indians had been wrongfully moved from their reservations in South Dakota to the Indian territory. They fled and returned to Fort Omaha. This incident drew the interest of the nation. Crook was sympathetic to the Indians; however, officially, he had obligations to return them to Indian territory. He agreed to receive a writ of habeas corpus in an attempt to help the Poncas. The trial began on April 18, 1879, and in the end the judge ruled that the Indian was a "person" and could avail himself of the right of freedom guaranteed by the Constitution. This trial prevented the return of the Poncas to the South and gained for Crook deep respect among the various tribes.<sup>41</sup>

Crook's period of service in the Department of the Platte had somewhat dimmed his meteoric rise as the most efficient Indian-fighting general. The winter and summer campaigns of 1876 had been very disappointing to many citizens, members of the press, and the higher echelons of the administration who rated successes by the number of Indian bodies counted. Crook must have been somewhat disappointed also, for he had not accomplished his missions in the manner he had planned. Yet they had been fulfilled without Crook prostituting his principles. By 1877, the Northern Plains enjoyed comparative peace, and Crook had withstood pressure from the press and the Army to use harsher methods to effect

the return of the hostiles to the reservations. Because of his personal involvement with Indian affairs and his attempts to obtain justice for them, Crook had been labeled by some with the odious term "Indian Lover."

Even though Crook had fallen from public favor, he was still recognized by those in the higher positions of the Army as its best general for handling Indian problems. Trouble was again brewing with the Apache in the Southwest; and, in view of his earlier successes there, Crook was the logical man to find the source of the trouble and contain the Indians.<sup>42</sup> For the last time, Crook made the trip to the Southwest, there to write the last chapter in his long career as an active campaigner against the Indians.

## CHAPTER V

### SECOND APACHE CAMPAIGN

Predictably, after a few years of uneasy peace in the Southwest, Indian troubles with the Apache flared up again. Colonel Orlando Bolivar Willcox commanded the Department of Arizona from his headquarters at Camp Grant in the early 1880s. Willcox had little knowledge of the Apache and even less empathy for them.<sup>1</sup> Due to a lack of progress by Willcox in solving the Indian problems, Commanding General of the Army Sherman relieved him and assigned George Crook the job. Crook assumed the duties of his second Apache campaign at Whipple Barracks, Prescott, Arizona, September 4, 1882. It was Crook's mission to bring order out of the chaos existing in Arizona and return all the Apache to their reservations. Crook analyzed his mission and determined that he had three basic tasks to accomplish. First, he had to calm the reservation Indians and prevent further outbreaks; second, he had to protect the citizens of Arizona; and third, he had to subdue those hostile bands living off the reservation.<sup>2</sup>

This was a different soldier than the George Crook who had left Arizona several years before. He was still strong willed and honest as the Apache remembered him; however, he was stronger in his belief that Indians were

human beings, a viewpoint not yet accepted by most of his fellow officers.<sup>3</sup>

Soon after arriving in Arizona, Crook conducted interrogations and conferences with the Apache leaders, both those in hostility and those still on the reservations, to learn what the grievances were. He soon identified the familiar type of administrative problems as the basis of discontent among the Apache. Crook found the reservations in terrible condition and the Apache very distrustful of all whites. The corruption, greed, and immunity from prosecution of the white commercial enterprises were the major reasons for the discontent. The Indians told Crook that they continually received reports from whites that they were to be disarmed, attacked by troops while on the reservations, and removed from their country. With all these reports, the Apache were ready to believe it was better to die than suffer such abuses. All the bands were on the verge of jumping the reservations.<sup>4</sup> In addition, Crook was told by the Indians that due to orders from the Indian bureau they were forced to cluster around the agency where disease and sickness were rampant, and they could not produce any crops. During these conferences, Crook was able to convince the Apache that conflict was what their enemies wanted so that their reservations could be taken away from them. He held the Indians' trust and confidence and was able to re-establish the relationship that had

existed between them during his prior service in Arizona. These desperate Indians were calmed and a general uprising prevented by Crook's influence, something no other military man could have accomplished.<sup>5</sup> Crook reinstated his former strict policies of accountability which involved accurate censuses and frequent checks of identification tags to determine those absent from the reservations.<sup>6</sup> Crook assumed the responsibility for the Indians and, with the consent of Agent P. P. Wilcox, he allowed the Indians to choose a place of settlement anywhere within the limits of the reservation.<sup>7</sup> Crook's policies worked so well that within two months he told the Apache he was going to stop the census, as they had demonstrated their good disposition. He also said that they could use their own form of government for controlling the tribes and he would bring white soldiers onto the reservation only should they prove incapable of controlling themselves.

The Apache were pleased but were wary about other orders. Crook forced them to stop brewing Tizwin, their potent beer, and to quit the ancient practice of wife beating.<sup>8</sup> He possessed enough confidence in his own abilities to believe that if he were left alone by higher authorities he could settle the Indian problems at minimum cost in dollars and lives.<sup>9</sup> Relying on some of the same methods he had used previously, Crook established an elaborate network of Indian spies to keep him informed of the activities

of all the Apache and to provide warning to the settlements and ranches. Crook re-established the general order he had issued in 1873 which decreed that any Apache guilty of committing depredations of choosing the warpath rather than peace would be shown no mercy. His new additions to those instructions gave an indication of the humanitarian views of this man:

Officers and men serving this department are reminded that one of the fundamental principles of the military character is justice to all--Indians as well as white men--and that a disregard of this principle is likely to bring about hostilities . . . . In all their dealings with the Indians, officers must be careful not only to observe the strictest fidelity, but to make no promises not in their power to carry out . . . . Grievances, however petty, if permitted to accumulate, will be embers that smoulder and eventually break into flame . . . . Each officer will be held to a strict accountability that his actions have been fully authorized by law and justice, and that Indians envincing a desire to enter upon a career of peace shall have no cause for complaint through hasty or injudicious acts of the military.<sup>10</sup>

The only tribe Crook was unable to meet with was the Chiricahua, as they had been in Mexico since the spring of 1882. His spy system did bring in information, however, that a raid by these hostiles was imminent.<sup>11</sup> Based on his previous experience, Crook knew that Regular troops had no chance of operating successfully against the Apache; therefore, he set about enlisting and equipping the wildest Indian scouts he could recruit. He also reorganized his pack trains and positioned his troop units in strategic locations, so that he might retaliate quickly to any raid.

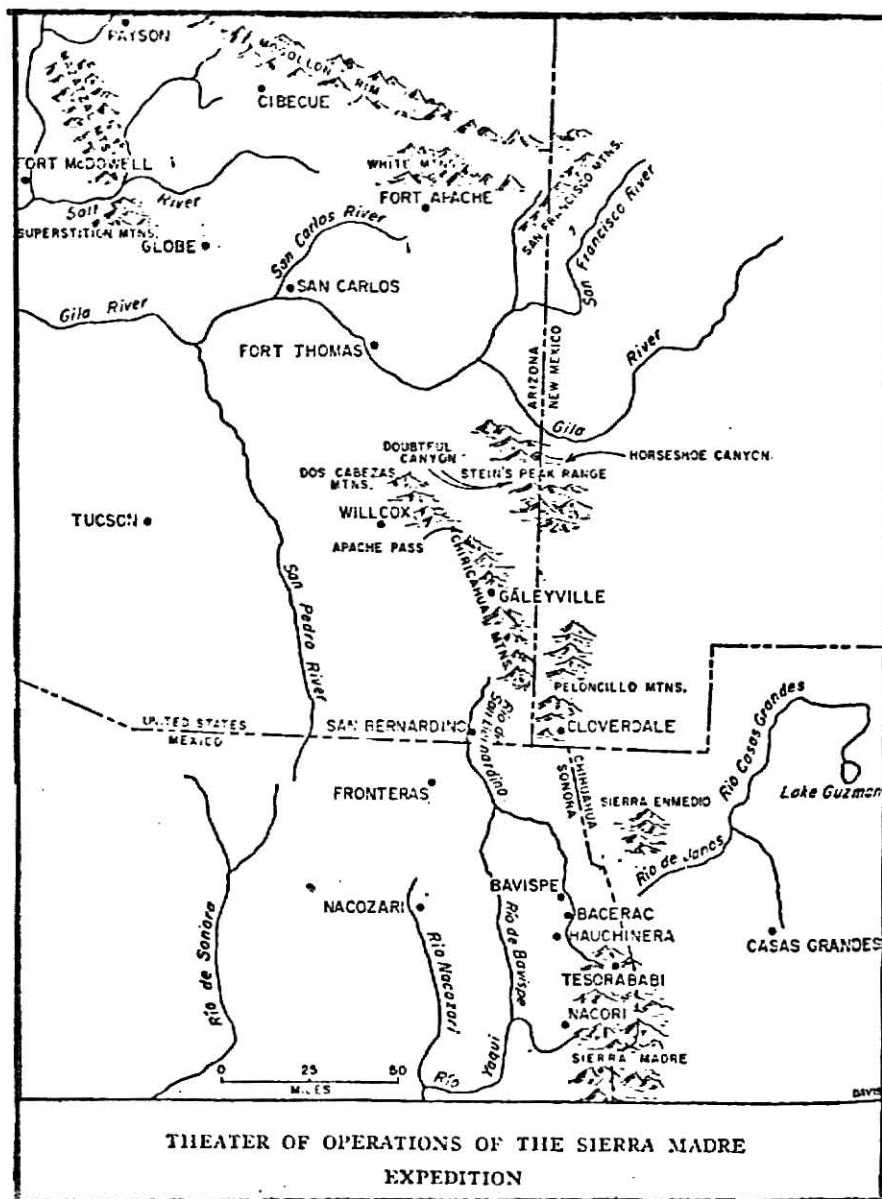


Crook could not take the initiative and move against the Chiricahua for two reasons. First, he could not cross the Mexican border unless he was in hot pursuit of a hostile band; second, he realized that to attempt to penetrate their Sierra Madre stronghold, completely ignorant of the territory, would be unwise.

The expected raid came on March 21, 1883. Chatto, Bonito, and Chihuahua, three Chiricahua leaders, crossed the Mexican border with twenty-three men, and for a short period of time wreaked havoc among the white settlements. The raid supplied Crook with both requirements he needed to mount an offensive operation. During the raid, a young renegade named Pa-nayo-tishn deserted the hostile band.<sup>12</sup> This young warrior, called "Peaches" by the soldiers, gave Crook much detailed information about the Apache stronghold deep in the Sierra Madre of Mexico and agreed to guide him there. The Apache raid had given Crook reason to pursue them across the border into Mexico, and now with someone to lead the way through the treacherous mountains, Crook began making preparations. On March 31, 1883, General Crook received the following message from his Division Commander, General Schofield:

Sir: Instructions just received from the General of the Army authorize you under existing order to destroy hostile Apaches, to pursue them regardless of department or national lines and to proceed to such points as you deem advisable.<sup>13</sup>

On the first of May, Crook entered Mexico on the



Source: Dan L. Thrapp, General Crook and the Sierra Madre Adventure (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972), p. 120.

most daring expedition of the Indian Wars with a column consisting of nine officers, forty-two enlisted men, one hundred and ninety-three Apache scouts, and several packers.<sup>14</sup> When Crook took his column into Mexico, he positioned cavalry and infantry units along the border to afford some protection to the settlers from bands attempting to slip to the north away from the column. Crook's instructions to his men were familiar to those who had served with him before: maintain relentless pursuit on the renegades at all times; attempt to obtain a surrender initially, however, if it is necessary to fight, do so with determination; spare women and children; and grant mercy to all who want it.<sup>15</sup> Crook's column plunged deep into Apache country and entered the Chiricahua stronghold. The troops kept pressure on the bands, although there were few actual battles. During this campaign, the Army high command spent some anxious moments, for the reticent Crook did not send out any type of dispatch, and for forty-two days they feared the worst for his command. The idea of Crook being within their fortress, guided by one of their former members and accompanied by many Apache soldiers, had a devastating effect on the morale of the hostiles. After a few weeks of constant harassment by the Army, the Apache were ready to discuss terms of surrender. Chihuahua was the first to discuss surrender with Crook. Shortly thereafter, Chato, Bonito, Loco, Nachez and Kan-tin-No surrendered their bands.<sup>16</sup>

These Indians all wanted to return to the San Carlos Reservation. After his normal verbal chastisement and psychological game with these chiefs, Crook agreed to take them to the agency. In June, Crook emerged from the wilds of Mexico with more than three hundred captive Apache. Additionally, Geronimo agreed to round up his scattered band with all their plunder and bring them in; however, it was several more months before he actually returned to the reservation.<sup>17</sup>

By mid-summer 1884, after about two years, Crook had converted the Apache situation in the Southwest from chaos to one of near tranquility. The author of one of the books on Crook's second Apache campaign stated that "there was not another officer in the Indian-fighting Army of that day who could have wrought this remarkable change in a like space of time."<sup>18</sup> Part of Crook's success was that he considered the Apache human beings and felt they had received injustice in their dealings with the government. His sentiments were expressed in an address in 1884:

The Apache knows his rights, and is not afraid to maintain them. Were he a Greek or Roman, we should read with pride and enthusiasm of his determination to die rather than suffer wrong; but looking at him as a native of our own soil and as a feeble barrier which stands between ourselves and the silver mines and the coal measures supposed to exist on his reservation, it is not always possible to do justice to his virtues or to consider his faults as identical with those of which we ourselves should be guilty under similar provocation.<sup>19</sup>

Crook put his most trusted and responsible officers

in charge of the reservations. Captain Emmet Crawford was installed at the sprawling San Carlos Agency on the Gila River, which contained the largest percentage of the recently subdued bands. Crawford had Lieutenant Britton Davis under his command at Turkey Creek near Fort Apache, in charge of the Chiricahua under Geronimo and Chato and Lieutenants C. B. Gatewood and Hampton M. Roach controlled the White Mountain Apache at Fort Apache.<sup>20</sup>

As early as December, 1884, indications that trouble could start again were apparent. A new agent, C. D. Ford, who was ignorant of the history of Apache problems, began to impose restrictions upon Captain Crawford's programs of rehabilitation. The agent's protests ran from verbal disapproval to actually confiscating farm implements issued to the Indians. Crook had been given the full responsibility for the control of the Apache and felt the agent was obstructing his progress. This resulted in a long series of messages from Crook to higher headquarters concerning the status of control and requesting that either he be given full control over the Apache or be relieved of the responsibility for their conduct.<sup>21</sup> His request was held in abeyance by General Sheridan who had become General of the Army upon the death of Sherman.

While the renegade warriors were in Mexico, many of their women and children were captured and distributed as slaves to various Mexican households. When the men returned

with Crook, they wanted their families united. Crook realized this situation was a threat to the stabilization of his charges and he repeatedly urged Washington to negotiate with the Mexican government for the release of the slaves, but few were returned.<sup>22</sup>

The relative serenity of Arizona was disrupted as the result of an unpremeditated drinking bout involving chiefs who were consuming their outlawed, homemade beer. Geronimo, Chihuahua, and others became drunk on the brew on May 15, 1885; three days later Geronimo led a party of 134 including the Chiefs Chihuahua, Natchez, Mangus, and Nana off the reservation to begin the last two years of savage and bloody warfare between the Army and the Apache.<sup>23</sup>

Crook could not explain the exact reasons for the outbreak but concluded in his annual report that Indian uprisings habitually resulted from an accumulation of grievances. He then took the opportunity to attack the parasitic whites who profited from Indian troubles.

I do not wish to be understood as in the least palliating their crimes, but I wish to say a word to stem the torrent of invective and abuse which has almost universally been indulged in against the whole Apache race. This is not strange on the frontier from a certain class of vampires who prey on the misfortunes of their fellow-men and who live best and easiest in the time of Indian troubles. With them peace kills the goose that lays the golden egg. Greed and avarice on the part of the whites--in other words the almighty dollar--is at the bottom of nine-tenths of all our Indian problems.<sup>24</sup>

For ten months, Army units pursued the hostiles and

finally in March, 1886, Crook agreed to meet personally with Geronimo, Chihuahua, and Natchez in order to discuss surrender terms. The conference lasted two days and ended when the chiefs all surrendered and agreed to return to the reservation. Following the outbreak, Crook's orders from General Sheridan were to accept unconditional surrender from the hostiles or kill them all.<sup>25</sup> During the meeting however, Crook and the chiefs had agreed to three terms of surrender: first, that the Indians be allowed to return to the reservation unharmed; second, that they be confined for two years at a place distant from the reservations; third, that their families could accompany them if they desired. The Apache said if these terms were not acceptable they would return to the warpath and fight to the death. Dispatches were sent from Fort Bowie to inform Sheridan of the surrender, and Crook asked for instructions reference the place of confinement of the Indians.<sup>26</sup> During the return march, a trader named Tribolet sold the Indians whiskey; and on the night of March 28, while they were drunk, Geronimo and a small band left camp and returned to Mexico.

On March 30, 1886, Crook received a telegram from Sheridan stating that President Grover Cleveland would not accept the conditional surrender and instructing Crook to re-enter negotiations for an unconditional surrender, sparing only their lives. Additionally, the message instructed Crook to take every possible precaution against

possible escape of the hostiles and ordered their destruction if they did not accept unconditional surrender.

There was no secret of the animosity between Crook and Sheridan and this telegram deepened that feeling. He knew that Sheridan and others in Washington who were making these demands had never seen a hostile Apache and therefore had no concept of the type of negotiations which were required to deal with them. He tried to explain in his reply that there was no possible way he could comply with the instructions to demand an unconditional surrender. It would involve a treacherous act to allow them to enter his camp in peace and then be brutally murdered if they refused the terms. When he received word of Geronimo's escape, Sheridan was furious and ordered Crook to assume a defensive posture and provide as much protection as possible to the business interests of Arizona and New Mexico. Obviously upset by the chastisement from Washington and offended by the suggestion that he lie and deal underhandedly with the Apache, Crook requested that he be relieved from command of his department.<sup>27</sup> Sheridan responded to Crook's request by transferring him to the Department of the Platte and assigning General Miles to Arizona to contend with Geronimo.<sup>28</sup>

So ended the active Indian campaigns of George Crook. After nearly thirty-three years of almost continuous conflict, the "Gray Wolf" now entered into the last phase of his career, a war with words.<sup>29</sup>



When General Terry requested retirement in 1887, both Crook and Miles were in position for their second star. Miles with his nearly paranoiac jealousy of Crook probably felt certain that he was the best man for the position. Crook, supported by several influential people, including former President Hayes, received the promotion. Without this support, the star would most likely have gone to Miles, as Crook had brazenly defied the Army high command with his actions in Arizona. Crook added his influence and support to the Indian franchise movement, was a member of the Sioux Commission of 1889, wrote the manuscript for his autobiography, and generally settled into the life of an old soldier. His only real battle was the long term fight he carried on with General Miles over the disposition of Apache prisoners.

Crook had sent seventy-seven hostile Apache to exile in Florida under the terms of the surrender of 1886. Miles sent another forty-one captives to Florida as the result of his campaign against Geronimo. Additionally, Miles sent all the remaining Chiricahua to Florida, including those who had been loyal scouts for Crook. General Crook felt this was a terrible injustice to the Chiricahua and a personal affront to himself. During the last years of his life, he was actively engaged in an effort to correct this situation and have the Indians moved to Indian territory.

At the time of his death, Crook had not realized his

plan to assist the Chiricahua. Not until August, 1894, were these Indians removed to Fort Sill. Crook's death in March, 1890, spared him the anguish of knowing of the slaughter at Wounded Knee, but it was a severe loss to the Indian nations. Upon hearing of Crook's death, Red Cloud said:

General Crook came; he, at least had never lied to us. His words gave the people hope. He died. Their hope died again.<sup>30</sup>

On the Apache reservations, the people "sat down in a great circle, let down their hair and wailed like children."<sup>31</sup>



General Crook  
in  
Field Uniform  
on  
Apache

## EPILOGUE

The study of George Crook reveals that not only was he a successful and competent military commander, but also a person of strong individualism who loved the wild and lonely places, had complete physical and moral fearlessness, eccentric manners, and strong feelings of compassion and empathy. In the days of dashing cavalrymen, Crook often rode to war on a mule with his magnificent forked beard braided, and he seldom wore a military uniform. More often than not, the practical Crook would adopt articles of clothing which provided comfort and protection rather than aesthetic value. He was one of the first American commanders to adapt clothing to special climatic conditions.

Crook was a born nimrod. This, coupled with his ability to live in complete harmony with his physical surroundings, led him on frequent hunting trips. Whenever possible, he went alone to the solitude of the mountains. The wilderness was a tonic to Crook. Even as his health failed in later years, he still took regular hunting and fishing trips with companions, during which he appeared in the best of health, only to decline again when back in civilization. Because he loved the wilderness so much, he could understand why the Indian resisted giving it up.

A true "soldier's soldier" Crook was highly respected

by his officers and men. He was approachable by any man and was sympathetic to their problems; however, he was a strict disciplinarian who demanded a great deal from his troops and gave them his all in return. His military knowledge and competence won the respect of his men. Crook had an immunity to fatigue and a contempt for danger that won him the admiration of everyone who served with him. All his officers and troops knew that he could do anything he asked of them, and that in times of danger he would be at their side.<sup>1</sup> During periods of extreme hardship resulting from heat, cold, fatigue, or lack of food, there was little criticism of Crook's actions from his troops because he shared freely with his men and claimed no special allowance of food or comfort for himself. His philosophy of command was well stated in a letter to his brother, a new captain, who asked how he could learn to command. Crook's reply was: "Learn to command yourself and you will find no trouble in commanding your company."<sup>2</sup> This kind of attitude and his natural manner attracted the finest young officers to him. He trusted his junior officers and depended upon them, which developed their self-confidence and abilities. He issued them few orders, believing a good example was the best of all commands. His one fault as mentioned by Rutherford B. Hayes, in his diary, was that Crook recklessly exposed himself in action, a fault which at times was a great asset.<sup>3</sup>

As mentioned earlier, Crook's attitude toward the

Indians was considerably different than that of most officers in the post-Civil War Army. He had sympathy, empathy, and understanding for the Indians. Sheridan was unnecessarily cruel and vindictive in his approach to Indian problems. Sherman was competent and had a real affection for the West; however, he had a dislike for the Indians whom he considered an impediment to settlement.<sup>4</sup> Miles thought only of his own career and stated that "going to meet the enemies of civilization and protect the defenseless settlements was a delightful enterprise."<sup>5</sup>

Crook was a truly dedicated and professional soldier. He was a relentless campaigner, yet held a humanitarian view of his Indian adversaries. He was decisive and knowledgeable, and had an appreciation for the Indian mind. While he was considered by most hostile Indians as an extremely dangerous opponent, he was respected as one whose word could be trusted and who attempted to spare their women and children in battle. He championed many Indian causes during his career. Crook felt the Indian was an intellectual equal of any of the other nationalities assimilated into the country, and that he needed equal protection under a system of law which would allow for the settling of conflicts between Indians and whites. In a letter to the secretary of the Indian Right Movement, Crook stated:

If our aim be to remove the aborigine from a

state of servile dependence we cannot begin in a better or more practical way than by making him think well of himself, to force upon him the knowledge that he is part and parcel of the nation, clothed with all its political privileges, entitled to share in all its benefits. . . . To sum up my panacea for the Indian trouble is to make the Indian self-supporting, a condition which can never in my opinion, be attained so long as the privileges which have made labor honorable, respectable, and able to defend itself, be withheld from him.<sup>6</sup>

In reviewing Crook's entire career of association with Indians, there is no other soldier who accomplished so much so honorably as he did. The obvious question is why? What were the keys which allowed him to succeed in military missions with the highest degree of professionalism, and yet allowed him the feelings of compassion and empathy for the Indians? One was his feeling that the Indians had been treated unjustly. In an official paper he stated: "It goes against my conscience to fight Indians when I know that the right is on their side and the wrong on ours."<sup>7</sup> When considering the plight of the Indians in 1878, Crook felt the white man had:

Occupied about all the lands the Indians derived their living from . . . . The disappearance of the game, which means starvation, may seem a small thing to us, but to them it is their all, and he must be a very contemptible being who would not fight for his life.<sup>8</sup>

Crook truly believed the American Indians were human beings, gifted with the same feelings, infirmities, and temptations as the white man. He could appreciate the anxieties and fears they experienced when faced with the

culture shock of the advancing civilization of the white man. At the root of the answer of why George Crook was different, is that he understood the Indian more than any other white man. "He was himself in fact an Indian, with all the bad qualities and evil propensities of the race eliminated and replaced with good ones."<sup>9</sup>



## END NOTES

### Introduction

<sup>1</sup>Virginia Weisel Johnson, The UnRegimented General: A Biography of Nelson A. Miles (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1962), p. 257.

<sup>2</sup>George Crook, General George Crook - His Autobiography, ed. Martin F. Schmitt (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1946), xiii.

<sup>3</sup>Stephen Longstreet, War Cries on Horseback: The Story of the Indian Wars of the Great Plains (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company Inc., 1970), p. 91.

<sup>4</sup>Dee Alexander Brown, Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), p. 402.

<sup>5</sup>Robert V. Hine, The American West: An Interpretive History (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1973), p. 196.

<sup>6</sup>Ralph K. Andrist, The Long Death: The Last Days of the Plains Indians (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1964), p. 89. For complete details of this action see: U.S. Congress, Senate, Executive Document 26, 39th Cong., 2d Sess.; U.S. Congress, Senate, Executive Document 156, The Chivington Massacre, 39th Cong., 2d Sess.; Stan Hoig, The Sand Creek Massacre (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961).

<sup>7</sup>Andrist, The Long Death, p. 154.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>John Gregory Bourke, On the Border with Crook (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891), pp. 221-16.

<sup>10</sup>Crook, General George Crook: His Autobiography, p. xvii.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. xix.

<sup>12</sup>United States Military Academy, 1964 Register of Graduates and Former Cadets of the United States Military Academy 1802-1964 (West Point, New York: The West Point Alumni Foundation Inc., 1964), pp. 234-40.

<sup>13</sup>See: Memorial Services, Major-General George Crook, Omaha, March 23, 1890 (Omaha: 1890), p. 11.

<sup>14</sup>John Gregory Bourke, "General Crook in the Indian Country," Century, Vol. XLI, (March, 1891), pp. 643-60. Bourke stated the Apache gave Crook the name "The Gray Wolf" as a compliment to his wisdom, foresight and remarkably successful management, whether of a negotiation or of a campaign; Brown, Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee, p. 279, said that the Plains Indians called Crook "Three Stars" rather than "The Gray Wolf." Throughout the book, Brown referred to Crook as "Three Stars," however, Crook's highest rank was Major General (two stars), which he achieved on April 6, 1888.

<sup>15</sup>James T. King, "Needed: A Re-Evaluation of General George Crook," Nebraska History, September, 1964, p. 224.

<sup>16</sup>John Gregory Bourke, An Apache Campaign in the Sierra Madre (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), pp. 14-15.

## Chapter I

<sup>1</sup>Neil Baird Thompson, "Discipline and Morale of the U.S. Army Troops in the Division of the Missouri 1866-1876" (unpublished Master's Thesis, Kansas State University, 1950), p. 11.

<sup>2</sup>Russell E. Belous and Robert A. Weinstein, Will Soule: Indian Photographer at Fort Sill, Oklahoma 1869-1874 (Los Angeles: The Ward Ritchie Press, 1969), p. 4.

<sup>3</sup>Belous, Will Soule, p. 6.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>For personal descriptions of Crook, see: John Gregory Bourke, On the Border with Crook (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891), p. 268; Bourke, "General Crook in the

Indian Country," Century, Vol. XLI (March, 1891), p. 653; Robert M. Utley, "General Crook and the Paiutes," American History Illustrated, July, 1973, p. 39.

<sup>6</sup>George Crook, General George Crook - His Autobiography, ed. Martin F. Schmitt (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1946), p. xv.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Ernest R. Dupuy, Men of West Point (New York: William Sloane Associates, 1964), p. 92.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 93.

<sup>10</sup>Dee Alexander Brown, Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), pp. 170-72.

<sup>11</sup>Thomas E. Mails, The Mystic Warriors of the Plains (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1972), p. 550.

<sup>12</sup>Fred L. Israel (ed.), The State of the Union Messages of the Presidents 1790-1960 (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1967), II. An examination of the addresses of Presidents Fillmore, Pierce, and Buchanan in this volume, revealed very little mention of the Army in relation to the Indian problem.

<sup>13</sup>Robert W. Frazer (ed.), Mansfield on the Condition of the Western Forts 1853-1854 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), pp. 153-170. This volume is a narrative report of the condition of the forts in the Department of the Pacific as found during the inspection of Colonel Joseph King Fenno Mansfield in 1853-1854.

<sup>14</sup>Crook, General George Crook - His Autobiography, pp. 83-84.

<sup>15</sup>Ezra J. Warner, Generals in Blue (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1964), p. 97.

<sup>16</sup>Rutherford Birchard Hayes, Diary and Letters of Rutherford Birchard Hayes, ed. Charles Richard Williams (Columbus, Ohio: F. J. Heer Printing Co., 1926) IV; Also, see T. Harry Williams, Hayes of the Twenty-Third: The Civil War Volunteer Officer (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965).

## Chapter II

<sup>1</sup>For the best discussion of the military on the frontier, see: Robert M. Utley, Frontiersmen in Blue: The United States Army and the Indian, 1848-1865 (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1967) and Utley's Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1890 (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1973).

<sup>2</sup>Fred L. Israel (ed.), The State of the Union Messages of the Presidents 1970-1960 (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1967), II., p. 1139.

<sup>3</sup>This figure is based on an average of several different sources: Robert Harry Lowie, Indians of the Plains (New York: McGraw Hill, 1954), pp. 12-13 (91,000); Richard Irving Dodge, The Plains of the Great West and Their Inhabitants (New York: Archer House Inc., 1959), pp. 441-48 (109,005); Robert Leckie, The Wars of America (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1968), (200,000); Robert M. Utley, Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1890 (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1973), p. 4 (270,000); William Addleman Ganoe, The History of the United States Army (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1924), p. 298 (300,000); Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol. 12, (Chicago: William Benton, 1972), p. 65 (100,800). The number of arms-carrying males is based on a formula of five Indians per lodge, and two males between the ages of fifteen and forty-five per lodge.

<sup>4</sup>William Addleman Ganoe, The History of the United States Army (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1924), p. 298.

<sup>5</sup>Walter Millis, Arms and Men (New York: The New American Library, 1956), p. 118.

<sup>6</sup>David Nevin, The Soldiers (New York: Time-Life Books, 1973), p. 172.

<sup>7</sup>Stanley Russell Connor and Mary Lee Stubbs, Armor-Cavalry Part I: Regular Army and Army Reserve (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1969), p. 20.

<sup>8</sup>John Gregory Bourke, An Apache Campaign in the Sierra Madre (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958). This book is one of the best available accounts of Apache warfare and the most effective methods of countering it.

<sup>9</sup>Thomas E. Mails, The Mystic Warriors of the Plains (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1972), p. 17.

<sup>10</sup>Bourke, An Apache Campaign, p. 52.

<sup>11</sup>John F. Finerty, War-Path and Bivouac or The Conquest of the Sioux (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961), pp. 65-67.

<sup>12</sup>Nevins, The Soldiers, p. 178.

<sup>13</sup>Finerty, War-Path and Bivouac, pp. 73-74.

<sup>14</sup>Don Russell, The Lives and Legends of Buffalo Bill (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960), p. 244.

<sup>15</sup>Nevin, The Soldiers, p. 173; King, "Needed: A Re-Evaluation of General George Crook," pp. 224-26; Robert G. Athearn, William Tecumseh Sherman, and The Settlement of the West (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1956), p. 314.

<sup>16</sup>William Gardner Bell, "A Dedication to the Memory of John Gregory Bourke 1846-1896," Arizona and the West, Winter 1971, p. 320.

<sup>17</sup>Charles King, Campaigning with Crook and Stories of Army Life (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964), pp. 3-8.

<sup>18</sup>Finerty, War-Path and Bivouac, pp. 4-5.

<sup>19</sup>Utley, Frontier Regulars, p. 184.

<sup>20</sup>George Crook, General George Crook - His Autobiography, ed. Martin F. Schmitt (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1946), p. 143.

<sup>21</sup>Utley, Frontier Regulars, p. 185.

<sup>22</sup>For an account of this scout, see: Crook, General George Crook - His Autobiography, note on p. 147.

<sup>23</sup>Utley, Frontier Regulars, p. 185.

<sup>24</sup>U.S. Congress, Report of the Secretary of War, 40th Cong., 3d Sess., House Executive Document 1 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1868), pp. 71-72. Contains Crook's report of the surrender. He spells the Chief's name We-ah-wee-wah.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., pp. 43-44.

### Chapter III

<sup>1</sup>Henry G. Waltman, "Circumstantial Reformer: President Grant and the Indian Problem," Arizona and the West, Winter, 1971, pp. 324-25.

<sup>2</sup>Ralph Hedrich Ogle, Federal Control of the Western Apaches (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1970), p. xxiv.

<sup>3</sup>John Upton Terrell, Apache Chronicle (New York: World Publishing, 1972), p. 265.

<sup>4</sup>Ogle, Federal Control of the Western Apaches, p. 69.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. xxiii.

<sup>6</sup>Ogle, Federal Control of the Western Apaches, p. 73.

<sup>7</sup>Terrell, Apache Chronicle, pp. 268-269.

<sup>8</sup>Virginia Weisel Johnson, The Unregimented General: A Biography of Nelson A. Miles (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1962), p. 43.

<sup>9</sup>John Gregory Bourke, On the Border with Crook (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891), p. 180. Bourke stated that Crook arrived by stage in early June; Lockwood, The Apache Indians, p. 87, agreed on the transportation; but, Terrell, Apache Chronicle, p. 282, said Crook arrived in late June in an Army ambulance.

<sup>10</sup>Bourke, On the Border with Crook, p. 159.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 137.

<sup>12</sup>John Gregory Bourke, "General Crook in the Indian Country," Century, Vol. XLI, (March, 1891), p. 652.

<sup>13</sup>Terrell, Apache Chronicle, pp. 284-85.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 301.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 301.

<sup>16</sup>Bourke, On the Border with Crook, p. 182.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 212.

<sup>18</sup>Dan L. Thrapp, The Conquest of Apacheria (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967), p. 143. Crook's chronology was a little off. Cortez led a Spanish expedition into Mexico in 1519, Nelson Klose, A Concise Study Guide of the American Frontier (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1964), p. 20; Francis C. Lockwood's The Apache Indians (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938), p. 4, stated that the historical beginning of the Apache was 1540.

<sup>19</sup>Thrapp, The Conquest of Apacheria, p. 140.

<sup>20</sup>James T. King, "George Crook: Indian Fighter and Humanitarian," Arizona and the West, Winter, 1967, p. 342.

<sup>21</sup>Thrapp, The Conquest of Apacheria, p. 152, showed that Eskiminzin had fled the agency; however, on p. 155, he apparently forgot to count Eskiminzin when he wrote that there were only four renegade leaders off the reservation; Terrell, Apache Chronicle, p. 309, said there were five hostile leaders, including Eskiminzin, roaming the countryside.

<sup>22</sup>U.S. Congress, Report of the Secretary of War, 43rd Cong., 2d Sess., House Executive Document 1, Part 2, Vol. 1 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1874), pp. 61-63. This was Crook's account of the killing of the four renegade leaders in 1874. (Hereafter referred to as Secretary of War Report, 1874.)

<sup>23</sup>George Crook, "The Apache Problem," Journal of the Military Institution of the United States, 1886, p. 261.



<sup>24</sup>U.S. Congress, Secretary of War Report, 1874.  
For Major General J. M. Schofield's report of action, see pp. 56-57; for Crook's report, see pp. 60-66.

<sup>25</sup>The New York Times, April 11, 1875, p. 1, Col. 4.

<sup>26</sup>Terrell, Apache Chronicle, pp. 314-15.

#### Chapter IV

<sup>1</sup>Charles J. Kappler (ed.), Indian Affairs, Laws and Treaties (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1903), p. 771.

<sup>2</sup>Cyrus Townsend Brady, Indian Fights and Fighters (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1971), p. 184.

<sup>3</sup>Dee Alexander Brown, Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), p. 276; Edgar Irving Stewart, Custer's Luck (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1955), p. 62, gives the alternate spelling of Pa Sapa.

<sup>4</sup>Brown, Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee, p. 273; for a dissenting view, see Albert Britt, Great Indian Chiefs: A Study of Indian Leaders in the Two Hundred Year Struggle to Stop the White Advance (Freeport, New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1969), p. 199. Britt suggested that the Indians had no fondness for the Black Hills and no desire for the gold, that it was just obstinance on the part of the Indians to keep the whites out.

<sup>5</sup>Stewart, Custer's Luck, p. 61-65.

<sup>6</sup>Brady, Indian Fights and Fighters, pp. 183-84. Alternate spelling of Sitting Bull's tribe is Hunkpapa. Brown, Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee, p. 10.

<sup>7</sup>Brady, Indian Fights and Fighters, p. 228.

<sup>8</sup>U.S. Congress, Report of the Secretary of War, 43d Cong., 2d Sess., House Executive Document 1, part 2, Vol. 1 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1874), pp. 32-34. General Ord's annual report gave a good indication of the restlessness of the natives and the frequency of their skirmishes with the Army.



<sup>9</sup>U.S. Congress, Report of the Secretary of War, 44th Cong., 1st Sess., House Executive Document 1, Vol. 1 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1875), p. 69. Reports of Secretary of War Belknap, p. 21, and Lieutenant General Philip H. Sheridan, p. 56, indicated the dilemma the Army faced. They did not want war with the Indians, however, they felt unless the Government was able to reach a settlement with the Indians on the Black Hills, it would be inevitable.

<sup>10</sup>George Crook, General George Crook: His Autobiography, ed. Martin F. Schmitt (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1946), p. 190.

<sup>11</sup>Brown, Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee, pp. 284-85.

<sup>12</sup>J. W. Vaughn, The Reynolds Campaign on Powder River (Norman: The University of Oklahoma Press, 1961), p. 8. This work is an excellent account of Crook's winter campaign of 1876.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 100.

<sup>14</sup>John Gregory Bourke, On the Border with Crook (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891), p. 270.

<sup>15</sup>John Gregory Bourke, "Mackenzie's Last Fight with the Cheyenne's: A Winter Campaign in Wyoming and Montana," Journal of Military Service Institution 1890, p. 1.

<sup>16</sup>U.S. Congress, Report of the Secretary of War, 44th Cong., 2d Sess., House Executive Document 1, Part 2, Vol. 1 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1876), pp. 30-35. (Hereafter referred to as Secretary of War Report, 1876.)

<sup>17</sup>John F. Finerty, War-Path and Bivouac (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961), pp. 64-72. This chapter provides an interesting account of the arrival of the scouts.

<sup>18</sup>U.S. Congress, Secretary of War Report, 1876, p. 30; U.S. War Department, Record of Engagements with Hostile Indians within the Military Division of the Missouri from 1868 to 1882 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1882), p. 60.

<sup>19</sup>J. W. Vaughn, With Crook at the Rosebud (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: The Stackpole Company, 1956), pp. 160-61.

<sup>20</sup>James T. King, "Needed: A Re-Evaluation of General Crook," Nebraska History, September, 1964, pp. 223-34.

<sup>21</sup>Henry Lee Scott, Military Dictionary (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968), p. 503.

<sup>22</sup>Lonnie J. White, Hostiles and Horse Soldiers: Indian Battles and Campaigns in the West (Boulder, Colorado: Pruett Publishing Company, 1972), p. 177.

<sup>23</sup>Joe DeBarth, Life and Adventures of Frank Grouard, ed. Edgar Irving Stewart (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958), p. 123; Bourke, On the Border with Crook, pp. 336-41; U.S. Congress, Secretary of War Report, 1876, p. 507.

<sup>24</sup>Don Russell, The Lives and Legends of Buffalo Bill (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960), p. 238.

<sup>25</sup>Bourke, On the Border with Crook, p. 349-50.

<sup>26</sup>Finerty, War-Path and Bivouac, pp. 153-54.

<sup>27</sup>U.S. Congress, Secretary of War Report, 1876, p. 504.

<sup>28</sup>Russell, The Lives and Legends of Buffalo Bill, p. 239.

<sup>29</sup>J. W. Vaughn, Indian Fights: New Facts on New Engagements (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1966), p. 187; J. W. Vaughn, With Crook at the Rosebud, preface; Charles King, Campaigning with Crook (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964), p. 63.

<sup>30</sup>King, Campaigning with Crook, p. 88.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 75.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 69-70.

<sup>33</sup>U.S. Congress, Secretary of War Report, 1876, pp. 36-37.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., pp. 505-06.

<sup>35</sup>White, Hostiles and Horse Soldiers, p. 188.

<sup>36</sup>Vaughn, With Crook on the Rosebud, p. 46. Vaughn gives number of warriors at 1,500; Bourke, On the Border with Crook, p. 311. This account claimed that Crazy Horse stated after his capture that he had 6,500 warriors at the Rosebud. The correct figure probably lies somewhere in between those figures.

<sup>37</sup>Crook, General George Crook: His Autobiography, pp. 215-16; Brown, Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee, pp. 306-310; Ralph K. Andrist, The Long Death: The Last Days of the Plains Indians (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1964), pp. 297-300.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 217.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., pp. 228-30.

<sup>40</sup>U.S. Congress, Report of the Secretary of War, 46th Cong., 2d Sess., House Executive Document 1, Part 2 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1879), p. 78.

<sup>41</sup>Brown, Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee, pp. 359-60.

<sup>42</sup>Crook, General Crook: His Autobiography, pp. 243-44.

## Chapter V

<sup>1</sup>Dan L. Thrapp, General Crook and the Sierra Madre Adventure (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972), p. 13.

<sup>2</sup>Robert M. Utley, Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1890 (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1973), p. 387.

<sup>3</sup>Dee Alexander Brown, Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), p. 402.

<sup>4</sup>U.S. Congress, Report of the Secretary of War, 48th Cong., 1st Sess., House Executive Document 1, Part 2 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1883), pp. 159-60. (Hereafter referred to as Secretary of War Report, 1883.)

<sup>5</sup>John Upton Terrell, Apache Chronicle (New York: World Publishing, 1972), pp. 358-59.

<sup>6</sup>Ralph Hedrich Ogle, Federal Control of the Western Apaches (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1970), p. 216.

<sup>7</sup>U.S. Congress, Secretary of War Report, 1883, pp. 163-64.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 172.

<sup>9</sup>John Gregory Bourke, On the Border with Crook (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891), p. 434.

<sup>10</sup>U.S. Congress, Secretary of War Report, 1883, pp. 170-71.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 161.

<sup>12</sup>Bourke, On the Border with Crook, p. 32; Also called "Tse-ay" in Terrell, Apache Chronicle, p. 362; "Tzoe" in Utley, Frontier Regulars, p. 389; "Tso-ay," Dan L. Thrapp, The Conquest of Apacheria, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967), p. 272.

<sup>13</sup>U.S. Congress, Secretary of War Report, 1883, p. 173.

<sup>14</sup>E. M. Halliday, "Geronimo," American Heritage, June, 1966, p. 63.

<sup>15</sup>Thrapp, General Crook and the Sierra Madre Adventure, p. 140.

<sup>16</sup>U.S. Congress, Secretary of War Report, 1883, p. 176. Crook spells Geronimo as Jeronimo in his report.

<sup>17</sup>Halliday, "Geronimo," p. 106.

<sup>18</sup>Thrapp, General Crook and the Sierra Madre Adventure, p. 177.

<sup>19</sup>James T. King, "George Crook: Indian Fighter and Humanitarian," Arizona and the West, Winter, 1967, p. 344.

<sup>20</sup>Charles P. Elliott, "An Indian Reservation under George Crook," Military Affairs, XII (1948), 95-97.

<sup>21</sup>U.S. Congress, Report of the Secretary of War, 49th Cong., 1st Sess., House Executive Document 1, Part 2 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1885), pp. 174-75. (Hereafter referred to as Secretary of War Report, 1885.)

<sup>22</sup>U.S. Congress, Report of the Secretary of War, 48th Cong., 2d Sess., House Executive Document 1, Part 2 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1884), p. 134.

<sup>23</sup>Thrapp, Conquest of Apacheria, pp. 311-18.

<sup>24</sup>U.S. Congress, Secretary of War Report, 1885, p. 178.

<sup>25</sup>Brown, Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee, p. 409.

<sup>26</sup>Bourke, On the Border with Crook, p. 479.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 482-85. Contains an excellent discussion of this event.

<sup>28</sup>U.S. Congress, Report of the Secretary of War, 49th Cong., 2d Sess., House Executive Document 1, Part 2 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1886), pp. 164-65.

<sup>29</sup>George Crook, General George Crook: His Autobiography, ed. Martin F. Schmitt (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1946), p. 267.

<sup>30</sup>Bourke, On the Border with Crook, pp. 486-87.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 487.

## Epilogue

<sup>1</sup>John Gregory Bourke, On the Border with Crook (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891), p. 181.

<sup>2</sup>Rutherford Birchard Hayes, Diary and Letters of Rutherford Birchard Hayes, ed. Charles Richard Williams (Columbus, Ohio: F. J. Heer Printing Co., 1926) IV, 58.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 465-66.

<sup>4</sup>David Nevin, The Soldiers (New York: Time-Life Books, 1973), pp. 167-78.

<sup>5</sup>Nelson Appleton Miles, Serving the Republic: Memoirs of the Civil and Military Life of Nelson Appleton Miles, Lieutenant General United States Army (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1911), p. 143.

<sup>6</sup>George Crook, Letter from George Crook on Giving Ballot to Indians, January, 1885.

<sup>7</sup>Lawrie Tatum, Our Red Brothers and the Peace Policy of President U. S. Grant (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1970), p. 15.

<sup>8</sup>Cyrus Townsend Brady, Indian Fights and Fighters (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1971), p. 184.

<sup>9</sup>See: Memorial Services, Major-General George Crook, Omaha, March 23, 1890 (Omaha: 1890), p. 8.

## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

There are seven books which are basic to the study of General George Crook. The largest and most valuable of these is On the Border with Crook (1891), written by John G. Bourke. Bourke was assigned to Crook's staff in 1871 and remained with the General through all his major Indian campaigns. He was a close friend until Crook's death. Bourke, who wrote this work from a personal diary he maintained, was not attempting to write a biography of Crook although he wrote much about Crook's personality traits. On the Border with Crook contains descriptions of the geographical areas in which Crook conducted his campaigns, accounts of the people Crook dealt with, both red and white, and the manner in which he accomplished his duties. Obviously, the book is highly complimentary to Crook; however, based on eyewitness accounts of the author who was widely recognized as a scholar in the late nineteenth century, it is an accurate reservoir of information. General George Crook: His Autobiography (1946), edited by Martin F. Schmitt, is also an excellent source of information about Crook. The General wrote the manuscript sometime between 1886 and 1890. It begins with Crook's graduation from West Point, then follows his career until stopping abruptly on June 18, 1876, the day after

Crook's battle with the Sioux on the Rosebud River. Like all autobiographies, the author used it as an opportunity to express his views and elevate his stature. Through the use of extensive footnotes and appendices, however, Schmitt has kept the book factual. Throughout this work, Crook was fairly critical of most contemporaries, especially in the two chapters dealing with his Civil War experiences.

Two other authors have written favorable books about Crook, concentrating on the Big Horn-Yellowstone Expedition against the Sioux in 1876. Charles King wrote Campaigning with Crook (1890) based on his personal experiences and observations while a member of Crook's command. The prolific King wrote these sketches of the 1876 Sioux Campaign at the request of a newspaper editor in 1880, and they were later consolidated into a book. King, who was a lieutenant in the Fifth Cavalry, was also complimentary to Crook, and provided good insight to his actions and attitudes from a soldier's standpoint.

During the march of the Fifth Cavalry to join Crook's column, King witnessed the famous "duel" between Buffalo Bill Cody and the Cheyenne warrior, Yellow Hand. While King's account is somewhat less dramatic than the celluloid version, it is still quite interesting.

Another firsthand account of the 1876 Sioux Campaign was provided by John F. Finerty in War-Path and Bivouac (1890). Finerty was a newspaper correspondent



who accompanied Crook's column and participated freely in the action. He was well liked and accepted by the soldiers; his reciprocal feelings are obvious from the tone of his book. Like King, Finerty had high praise for Crook's conduct of the operation and gave some interesting views of Crook's personality. Finerty was a member of the Sibley Scout and provided a detailed account of that episode.

J. W. Vaughn, in his With Crook on the Rosebud (1956), has concentrated mainly on the June 17, 1876, battle between Crook's column and the Sioux under Crazy Horse. This battle has been the focus of considerable controversy. While Vaughn attempted to portray both sides of the story, it was critical of Crook's actions. The author stated that his purpose was to recount this battle as accurately as possible, for it may have been a turning point in history. The accounts of the battle have validity; however, the author's interpretation of the importance of the battle and its indirect results is questionable. Vaughn also made some incorrect assumptions of Crook's opinion of the Indians' fighting ability. The overall validity of the book becomes suspect in view of a footnote which stated that Crook's daughter married the Confederate Cavalry leader, J. E. B. Stuart, while, in fact, Crook had no children.

Crook's campaign into Mexico in 1883 in pursuit of hostile Apache has been well documented in Dan L. Thrapp's General Crook and the Sierra Madre Adventure (1972). Thrapp

presented a detailed account of Crook's mission and delineated the chain of events which made the expedition necessary. The author had a good background on the subject of the Apache, as he had authored two other books dealing with much the same subject, Al Sieber: Chief of Scouts (1964) and The Conquest of Apacheria (1967). Both of these books contain small favorable accounts of Crook's two Apache campaigns. In General Crook and the Sierra Madre Adventure, Thrapp had high praise for Crook and concluded that no other white man understood the Apache like Crook. A major weakness in this book, however, is that over half of it deals with background causes, and less than half is focused on the actual campaign.

A short but valuable source of information is Bourke's An Apache Campaign in the Sierra Madre (1958), originally published serially in Outing Magazine in 1885. This small volume concentrated specifically on the 1883 campaign against the hostile Chiricahua, and is a classic explanation of a successful counter-guerrilla operation. Bourke accumulated the data for this book while accompanying Crook on that expedition. Later, portions of this book were included in the previously mentioned On the Border with Crook.

There are numerous other books dealing with the conflicts between the frontier Army and the Indians from 1853-1890, which contain chapters or sections that are complimentary to Crook, however, they are too numerous to

mention. A portion of those critical of Crook will be discussed later in this essay.

An article very favorable to Crook entitled "George Crook: Indian Fighter and Humanitarian" by James T. King was published in Arizona and the West (Winter 1967). As implied by the title, Professor King concentrated on the humanitarian aspect of Crook throughout his Indian-fighting career. This article is in great contrast to one published by the same author in Nebraska History (September, 1964) entitled "Needed: A Re-Evaluation of General Crook," which was very critical of Crook's tactical decisions following the Battle of the Rosebud in June, 1876. There are some questionable facts and interpretations in this article. It appeared in the same issue of Nebraska History as a review of King's biography of General Eugene Carr and was possibly written to enhance Carr's image. The more recent article praising Crook may well be accounted for by the fact that King is currently working on a biography of Crook.

For excellent accounts of the frontier Army, its development, congressional relationships, personnel, equipment, lifestyle, and Indian battles, see the sequential works by Robert M. Utley, Frontiersmen in Blue: The United States Army and the Indian 1848-1865 (1967) and Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian 1866-1891 (1973). Utley made extensive use of official government records in writing these books. Both are well documented

and contain a large bibliography.

One of the best accounts of the enlisted soldier in the frontier Army is Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay (1963) by Don Rickey, Jr. This book covered all aspects of the life of the enlisted man, and was based on interviews, questionnaires and accounts provided by more than three hundred veterans of the Indian War. For additional material on conditions in the frontier Army, see the unpublished master's thesis by Neil Baird Thompson, "Discipline and Morale of the United States Army Troops in the Division of the Missouri 1866-1876" (1950).

One chapter of S. L. A. Marshall's The Crimsoned Prairie (1972) was devoted to the actions of Crook at the Rosebud Battle. The tone of this chapter is critical of Crook, but very defensive of the Army. Poorly written and factually inaccurate, Marshall was working outside his field with little research to support his findings. In the critical vein, another article by James T. King, entitled "General Crook at Camp Cloud Peak: 'I am at a Loss What to Do,'" appeared in Lonnie J. White's Hostiles and Horse Soldiers (1972). This article is very similar to the one which appeared in Nebraska History and questioned Crook's tactical decisions. Official government records and personal accounts have generally discredited these attacks on Crook's actions.

The best source for information about Crook's Civil

War Years can be found in the United States War Department's The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies (1880-1901). This extensive set contains reports, records, orders, and accounts of battles from both antagonists. The Diary and Letters of Rutherford Birchard Hayes (1926), edited by Charles Richard Williams, provides information favorable to Crook. Hayes served as a staff officer and commander of Crook during most of the War. H. A. DuPont's The Campaign of 1864 in the Valley of Virginia (1925) also provides complimentary comment on Crook. The only minor criticism of Crook during the Civil War is contained T. Harry William's Hayes of the Twenty-Third (1965), which discredits some of the favorable comments of R. B. Hayes.

The best work on the Apache is The Apache Indians (1938) by Frank C. Lockwood. Crook's two Apache campaigns are each covered in a highly complimentary chapter. A good chronological account of Apache problems in the Southwest and favorable to Crook's involvement in them is contained in John Upton Terrell's Apache Chronicle (1972).

There are many books which present the conflict between Indians and whites on the Plains in a view sympathetic to the Indians. Most of these books have only token information on Crook but are valuable for general background. The Long Death (1964) by Ralph K. Andrist provided excellent accounts of the numerous conflicts on the Plains, which

culminated in final defeat for these Indians at Wounded Knee, December 29, 1890. Dee Brown's Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee (1970) is interesting reading, however, it is extremely biased in its approach. It attempts to view the settlement of the West through the eyes of an Indian. The Fighting Cheyennes (1915), by George Bird Brinnell, is a good account of the Indians' point of view.

An excellent source of data on the various Indian tribes of the Plains is The Mystic Warriors of the Plains (1972) by Thomas E. Mails. This extensive volume contains many illustrations and provided detailed description of the life ways and life styles of the Plains Indians at their cultural peak.

Official sources of information pertaining to Crook's frontier activities are the annual official Reports of the Secretary of War. They are indispensable primary documents which provide vast quantities of uninterpreted data.

The memoirs and accounts of Crook's contemporaries, such as Grant, Sherman, and Sheridan, contain little information on Crook. Evidence of the long and bitter feud between Nelson A. Miles and Crook are found in Miles' memoirs, Personal Recollections and Observations of General Nelson A. Miles (1969) and in The Unregimented General: A Biography of Nelson A. Miles (1962), by Virginia Weisel Johnson.

There are, of course, many additional sources covering this subject. Those mentioned here were of significant use in the preparation of this thesis.

INDIAN FIGHTER AND INDIAN FRIEND  
GENERAL GEORGE CROOK 1853-1890

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S THESIS

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## ABSTRACT

George Crook was a relatively unknown general, instrumental in the final subjugation of the Indian tribes of the American West. His effective yet humanitarian approach to Indian problems was unusual. This thesis attempts to determine why he was so unique among his contemporaries.

Crook's campaigns in the West are followed, as well as the five years he spent away from the frontier, to determine their influence on Crook's benevolence toward the Indians. His early years on the frontier were spent in California and the Pacific Northwest. There, young and impressionable Crook was influenced by the character and attitude of the frontier Army and western settlers, and by the nature of the Indians. His Indian fighting experiences were minimal during this period.

Crook returned to the Northwest after the Civil War, and through several tactical innovations and honest diplomacy, he conducted successful campaigns against the Paiute and other Indians. His career was greatly enhanced by these successes and he was elevated past many of his contemporaries to a highly sought after command position.

Indian troubles brought a highly recommended Crook to the Southwest in 1871 to campaign against the Apache who

had constantly terrorized that area for more than two centuries. A detailed analysis of the situation, some brilliant tactical innovations and a straight forward and sympathetic approach to the Apache problem enabled Crook to bring peace to the Department of Arizona. His management of the Apache reservations was based on the premises of honest administration backed by sufficient force and a revenue-producing economy. Crook's reputation reached its zenith during this period, and he was transferred to the Northern Plains which was the newest trouble spot. The more numerous and superbly mounted Plains Indians presented Crook with a new situation. His first campaign in early 1876 was indecisive. The Big Horn-Yellowstone Campaign the following spring and summer provided the Indians with their greatest post-war victory, the Custer Massacre. For his actions, Crook was embroiled in lasting controversy.

Although his reputation had been somewhat dimmed, the Army still considered Crook its most efficient Indian-fighter and sent him back to Arizona in 1881. There he conducted a classic counter-guerrilla campaign into Mexico and returned the hostiles to the reservation. Following a minor breakout in 1886, Crook was chastised by Commanding General Sheridan for not demanding unconditional surrender. He considered this policy unjust and requested and obtained release from his command.

Crook's philosophy evolved throughout his career to

one of increasing benevolence toward Indians. He was unique among major Army leaders in that he understood the Indians, considered them as human beings and felt compassion and empathy for them.

The research for this thesis was done from a wide variety of primary and secondary sources. The basic works were Bourke's On the Border with Crook, and Crook's General George Crook: His Autobiography. The official Secretary of War Reports were valuable for accounts of various campaigns, and The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, provided information about Crook's Civil War years. Lockwood's The Apache Indians was the basic source for the Apache. Robert Utley's two books, Frontiersmen in Blue and Frontier Regulars, provided a good account of the condition and attitude of the frontier Army and the Indians from 1848 to 1890. These books and other sources support the position that Crook was truly a unique military leader during this period.