

Fort Huachuca: A Sense of Place

Places give off a powerful sense of identity. People define themselves by the surroundings in which they feel familiar and comfortable. When they moved to new worlds, they labeled these new environs with the names of the places from which they had come. History merges quietly into geography and becomes indistinguishable from it. A locale becomes known for the events that transpired there and the people who inhabited it. Likewise, events and people are marked unmistakably by the place they call home. Values and ideas root in the neighborhood soil and how one hews to these values and ideas marks them as credits or disgraces to the community.

Nowhere is the interplay of geography and history more vivid than in the military operations of Arizona and New Mexico. The American Southwest was a sun-blasted laboratory in which the theory of “survival of the fittest” was reconfirmed. Only those species of man, beast, and flora that could quickly adapt to the inhospitable terrain would triumph.

The Huachucas are a storehouse of impressions, ideas about this place that cumulatively form its identity. The mountains themselves serve as historic markers for under their commanding presence have transpired centuries of change, drama both tragic and comic. They are landscape as artifact. Though languages, customs, beliefs and values have evolved over the centuries during which man has inhabited the San Pedro and Santa Cruz Valleys, that ridgeline of the Huachuca Mountains has changed not at all. It is as familiar to those of us who gaze upon it each day as it was

to the Indians, missionaries, explorers, miners, ranchers, soldiers and other history-makers. Silent witnesses to millenia of human struggle, these mountain ramparts will also preside over history yet unmade.

It would be difficult to find another spot on the globe where nature has created a more bizarre array, where geology hunkers on every horizon. The Huachucas are Precambrian granite bedrock accumulated and compressed as long ago as 1,700 million years. In more recent times, some 30 million years ago (oligocene, part of the cenozoic), explosive volcanism threw up lava and welded tuff, volcanic ash hardened by its original heat and gases. It is geology made frightening by what it reveals of time, incomprehensible from our infinitesimal peephole. Motes of quartz, the same dust that blinks your eye and abrades your windshield, blown by timeless winds, sand-blasting, rounding off granite, and then these quartz particles, this sediment, recombines to become sandstone until it too is chipped away at by other wind-driven particles, a cycle that may last 200 million years.

The American soldiers who in 1877 hewed and hacked out a crude haven in the windswept canyon mouth today known as Fort Huachuca were hardly the first to seek shelter in the lee of these sierras. Others had made the trip before into the valley of the Huachucas. The San Pedro Valley had its attractions as long as 11,000 years ago. Prehistoric men would gather here to loose their spears into bog-mired mammoths and leave their projectile points lying around, like careless tourists, to be picked up by thoughtful archaeologists over ten millennia later. Some of those who have sifted through their litter speculate that these may have been the first inhabitants of our continent, enabling us to take that speculation one step further and claim that the first Huachucans may have

been the first Americans.

These were the Clovis-Cochise hunters. As the climate became drier, the Clovis-Cochise people became gatherers. In the next chapter in Paleoindian history in southeastern Arizona, the San Pedro Valley became the scene for the overlap between two cultures: The Mogollon, a people who ranged from the confluence of the Salt and Little Colorado Rivers south to the mountains of southeastern Arizona; and the Hohokam who moved into southeastern Arizona and New Mexico from the south. Both of these cultures also show influences from the Anasazi people to the north.

Dr. Emil Haury dates the Hohokam in the Southwest from about 200 A.D. and divides them into the four periods of Pioneer, Colonial, Sedentary and Classic, until the culture fades in about 1400 A.D. The name Hohokam was assigned to these people by pioneer Southwestern archaeologist Harold Gladwin. It was taken from a Pima Indian expression which translates “those who have gone” or “all used up.”¹

Dr. Charles Di Peso, who did extensive work in the area between the Huachucas and the San Pedro Valley puts forward an alternate theory. He interprets the cultures believed to be a blending of Mogollon and Hohokam as a single people whom he calls the O’otam. These were the old local inhabitants of southern Arizona and New Mexico who were associated with the late Cochise culture and the ancestors of today’s Tohono O’otam Indians. According to Di Peso, they were assimilated by the Hohokam people who pushed northward from Mexico in about 900 A.D. and settled among the Ootam. The Hohokam brought progress with them and introduced new means of irrigating the desert, different pottery techniques, ornamental shellwork and a ball game resembling kickball.

The Hohokam settled in large communities, built extensive irrigation canals, and lived within a stratified social system. These patterns are different from the earlier O'otam lifeways, so Di Peso and others believe them to be migrants from Mexico. Di Peso compresses the time frame for the Hohokam to about 350 years from 900 to 1250 A.D.

In what is believed to be the first archaeological field expedition conducted under U.S. Army sponsorship, Jon Nathan Young, a University of Arizona graduate student, supervised the excavation of a fifteenth century Hohokam Indian settlement in Fort Huachuca's Garden Canyon in 1964. Young thought the Garden Canyon people were fairly advanced. "On the whole, the material culture of the people who inhabited Garden Canyon during the late prehistoric period was rich and varied. The relative scarcity of bone artifacts is, undoubtedly, attributable to the nature of the site, which was not especially conducive to the preservation of items of a more perishable nature. The quality and quantity of the shell artifacts is a testimony that the people of Garden Canyon had reached a relatively high level of culture which could command artifacts, or, perhaps, raw materials, which had their points of origin at least as far away as the Gulf of Mexico or the coast of California."²

Traces of the Hohokam disappear after 1400 A.D., the people probably forced out of their homelands by an enemy, possibly the Athapascan Apache. Or they may have been assimilated by the Mogollon and Anasazi cultures. Some undoubtedly stayed on in southern Arizona to later appear as the Papago and Pima tribes, who today share some of the social and cultural traits of the Hohokam.

The Babocomari River, which takes its name from a Spanish land grant of the area, runs east and west just north of the Huachuca Mountain range. It is a tributary of the San Pedro River to the east. In 1948 and 1949 Dr. Charles Di Peso excavated an Indian village which was situated against the northern foothills of the Huachucas. DiPeso calls the villagers Babocomarites and postulates, based on the types of pottery found there, that they moved into the river valley between 1200 and 1450 A.D. He concluded that

...in late prehistoric times, an agricultural people who had certain affiliations with the people to the south, in Sonora, Mexico, and peripheral to the Chihuahuan Culture area, moved into the area of the eastern slopes of the Huachuca Mountains. They came unmolested, and built at least four loosely knit villages, and apparently were at peace with the world and busied themselves with their farming. One of the villages was the Babocomari Village. As the prologue of the historic period evolved, we find that the early Spanish found a people termed the Sobaipuris living in the area. These people were, so to speak, the buffer against the Apache Indian attacks coming from the east, and the peaceful Papago-Pima groups living to the west. It is still a moot question as to whether the Babocomarites were the forerunners of the Sobaipuris or not. There are strong archaeological suggestions for and against this possibility which can be solved only when a recognized historical site, bearing the remains of the Sobaipuris, is excavated, and the materials coming from the Babocomari village are compared with this Sobaipuri village.”³

The next step in the quest for answers about the Huachuca people to which DiPeso referred

shifts our interest to a site called Quiburi just north of Fairbanks on the San Pedro River, midway between Fort Huachuca and Tombstone. It was investigated in 1950 and 1951 in order to bridge the gap between the late prehistoric period of the Garden Canyon people and the Babocomarites and the early historic period when the Spanish recorded encountering the Sobaipuri Indians. The study established that the inhabitants of the Babocomari village discussed earlier were a people known as Pima Proper, a group historically distinct from the Sobaipuri of Quiburi.

The historical record shows that the Spanish colonizers cultivated the Sobaipuris as an ally against the Apache. Despite their warlike nature, the Sobaipuris were no match for the Apaches who raided from the north and drove them out of the San Pedro Valley in 1698 and again in 1762. By the end of the eighteenth century they had moved to San Xavier del Bac and Santa Maria Soanca.

The Apaches are members of the Athapascan language family. The largest number of Indians speaking this language are found in the interior of Alaska and in the Canadian northwest. Those that found their way to the American Southwest, probably by way of the western plains or the Rockies, are comprised of seven tribes. The Navaho settled in the northern parts of Arizona and New Mexico, that land once occupied by the old Anasazi. The Mescalero, Lipan and Kiowa Apaches ranged through eastern New Mexico, Oklahoma and western and southern Texas. The Jicarila Apaches lived in northeastern New Mexico and adjacent areas. The Western Apaches populated central Arizona and were bordered on the north by the Navaho, and on the west by the Pima and on the south by the Yumas. The Chiricahua Apache roamed the area of southeastern Arizona and southwestern New Mexico. They are believed to have entered the Southwest in about

1500 A.D.

At the dawn of European discovery, a new people spread into the vicinity of the Huachucas. They were the Children of the Sun, the Spanish explorers who were driven into these arid lands by the lust for gold and empire. The first Europeans to trod Huachuca horizons were Cabeza de Vaca and Estevan de Dorantes who passed through the southeasternmost corner of what is today the state of Arizona in 1539. They had been shipwrecked on the coast of Texas eight years earlier and made their remarkable trek from the vicinity of Galveston west to Douglas, then south to Sinaloa, Mexico. They retailed stories about fabulous riches in the civilizations to the north and reenkindled the feverish quest for the fabled Seven Cities of gold or Cibola.

Appointed in 1539 to lead the expedition into Arizona in search of Cibola was Francisco Vasquez de Coronado. He had come to the new world with viceroy Antonio de Mendoza and was serving as governor of Nueva Galicia, New Spain's northernmost province. Following Fray Marcos de Niza's preliminary 1539 exploration and glowing reports of untold wealth in the Seven Cities, Coronado set out with 336 Spanish cavalry, 1,000 Indian allies and 1,500 horses, mules, and uncounted cattle and sheep. In the Spring he and his advance guard crossed into what is today Arizona at a point visible from the Huachuca Mountains. On July 7, 1540, his army reached its goal, the Zuni Indian pueblo of Hawikuh. He found no riches, only Indians willing to fight for their meager food supply. After continuing as far east as Wichita, Kansas, he returned to Mexico City in the spring of 1542 to face charges for his failure. He was absolved six years later. The Coronado National Monument in the southern Huachucas commemorates this conquistador.

Though he failed to find any golden cities, or for that matter even any territory worth colonizing, Coronado did hear from an Indian whom they called “Turk” that there was a rich land farther to the east called Quivara. This was enough to fire the imaginations of those still interested in the mineral wealth of the far-reaching northern outposts of New Spain. They marched into Arizona and New Mexico, across deserts and over mountain ranges, picking their way through the bizarre flora and fauna that would now bear Spanish designations, names like mesquite, desert mariposa, ocotillo, cholla, paloverde, saguaro, jojoba, yucca, agave and manzanita. In the course of their wide-ranging explorations, they would meet, convert, and subjugate the land’s Indians. These natives had not always been at peace with one another, but they were united now with one thought—to resist to the death the Spanish invaders of their homelands. They unlimbered their bows and picked up rocks to hurl at the armored Iberians. It was the battle of the Stone Age against the Iron Age and, after much bloodshed, the advanced European armies would prevail.

The adventures of the Spanish soldier on a frontier they called “el fin del mundo,” or “the end of the world,” are tales of hardship, of heroism, of success and failure, and too often were tragedies arising out of the clash of cultures. The Spanish were operating in the borderlands of New Spain for three centuries before the United States conquered the region. The story of their struggles and triumphs are prologue to the U.S. Army’s operations in the indomitable and sanguinary American Southwest.

After the Spanish conquistadors came the soldiers of Jesus, and foremost among them was Eusebio Francisco Kino who entered southern Arizona in 1691 to found the mission of San Cayetano

de Tumacacori. Gradually he worked as far north as the Gila River, mapping, exploring, preaching and giving agricultural instruction. By the time of his death, the scholarly Jesuit had added a new region to the Spanish domain. San Xavier del Bac is one of his better known missions. A fellow traveler described him as a man of courage and frugality: “He never had any other bed than the sweat blankets of his horse for a mattress and two Indian blankets. He never had more than two coarse shirts, because he gave everything as alms to the Indians.”⁴

In 1696 Kino introduced cattle and horses into the San Pedro Valley at Quiburi, a Sobaipuri Indian village located between present-day Fort Huachuca and Tombstone. Kino enlisted the Sobaipuris as allies of the Spanish against the Apaches and they proved to be effective warriors, routing a combined party of Jocomé, Mansos, and Apache raiders in the battle of Santa Cruz in 1698. The Apaches returned for revenge later that same year and eventually drove the Sobaipuri out of the San Pedro Valley.

The Spanish intensified their efforts to fortify their northernmost colonies after a 1751 uprising by the Pima Indians. They built a presidio at Tubac in 1752 to protect their settlers while the Jesuits maintained a mission just three miles away at Tumacacori. From Tubac in 1774 was launched the expedition of Juan Bautista de Anza to open an overland route to California. The presidio at Tubac was replaced by a new fort in Tucson in 1776 to meet the increasing Apache threat in the north.

The San Pedro was a strategic key to the Spanish defense of their colonies and they built a fortress, the presidio of Santa Cruz de Terrenate, at Quiburi in 1772, ten years after their allies, the

Sobaipuri, had abandoned it. But even this fortified position could not withstand the onslaught of the Apache and it was vacated and transferred to Sonora in 1789 leaving the entire San Pedro Valley and Huachuca Mountains under the sway of the Apaches. These fierce warriors would dominate the area for the next 70 years until the arrival of the U.S. Army and the ensuing Apache Campaign.

We live in a place that has evoked in its former inhabitants or visitors strong feelings. The mountains which are daily on our horizon have left their mark in the consciousness of those who have come here before us. As one former Huachucan has put it: “These mountains, never out of sight, are never out of mind. Their presence—brooding, reclusive, and strangely inviting—hammers the soul.”⁵

One of the earliest commentators to be hammered by the Huachucas was a Spanish captain named Nicolas LaFora. He was an engineer officer who accompanied the Marquez de Rubi on an inspection tour of the Spanish frontier during which they covered some 7,600 miles. The captain’s diary has survived to give us a picture of conditions on the war-torn northern frontier of New Spain at a time when the Apaches plundered at will. A decade before the United States declared themselves independent, he wrote in 1766:

...despite the danger, settlers plant on the banks of the San Pedro River in the Sobaipuris valley.... They maintain a storehouse there which has been burned two or three times by the enemy. This valley is very suitable for settlement and it would be well to move the presidio there so that settlers might gather under its protection. Undoubtedly they would be attracted by the good and abundant land there. In time this would facilitate and encourage work in the

mines in the adjacent mountains, especially in the Guachuca mountains, which are now producing good silver, notwithstanding the scarcity of people and the excessive risk [from Apaches].”⁶

So more than 200 years ago, the first Europeans thought this a good place to settle down. But despite this early Chamber of Commerce promotional effort, the Americans, with the exception of a few mountain men, would not arrive on the scene until some 70 years later.

The first of the mountain men, American fur trappers who made their headquarters in Santa Fe, to enter and record his impressions of Arizona was James Ohio Pattie. Pattie was a young man when he first joined his father’s party of trappers in 1824. In the next few years he would criss-cross what was then northern Mexico and is today southern Arizona in search of beaver pelts. In 1825 he made a trip down the San Pedro and described the javelina he found in the same neighborhood Captain LaFora had looked at fifty years earlier.

Its banks are still plentifully timbered with cottonwood and willow. The bottoms on each side afford a fine soil for cultivation. From these bottoms the hills rise to an enormous height, and their summits are covered with perpetual snow. In these bottoms are great numbers of wild hogs, of a species entirely different from our domestic swine. ...The country presents the aspect of having been once settled at some remote period of the past. Great quantities of broken pottery are scattered over the ground and there are distinct traces of ditches and stone walls, some of them as high as a man’s breast, with very broad foundations.⁷

After the mountain men came the U.S. Army which first penetrated this Indian-Spanish enclave in 1846 during the Mexican War. The Army of the West marched out of Fort Leavenworth, Missouri, under Stephen Watts Kearny, and traversed today's American Southwest, claiming it for the United States.

One wing of Kearny's army was charged with finding and building a wagon route from the Rio Grande to San Diego. It was the Mormon Battalion led by a regular Army dragoon officer, Lieutenant Colonel Phillip St. George Cooke. They walked west from Guadalupe Pass in the southeastern most corner of Arizona to the San Pedro River, and then north. In his journal Colonel Cooke described his march from the Mule Mountains at Bisbee toward the Huachucas.

As we approached the broken ground with a long black streak of mesquite, etc., where we imagined we should find the San Pedro, we were much disappointed. ...I finally concluded we had passed too far south for the river, or that this was the head of it; the guides had all become doubtful themselves. Troops of wild horses, and cattle, and antelopes seemed to invite attention, little of which was given. Leaving the great valley of the dry branch, we passed all appearances of broken ground, mesquite, or timber. Beyond, toward the mountain towering before us white with snow, from which a northwester cut us to the bone, we had seen only a smooth slope of prairie. My anxiety became very great and I pushed on at a fast gait to the guides, and after ascending a hill saw a valley indeed, but no other appearance of a stream than a few ash trees in the midst; but they, with the numerous cattle paths, gave every promise of water. On we pushed, and finally, when twenty paces off, saw a fine bold

stream! There was the San Pedro we had so long and anxiously pursued.⁸

It was here, along the San Pedro near present-day Fairbanks, that they fought their first and only battle. But the foe were not Mexican militia or Apache horsemen, but bulls, wild ones. Apparently the remnants of Spanish herdsman or Apache plunder, these wild cattle charged the column on December 11 and wreaked havoc until they were brought down or driven off. Several soldiers were wounded and some mules gored. The enemy casualties were barbecued.

Cooke's wagon road would prove to be invaluable to the men who streamed to California's gold fields in 1849, and would be ideal for railroad grades, an all-important southern transportation artery connecting the rest of the country to the Pacific coast. Cooke's wagon route made the Gadsden Purchase seven years later a bargain.

The 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, ending the Mexican War, and the Gadsden Purchase of 1853 added the present state of Arizona to the American frontier. Part of the Territory of New Mexico, Arizona quickly acquired a pioneer character of its own. First came the U.S. Army surveyors charting the vast deserts and the '49ers hurrying down the Gila Trail to the California gold fields. Then came the permanent settlers, braving Indians and lawlessness in search of promising minerals, farms, grazing lands, and shops. Their growing presence necessitated a form of protection and government responsibilities that were assigned to the U.S. Army. The soldiers arrived to garrison this turbulent frontier and to open one of the most colorful chapters in American history.

Lieut. James H. Simpson of the Topographical Engineers accompanied the 1849 expedition led by Lieut. Col. John Washington deep into Navaho lands, making a bountiful record of the

natives and their environs, especially the ruins at Canyon de Chelly, Chaco and Inscription Rock. Simpson's journal of the Navaho campaign became a popular account of the work being done in the Southwest by the U.S. Army. Simpson himself, however, was no fan of the Southwest, finding the "general nakedness" and "sickening-colored aspect" of the country could not compare with the lush greenery of his native New Jersey. When he thought about the scenery now around him, he felt "a sensation of loathing."⁹

In addition to calling up feelings of loathing in some of its inhabitants, the landscape, with its vast, waterless expanses, confounded efforts at logistics. In the mid-1850s the arid terrain prompted an experiment with imported camels, thought to be the only way to carry supplies across the desert. Naval lieutenant E. F. Beale made an expedition in 1857 from Texas, across Arizona, to California, using 25 of the Army's 70 imported camels. Despite their effectiveness at ferrying supplies, the camel corps was abandoned when the troops were withdrawn to fight the Civil War, and the animals were sold at auction. They were eventually released to roam the deserts of Sonora, Chihuahua, and Arizona until about 1910. Along with the camels, the U.S. government brought from the middle east a Syrian-born camel wrangler named Hadji Ali, whose name would be corrupted by the thick-tongued American soldiers with whom he marched as Hi Jolly. When the camel experiment went bust, Hi Jolly served as a packer with George Crook during the Geronimo campaigns and spend the final years of the century on the Fort Huachuca payroll as a packer.

Describing the country they were entering, an officer footnotes his journal with a remark that has been echoed over the years by countless visitors to New Mexico and Arizona. "If it were

possible for the reader to put himself in full sympathy with any participator in the marches and explorations of this [writer], he would not wonder at an unflinching and glad mention of any green thing,—especially those masterpieces of the vegetable kingdom, to wit, *trees*. Pleasing and strange to his eyes!—strong reminders of home! and, so suggestive of the infinite comfort of fuel! About the women he spotted in the villages along the way, the same officer granted “they were not destitute of beauty.”¹⁰

An early description of the San Pedro River was penned by Boundary Commissioner John Bartlett in 1851. His party emerged into the San Pedro Valley from Dragoon Wash and he wrote: “...We entered a plain, thickly overgrown with large mezquit bushes, but destitute of grass. We looked in vain for a line of trees, or of luxuriant vegetation to mark the course of the San Pedro—when all of sudden we found ourselves upon its banks. The stream...was here about twenty feet across, about two feet deep, and quite rapid. The water, though muddy, was pleasant to the taste.”

Traveling south of the Mustang Mountains, the Bartlett party encountered Babocomari Creek which flows out of the Huachucas eastward to the San Pedro River. “The valley of the Babocomari, is here from a quarter to half a mile in breadth, and covered with a luxuriant growth of grass. The stream, which is about twenty feet wide, and in some places two feet deep, winds through this valley, with willows, and large cottonwood trees growing along its margin.”¹¹

A treaty, negotiated in 1853 by U.S. minister to Mexico, James Gadsden, was ratified in the summer of 1854 which ceded all the land of present-day Arizona south of the Gila River to the United States for \$10 million. The job of marking out the new border with Mexico fell to William

H. Emory and Jose Salazar Ilarregui, the commissioners for the two countries. The survey, unlike similar efforts in the past, was noted by the cooperation of the two commissioners and the efficiency with which they undertook the job. Emory's three-volume *Report of the United States and Mexican Boundary Survey*, published between 1856 and 1859, is an encyclopedic portrait of the American Southwest unparalleled in the sheer volume of accumulated data.

The land in front of them was both desolate and spectacular. In order to survive in Arizona's deserts, the plants and wildlife were forced to accommodate themselves to scant rainfall and assume bizarre forms. Twisted cacti, with needle-sharp fur, were scrawled against the indio orange western sky. Prehistoric lizards, who had learned about survival, grinned at the newcomers from their limestone perches. There was a lot for Topographical Engineers like Lieutenant Emory and his scientific party to observe and record. There was a lot for the dragoons to learn about suffering.

In his report Emory refers to the Huachuca Mountains as the Sierra Espinola, and described the San Pedro Valley:

Throughout the whole course of the San Pedro there are beautiful valleys susceptible of irrigation, and capable of producing large crops of wheat, corn, cotton, and grapes; and there are on this river the remains of large settlements which have been destroyed by the hostile Indians, the most conspicuous of which are the mining town of San Pedro and the town of San Cruz Viejo. There are also to be found here, in the remains of spacious corrals, ...wild cattle and horses..., the evidences of its immense capacity as a grazing country.

Removed from the river beds, at the base of the mountains, where perpetual springs

are found, are also to be seen the remains of large grazing establishments; the most famous of which is the ranch of San Bernardino, which falls half in the United States and half in Mexico. I have been informed that this establishment was owned in Mexico, and when in its most flourishing condition boasted as many as one hundred thousand head of cattle and horses. They have been killed or run off by the Indians, and the spacious buildings of adobe which accommodated the employees of this vast grazing farm are now washed nearly level with the earth.¹²

The first military stations to attach themselves to the streambeds and arroyos of the southeastern corner of today's Arizona were Camps Wallen (1866) and Buchanan (1857). Some of the dragoons from Fort Buchanan were sent off to the San Pedro River in 1859 to found Fort Breckinridge. The U.S. Army strength in southern Arizona from 1856 to 1860 numbered as few as 120 and as high as 375. These and other temporary camps were abandoned in 1860 and 1861 when the regular troops were recalled to the east to fight the Civil War.

Captain Richard "Baldy" Ewell, who in 1860 commanded Fort Buchanan which was situated on the West side of the Huachuca Mountains between the present-day towns of Sonoita and Patagonia, found the terrain and hard campaigning against the Pinal Apaches sapping his health. Writing from Albuquerque, N.M., on 22 January 1861, after having served on a court-martial in El Paso, Ewell told his sister:

Possibly I may get away when the Court closes. I have the recommendation of two Army surgeons to leave this Dept. as soon as possible.

It is not likely that I could stand another season in Arizona as I would be much more debilitated than before and the last one nearly did the business.

Of all the miserable places this is the worst. Whiskey is abundant everywhere and scarcely anything else.¹³

Ewell tendered his resignation from the U.S. Army on 24 April 1861 and was commissioned a Lieutenant Colonel of Cavalry in the Confederate Army in May. His abilities propelled him to the rank of Lieutenant General by war's end.

About the same time another officer in Arizona remarked, "I defy anyone to make his way over this country without the aid of profanity."¹⁴

The Civil War touched Arizona when a Confederate Army raised in San Antonio and under the command of Brig. Gen. Henry H. Sibley marched as far as Santa Fe and claimed all of New Mexico territory (which then included Arizona) for the Confederacy. A 200-man detachment of Sibley's troops under Capt. Sherrod Hunter arrived in Tucson in 1862 to the cheers of Southern sympathizers. Their hold on Arizona was short-lived as a force of California Volunteers, 1,800-strong, under Colonel (later brigadier general) James H. Carleton, secured Arizona for the Union. They marched into Arizona and New Mexico to replace regular troops that had been withdrawn to fight in the east. One of these volunteer troops was First Sergeant George Hand of Company B, 1st California Infantry. He kept a diary of his experiences in 1862 and subsequent years. On 1 May 1863 Sergeant Hand was incensed when the company dog "Butch" was shot and killed by "some damned villain of an officer." For that murderer Sergeant Hand reserved his most awful curse. He

wrote in his diary, “May he never get out of this country.”¹⁵

A formidable obstacle lay in the path of America’s “manifest Destiny,” that glib phrase that would stand for the inevitable westward territorial expansion. It was the Apache, a nation of mounted warriors who have been characterized as the world’s most formidable guerilla fighters. Just as American newspaper editors thought it was our destiny to “overspread the continent...for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions,” so did the Apache find it their destiny to defy the intruder just as the spiny desert terrain has resisted being overrun. The Chiricahua Apaches called themselves “Indeh,” or “the Dead,” perhaps foreseeing their destiny that the white man thought so manifest. When Anglo soldier and Apache confronted one another in the wilds of the Southwest, there was little reason to expect any attempt at mutual understanding, although some on both sides tried. The Apaches could not understand the bluecoats who, for all of their inadequacies in counter guerilla warfare, were as relentless as the Arizona sun, just as the soldiers could not fathom the Indian who chose to fight against such overwhelming odds for so primitive a way of life. The outcome of the Apache campaigns was predestined, but tragically postponed due to these breakdowns in understanding.

The Apaches, a people steeled by long years in the crucible of sun and rock, used the rugged landscape from 1860 to 1886 to wear out the pursuing patrols of the U.S. Army. It was at the end of the Apache campaigns that the Army took advantage of the cloudless Southwestern skies to test a network of heliographs, signalling instruments that used mirrors and the sun to flash messages from mountain top to mountain top.

For the soldier the frontier meant prolonged bouts of boredom with a military routine far from civilization, relieved only by the occasional brush with a violent and lonely death. The terrain physically punished the trooper who found the desert floor furnace-hot and the mountain heights glacier-cold. In the scrub he was slashed by Spanish bayonets and clawed by prickly pears. He was poisoned by scorpions and rattlesnakes, chilled by summer monsoons, and exhausted by the vertical climbs of the mountain trails. This place of sting and thorn tested the soldier and at the same time struck him with wonder.

The Apache campaigns in the American Southwest were carried out in an arena full of boulders, crevices, arroyos and wooded mountains. It would be a place where the American Army would put Jomini aside and would learn about cover and concealment. Here, spread thin over the vastness of New Mexico and Arizona, it would learn about small unit tactics and low intensity conflict. This new awareness was not to become official doctrine or to appear in any West Point textbook. They were first-hand lessons picked up by necessity in a theater of operations where the enemy did not know of European warfare.

One of the American soldiers sent to garrison and pacify this frontier was Captain John Bourke, an officer with a scientific bent and a way with words. His description of southern Arizona remains one of the best. He wrote:

Dante..., it has always seemed to me, made the mistake of his life in dying when he did...five hundred and fifty years ago. Had he held on to this mortal coil until after Uncle Sam had perfected the Gadsden Purchase, he would have found full scope for his genius in

the description of a region in which not only purgatory and hell, but heaven likewise, had combined to produce a bewildering kaleidoscope of all that was wonderful, weird, terrible, and awe-inspiring, with not a little that was beautiful and romantic.

...In no other section can there be found such extensive areas of desert crossed in every direction by the most asperous mountains, whose profound canyons are the wonder of the world, whose parched flanks are matted with the thorny and leafless vegetation of the tropics, and whose lofty summits are black with the foliage of pines whose graceful branches bend in the welcome breezes from the temperate zone. Here one stumbles at almost every step upon the traces of former populations, of whom so little is known, or sees repeated from peak to peak the signal smokes of the fierce Apaches, whose hostility to the white man dates back to the time of Cortes.¹⁶

Bourke often made a joke of the furnace-like Arizona climate and was fond of telling this tale which he referred to as a “mouldy military chestnut.” It is the story of the soldier, stationed at Fort Yuma, who after dying and descending to Hades, returned to Yuma for his blankets, “finding the next world to cold to suit him.”

Lieut. Bourke spent much time combing this part of the country in the company of Lieut. Howard Cushing. They were looking for the elusive Apaches who had left their mark on the country. Bourke climbed a mountain just north of the Huachucas and looked around him, feeling the history envelope him. He wrote:

Standing on the summit of the Whetstone Range, which has no great height, one can

see the places, or the hills overlooking them, where several other officers met their death at the hands of the same foe. To the west is Davidson's Canon, where the Apaches ambushed and killed Lieutenant Reid T. Stewart and Corporal Black; on the north, the cone of Trumbull overlooks the San Carlos Agency, where the brave Almy fell; to the northwest are the Tortolita hills, near which Miller and Tappan were killed in ambushade...; and to the east are the Chiricahua Mountains, in whose bosom rests Fort Bowie with its grewsome graveyard filled with such inscriptions as "Killed by the Apaches," "Met his death at the hands of the Apaches," "Died of wounds inflicted by Apache Indians," and at times "Tortured and killed by Apaches." One visit to that cemetery was warranted to furnish the most callous with nightmares for a month.¹⁷

In the Apache campaigns, a key to American strategy was the establishment of a permanent camp astride the enemy's traditional escape routes to Mexico. Writing his annual report in August 1877, the department commander, Colonel Augustus V. Kautz, explained his purpose: "In consequence of a raid last winter made by renegade Indians from the Warm Spring reservation, in New Mexico, I caused a temporary camp to be established in the Huachuca Mountains. ...I am of the opinion that the Camp in the Huachuca Mountains...will require to be kept up, and I would therefore earnestly recommend that an appropriation for quarters and storehouses be made in order that the troops dept there may be made more comfortable. The camp in the Huachuca Mountains will be needed for the protection of the border against that class of lawless characters which finds its greatest safety near a boundary line between two foreign States."¹⁸

Pursuant to the orders of the department commander, Captain Samuel Whitside led a column of the 6th U.S. Cavalry from Tucson, over the Whetstone Mountains, across the Spanish land grant known as the San Ignacio del Babocomari, and into the shelter of the Huachuca Mountains. On March 3, 1877, he selected the northernmost canyon in the chain which ran south to the border with Mexico. The location provided excellent observation of both the Santa Cruz and San Pedro valleys while the canyon's timber and creek offered the necessary logistical conveniences.

Huachuca is located in the desert, the Chihuahuan-Sonoran transition. The eye is assaulted by a merciless barrage of color and form, shell-bursts of ocotillo, thickets of Spanish bayonets, surreal soaptree yucca, volcanic explosions of welded tuff, a blasted landscape of creosote and mesquite, a desert floor so hot that the company mascots had to ride horseback up behind the trooper.

Life zones are based upon elevation, so that the kind of plants, mammals, birds that live from the lower Sonoran desert in Mexico to the northern reaches of Canada can be found in a less than two-mile climb up one of Huachuca's higher peaks.

These mountains are carpeted with Douglas fir at the highest elevations, squadrons of ponderosa pine march down their flanks, while the foothills are picketed with Juniper, Mexican and Emory Oak. In the high desert there are Palo Verde and Manzanita, in the grassy plains, creosote and mesquite. These are plants that guard their juice with an abbat of spike and barb; that manage to survive only on the memory of rain. In the sunless night, rattlesnakes work on their calligraphy, leaving their ideograms in the morning dust.

The high desert environment, that had heretofore seen only Indian and Spanish trafficking across its tracts, would henceforth play host to a new kind of man, the American soldier. Here in a remote corner on the Mexican border, enduring values would begin to gestate among a hardy breed of men who lived their regulated lives measured out between bugle calls. The canyon would bear witness to a decades-long procession across a wind-warped parade field marked out at its center. The men drilled on the sun-hazed slopes, gleaming in Army blue and gold, khakhi and brown, olive drab herringbone, brown wool worsted and pinks, Army green and paloverde, woodland patterns, and chocolate chip. They coursed the back trails on horse and Humvee, shouldered Springfield, Brownings and the M16A2; were armored with steel and Kelvar. They tapped out telegraph messages, monitored microwave signals, and manned computer work stations. They left a tradition of values in the canyon and the mountains, in return, seared into the horizons of their memories unforgettable experiences. Let's listen to what they had to say about soldiering at this place.

Dan O'Leary was a civilian scout for the U.S. Army and the first civilian employee at Camp Huachuca. Historian Dan Thrapp, who has done a lot of research on the scouts, says, "He was a dead shot, a good companion, had an Irish sense of humor and playfulness, and the warm heart that traditionally dwells in a son of Erin. On various occasions O'Leary was known to have raised some Indian waif, and to have done it with a kindness that the youngsters never forgot. Judging from bits of tales that have come down to us, they ever after looked up to Dan with an open trustfulness and, quite possibly, admiration."¹⁹ O'Leary is credited as the man who warned miner Ed Schieffelin that all he would find around here would be his tombstone, giving that community its colorful name.

In 1877 he wrote a description of the new camp to which he had been assigned with his Walapais Scouts and it was published in the Prescott *Miner*.

We left [Camp] Lowell and marched out to the Cienega, ... After passing to the other side of the Whetstone mountains, we struck the valley of Barbercombi [Babocomari] creek, and fine grass all along....

I am satisfied that in two or three months from now all danger from hostile Indians will have ceased. The presence of the military here [at Camp Huachuca] is a guaranty of safety to those who desire to settle up the country. Lieutenants Hanna and Rucker keep the country well scouted, and are able and willing to look out for this portion of Arizona.

A small party of our Hualpais [Walapais] are out all the time looking for signs of hostiles, but as yet have found none. This is about the only unpleasant feature for the Hualpais. There is plenty of game here, and good fishing in the San Pedro; parties go down there occasionally and supply the whole camp with fish. No danger of any person's hair getting stiff here for the want of grease, as there are plenty of bears in the mountains, and not a few have contributed towards supplying hair-oil and meat for the garrison.... Occasionally the Hualpais get on the track of some Mexican passing through to Tucson to sell mescal and other articles, and chase them up, and are much disappointed that they are not Apaches....²⁰

The area is described at length in *Hinton's Handbook of Arizona*, a 1877 publication, that depended upon "a careful and conscientious examination of all sources of information, verified by actual observation and examination." One of Hinton's correspondents wrote for his handbook:

We scouted around the southern base of the Huachuca mountains—this portion of country it is needless to describe, as it is (at present) outside our jurisdiction. This country is much better for farming and cattle raising than we have heretofore given it credit for, and there is land sufficient for farming and grazing for many an emigrant.

The account continues—

Of Camp Huachuca and vicinity, it is reported that the country is rapidly settling up for miles around the point where the troops are stationed. The military have a garden down at old Camp Wallen where they produce vegetables for the camp. Everything grows not only very large, but with wonderful rapidity, and is unexcelled in delicacy of flavor by similar productions elsewhere. Beets and carrots root down over two feet, and the corn grows so high there that it is not unusual to find stalks where the ears are from six to seven feet from the ground. The surrounding mountains are full of mineral. Several very rich discoveries have just been made, both in the Huachuca and Mule mountains. One lead shows over seventy percent copper, and is very rich in silver. There are traces of several old mines which have been worked, but prospectors are taking hold of new discoveries. Here nature has placed side by side one of the richest valleys and mineral producing belts in the Territory, so that the miner and farmer may walk hand in hand.²¹

Just months after Whitside established his mountainside post, the *Arizona Weekly Star* published a hyperbolic testimonial. It said:

Mr. C. E. Burton, proprietor of the Burton Hotel of Fort Huachuca, has been in the

city for the last few days. He says the country surrounding Fort Huachuca is filling to the brim. All of the available agriculture and grazing land is now settled upon. Stock is turning the Mesa grass into meat, and the country is full of activity. Miners and prospectors are moving in every direction, and new finds are the rewards for their labor. Fort Huachuca for years has been considered the choise (sic) spot of southern Arizona. The temperature is about 25 degrees less than Tucson, owing to the altitude. Excellent water is found in abundance. The rolling mesa lands are heavily timbered and together with the beautiful mountain scenery is what will make Huachuca the Saratoga of Arizona.²²

Two years after Captain Whitside founded Camp Huachuca, a military observer wrote this glowing account in the *Arizona Daily Star*:

Major Whitside was detailed for duty here two and a half years ago. He found the whole region deserted; but one man near his intended camp, owing to the border and Indian troubles. By his vigor, courage, sound judgment and alertness, he has quieted the border, corralled the troublesome Apache, and brought into the district two thousand pioneers and workers; the result of which is the opening of mines, starting of towns, the erection of mills, etc. [Camp Huachuca] lies at the base of the greatest mountain peaks of the range, where the gorge between them widens into a grassy valley of a fourth of a mile or more, gently sloping, winding through which a sweet stream flows, affording water supplies for the camp, and over which oak trees grow.... Officers' quarters are built in neat style of adobe brick, and are very home-like, especially at Major Whitside's, where the hand of a good wife has come

to the rescue with exquisite taste in simple home adornments. ...The whole camp was clean, bright, embowered and attractive.... About the camp were some contractors and a few Mexican families who worked for them. ...Around this one spot there is wood, water, and grass in abundance for scores of settlers.²³

A bid for permanent post status was made by Army officials in the early 1880s. One of these men was Major James Biddle, an Assistant Inspector General of the Department. He pointed out:

A camp which is a tent city is an expensive way to shelter troops and supplies. Constantly replacing canvas tents is costly. The vast growth of the mining industry in the southern part of this territory, close to, and bordering on the Sonora line, can hardly be appreciated without being seen. Towns have sprung up as if by magic. The sound of mills is heard all over this section and flow of bullion is large and increasing each day. All this brings with it a large number of settlers who live upon the wants of the miner, and large herds of cattle and horses will accumulate along this border. All these things will be inducements to the...Indian inhabitants of Sonora to raid and commit depredations. There are also a large number of Americans crossing into Sonora, prospecting, building mills and engaging in mercantile pursuits.

I recommend...permanent buildings [be] erected and a garrison of some strength assigned it, that protection may be afforded to all these mining towns, and which will be an asylum to our citizens now in Sonora, in case of revolutionary or other troubles—a place which they might reach quickly, or from which a force might be sent promptly to their relief,

if necessary.²⁴

Biddle's case won support from General of the Army William T. Sherman, who personally visited Huachuca and in 1882 recommended to the Secretary of War:

In regard to the posts in Arizona I have heretofore reported the result of my personal inspection that the post of Huachuca...be enlarged and improved to the largest possible extent and that all others be neglected.²⁵

The personal attention of the nation's top military commander gave the construction program momentum and underscored the emerging importance of Fort Huachuca in the national defense picture.

Just before the Geronimo campaign, in 1884, William B. Jett was assigned to the 4th Cavalry at Fort Huachuca. Jett is known to history as the "reluctant corporal." He got this characterization because when he was recommended for promotion to that rank, he at first turned it down. It was his theory that being a corporal would bring him into closer contact with the officers and Jett thought that "the less an enlisted man comes in contact with an officer the better off he is...."

Corporal Jett was one of the soldiers who took part in the construction work. In his diary he remembered not only the comforts, but the hard work at Huachuca.

Fort Huachuca was a picturesque place nestling at the foot of the mountains about eight miles from Huachuca station on the Southern Pacific Railroad, and most other Government Forts of that day, was supplied with water running down from the mountains. As long as we were in the Fort quarters there were more comforts at hand than I had anywhere else

during my stay in the West. There was some hard work, however, in the Fort, and I have not forgotten carrying the hod of mortar on my bony shoulder many a day up to the men who were laying the sun dried blocks in the erection of barracks.²⁶

1885 and 86 were busy years for the soldiers of the Department of Arizona, as they scoured the trails of southern Arizona, New Mexico and neighboring Mexico. They were looking for Goyakla—"The Man Who Yawns." History remembers him as Geronimo. He was a man as hard as the granitic outcroppings under which he was nurtured and he had learned well the art of Apache warfare in the schools of such warriors as Mangas Colorado, Cochise and Victorio. His body bore the scars of eight wounds received in battles with Mexicans.

When he was 29, his mother, wife, and children were killed by Mexican soldiers, instilling in him a rare capacity for hatred and vengeance. In 1883 he was 54 years old and the uncontested leader of the footloose Chiricahuas on the San Carlos Reservation. A cavalry officer who knew him well described him as "thoroughly vicious, intractable, and treacherous,"²⁷ while a cousin and follower saw him as "vigorous and farsighted" and "in times of danger...a man to be relied upon."²⁸ As did many of his contemporaries, Geronimo had an incurable fondness for tizwin (an Apache home brew) and white man's whiskey. His stature among the Apache war chiefs is exaggerated by the historical quirk that he was the last to terrorize the Southwest and the most lionized by the press. However, notwithstanding press hyperbole, terrorize he did with fervor and unmitigated cruelty.

When renegade Chiricahua Apaches under Juh and Geronimo bolted from the San Carlos reservation to the fastness of the Sierra Madres, the territory was racked with new fear. The best

man to deal with the Apache was recalled to Arizona in 1882. Brig. Gen. George Crook began immediately to assume an unflagging offensive. He first talked with Mexican officials to assure that the recent treaty allowing “hot pursuit” into Mexico would be honored and to elicit their cooperation in his planned operations.

Personally leading a column of 193 newly recruited Apache Scouts and a troop of regular cavalry, Crook, Capt. Emmet Crawford, and Lt. Charles B. Gatewood probed far into Mexico. A defector from an earlier raid into Arizona, called Peaches, guided the force into the enemy’s sanctuary in the Sierra Madre of Mexico in 1883. In actuality Crook and his men were at the mercy of the hostile Apaches, but he depended upon boldness and the psychological factor induced by having mobilized other Apaches against the renegades. The Chiefs came into Crook’s camp to talk. They were men like Chihuahua, Nana, Loco, Nachez, Kaytenne, and Geronimo. All were apparently persuaded to surrender and return to the reservation. The Warm Springs Apaches under Nana and Loco returned at once, but the Chiricahuas tarried and continued to cause unrest until their eventual return to San Carlos in 1883 and 1884.

Their reservation domicility was short lived however. Balking at a Crook-imposed ban on tizwin and wife-beating, they longed for an old way of life in the Sierra Madres. In May of 1885, 42 braves and 92 women and children slipped off during the night and made for old haunts in Mexico. They were led by Geronimo.

Samuel Kenoi, a Southern Chiricahua whose father was a member of Juh’s band, was 10 years old in 1885. He gave his account of the Geronimo Campaign to anthropologist Morris Opler

in 1932. He explained the Apache's attitude toward the whites who had corralled them on the San Carlos Indian Agency.

What they didn't like was so much ruling; that's what they didn't like. They didn't have all the Indians at the agency in those days. It was the people who lived around the agency, who saw white people all the time, who were controlled. The people out away from the agency were wild. That's why some thought the white men had queer ways and hated them. After they got to know the white man's way, they liked it. The white men gave them new things, new food, for instance. But it was the new-comers like Ho [Juh] and Geronimo who didn't like the white man. If there was any ruling to do, they wanted to do it.²⁹

The Indians on the reservation stayed around the agency buildings when the bandits were out, because the bandits would capture anyone who could carry a gun and make him go with them. And they took women too. If you wanted a horse from pasture, you would have to send a little boy for it to be safe.³⁰

In an attempt to prevent the Apaches from using their Mexican stronghold as a base for raids into the United States, Crook cordoned off the border, placing patrols at "every water hole along the border from the Patagonia mountains to the Rio Grande." At the same time he sent the commands of Capts. Wirt Davis and Emmet Crawford into Mexico to scout the Sierra Madres. Their force consisted primarily of Apache scouts, the wisdom of which was challenged by Gen. Phillip H. Sheridan when he visited Crook's headquarters at Fort Bowie. As Crawford closed in on Geronimo, he was killed in a firefight with Mexican militia who claimed they had mistaken the American

column for renegades, a claim which few could believe.

The stage was set for a second dramatic conference between Geronimo and Crook. Their meeting took place in Canyon de los Embudos on March 25, 1886. Demanding unconditional surrender, Crook promised that the only alternative to surrender open to the Apaches was to be hunted down no matter how long that might take. He then offered a more palatable way out for Geronimo, promising them confinement in the East for two years after which they would be free to return to San Carlos. The Apaches agreed to the terms, but before they could be escorted safely back to the reservation, Geronimo, drunk on whiskey smuggled to him by a white trader named Tribolett, changed his mind and dashed back to the mountains with Nachez, 20 men and 13 women.

This had a devastating effect on the general, who was already under heavy criticism by a panicky populace for being too fair to the Apache. His surrender terms were not accepted by Washington, which called for unconditional surrender. In view of these reversals, Crook resigned, leaving the field to Gen. Nelson A. Miles, a Civil War hero and Western campaigner.

Miles' job was made more difficult because he did not have the respect of the Indian that Crook enjoyed and because he discounted the value of Apache Scouts. But, undaunted, Miles organized an expedition of his own of hand-picked, hardened regulars under the command of Capt. Henry W. Lawton at Fort Huachuca. Lawton's second in command was an assistant contract surgeon named Leonard Wood, who would make a name for himself as a line officer in Cuba and become Army Chief of Staff. On May 5, 1886, with the band playing "The Girl I Left Behind Me," Lawton and his seasoned troopers embarked from Fort Huachuca on what was to be one of the most

grueling pursuits of the Apache campaigns.

During April, May and June, General Miles visited Fort Huachuca on several occasions to get closer to the operations and discuss his plans with officers of the 4th Cavalry and the 8th Infantry who would lead his spearhead into Mexico. He was accompanied in May and June by artist Frederic Remington and the son of the Secretary of the Interior, L.Q.C. Lamar. On one visit, an eyewitness reported that he wore out his escorts climbing from peak to peak in the Huachuca Mountains to get a better view of the country.

Miles' eventual success was attributable to several factors, not the least of which was the bravery of Lt. Charles B. Gatewood who, with two Apache Scouts, located Geronimo's camp and entered it to talk with the unpredictable war-chief. Gatewood spoke the Apache language and was well known to Geronimo from the Crook operations. He was able to convince Geronimo and his followers of the futility of continued resistance. The arguments carrying the most weight had to be Miles' removal of the Chiricahua and Warm Springs Apaches to Florida, a move that cut the renegades off from family and reinforcements. And, although Lawton's column had failed to make contact during four sweltering months in the field, the Apaches could not fail to be awed by this most persistent of American efforts. Escorted by Lawton and Wood, the Chiricahuas trekked north to Skeleton Canyon where, on 4 September 1886, they surrendered officially to General Miles.

The bloody and unparalleled Apache campaigns were at a close. In the years to come a few Apache desperadoes would undertake a fugitive existence, but never again to the extent witnessed up until 1886.

Geronimo was 57 years old when he and the Chiricahua Apaches were sent to captivity in Florida, where they “put me to sawing up large logs.” In 1894 he was relocated to Fort Sill, Oklahoma, where he lived as a watermelon farmer and tourist sideshow. He was converted to Christianity. Newspaperman Charles Lummis versified:

The Corsican, whose million men
 bowed Europe to the dust,
Was whipped—and ate his heart away
 in St. Helena’s rust.
But Goyathlay, whose breechclout score
 two nations mocked at will—
Serenely yawned himself to death
 in Sunday school at Sill.³¹

He appeared at expositions around the country at the turn of the century, including the St. Louis World’s Fair. He was billed as “The Hostile Savage Apache Chief Geronimo.” In 1905 he attended the inauguration of President Theodore Roosevelt. Back at Fort Sill officers recalled his shambling Saturday night drunks. He died in 1909 from pneumonia contracted while lying outdoors all night after a drunken spree. The scourge of the Southwest ended his years as a curiosity and a manic alcoholic.

Neil Erickson, a native of Sweden, served his entire enlistment in E Troop of the 4th Cavalry. Despite his poor command of English, he made First Sergeant of his troop within eight months

after his enlistment in 1881. Sergeant Erickson served first at the Ojo Caliente agency in New Mexico, at Fort Craig, New Mexico, in 1882, and along the Gila River in 1883. Eventually he would wind up at Fort Huachuca. With the Geronimo Campaign at an end, the 27-year-old First Sergeant Erickson took his discharge on 10 October 1886. Like so many other veterans, he took up ranching in Arizona. His ranch, near the Chiricahua National Monument and Fort Bowie, was the scene of an interview in 1935 during which Sgt. Erickson related his experiences in the Indian-fighting army at and around Fort Huachuca.

Most of Erickson's service was spent in the field and his recollection of the active campaigns of the cavalry in the early 1880s give a vivid picture of the lifestyle an NCO might expect to encounter in the mountains and deserts of Arizona, New Mexico, and Chihuahua. His first scout was as part of the command of Colonel George Forsyth which was scouring the countryside for the Apache Chief Loco and his warriors.

The rations were a subject that every veteran remembered well. Before setting off on a march, Erickson recalled that "the captain gave each of us two horseshoes, sixteen nails and a nose bag of hard tack. We had coffee and sugar in canvas sacks, salt and pepper mixed together in another sack, and carried sow belly in our saddle bags." If a soldier was lucky enough to have any money, he could supplement his rations when the opportunity presented itself. On one occasion when they came across a store and saloon at a town called Guthrie on the Gila River, Erickson blew his entire bankroll, fifty cents, on some cheese and crackers. At other times the Indian scouts would find some deer and antelope for their dinner. Erickson told the story of running out of rations during

the last two days of the march and coming into a station on the railroad half starved. There was a boxcar full of rations waiting for them but they were too hungry to wait for their meals to be prepared.

...We were supposed to draw corn and flour, corn for the horses and flour for ourselves, but the mess sergeant got the orders mixed and brought in beans and flour and the animals refused to eat beans. All of us boys were so hungry that we couldn't wait for the cooks to get a regular meal. We each got a cup of flour and some bacon, we mixed the flour and water in the crowns of our hats, fried the bacon in our mess kit, then fried the bread in the grease and made coffee in our pint tin cups and we kept cooking and eating until the cooks got organized, which was around midnight. They fixed up a batch of biscuits and pork but by that time we were all pretty well filled up.³²

It was the custom to share your blankets with another man, called your "bunkie," to take advantage of body warmth in the bitter cold of the high elevations. Erickson's bunkmate was a blacksmith named Boyle. After a long day in the saddle, the men were often too exhausted to even picket their horses. The sergeant remembered one such evening when "Boyle was so tired that I had to stake out both horses and Boyle flopped on the ground, laid his head on his saddle and went sound asleep. I lay down beside him, pulled a blanket over both of us and slept soundly until morning, when before daylight the scouts found water and brought it into camp. We all had a good breakfast and felt better."

Sometimes the animals fared worse than the soldiers. Erickson related:

Troop E lost thirteen horses on that trip before we got back to the station Separ on the S.P. (Southern Pacific Railroad) between Lordsburg and Deming. Some of the horses just played out, others died or were shot by the soldiers when too weak to travel farther. I don't know how many the other troops lost. When a trooper was put on foot, he walked and packed his saddle. Those were the days of hardships.

“A dollar a day is damn poor pay/but thirteen dollars a month is less,” was a refrain in an Army song of the Indian wars. For all their suffering and risk, the soldier's pay was a pittance. Sergeant Erickson explained the pay scale.

In those days we weren't paid as well as the army is today [1935]. Privates risked their lives fighting Apaches for \$13 per month during the first and second years of their enlistment. The pay was increased after the second year to \$14, then \$15, and finally \$16, but all during this time the soldier never drew any more than \$13. The balance was called retained pay and was handed over to him when he was discharged. This was pretty good because most of the fellows would gamble or drink away their pay and if they didn't have the retained pay when discharged they would have been broke. A common sergeant drew \$17 per month.

It was during the Geronimo campaign, on the 4th of July, 1885, that an ambulance wagon drew up in front of the hotel across from the Post Trader's store at Huachuca and delivered the new assistant contract surgeon. He was 26-year-old Leonard Wood and he had come west to fight Apaches as well as to doctor. He found Huachuca “the largest and pleasantest post in the depart-

ment.” He thought he was lucky as Geronimo and his Apaches were on the warpath and he would “Probably get a good deal of active service.” He wrote to his brother, “Think I shall have an immense time.”³³

In later years Leonard Wood, by now a former Chief of Staff of the Army and an unsuccessful presidential candidate, remembered that “the service at Huachuca and in the field in the old days was a good school for officers and men. It was a healthy, vigorous life....”³⁴

Lieutenant John Bigelow, a 10th Cavalry officer who was from a literary New England family and would make a name for himself as a writer on military tactics, wrote about his visit to Fort Huachuca in 1885.

Wanting an opportunity to see Fort Huachuca, I asked the captain a few days ago if he could not give me something to do there....

We did not see a human dwelling or human being, or a water course or source until we reached the Huachuca Mountains, in which we passed two or three houses near small streams and springs, with tracts of cultivated ground surrounding or adjoining them.

Fort Huachuca lies in what is called Huachuca Canyon, on the east side of the north point of the Huachuca range. We entered the post at its upper, or higher end, and passed through the outskirts of tents, huts, shanties and houses—the quarters of a few privileged soldiers, of certain civil employees, and of laundresses and other hangers-on, or camp followers—past the guard house to the parade ground, where in accordance with custom, the officers’ quarters were ranged on one side, and the men’s on the other.

A few days later he had the opportunity to visit the post library where he “found a pretty good collection of papers—though not as good as at Fort Grant—but no books. The Fourth Cavalry, whose headquarters this is, has, I am told, a good regimental library, but it is boxed up. I saw no indications of impatience on the part of the garrison to get at it.”³⁵

Many renowned military families have called Fort Huachuca home. One of these was that of Lieutenant Alexander M. Patch who was Quartermaster of the post and the 4th Cavalry from 1885 to 1889. Leaving the Army because of an injury, Lieutenant Patch remained on the fort as manager of the Post Trader’s store. His two sons, both born at Fort Huachuca, rose to General ranks. Lieutenant General Alexander M. Patch, Jr., born in 1889, was commander of U.S. Forces at Guadacanal and Commanding General of the Seventh Army in Europe. Major General Joseph Dorst Patch, born in 1885, won a Distinguished Service Cross for gallantry in the fighting in France in World War I, and commanded the 80th Division during World War II.

Major General Joseph Dorst Patch wrote his “Reminiscences of Fort Huachuca” in later years and they give a sweeping picture of the post at the time of the close of the Apache campaigns.

My earliest recollection was the mounted parade between the Officers’ Quarters and the Enlisted Men’s Barracks. The band and troops all wore helmets with yellow plumes and dark blue blouses and light blue trousers with yellow stripes down the sides. The Infantry wore white stripes on their trousers. The only thing that could interfere with this ceremony was an expedition against the Indians. It was considered most important for morale, which it was.³⁶

The troopers at Fort Huachuca were not all cataloging the sights that surrounded them and setting their observations down in their journals. Most were simply going about the work of soldiering. For some, it was routine and uneventful. Others, unlike Leonard Wood, would find that it was not all that much of a healthy and invigorating life. They would discover that the landscape, with its boulder-strewn hillsides and creosote thickets, could hide heart-stopping ambushes as easily as they could conceal an inventory of natural beauty.

In early June 1885, the beginning months of the final Geronimo campaign, an alarming report was received at departmental headquarters from Fort Huachuca.

Courier just in from Lawton's camp. He reports while he [Lawton], Wood, and Hatfield were scouting in vicinity of Guadalupe Canyon, his camp was attacked by Indians about noon, the eighth. Five of his men killed and two mules and five horses taken and some company equipment and stores burned. Camp was in charge of one non-com officer and seven men. Lawton and Wood are hot on their trail.³⁷

The raid was led by Chihuahua, in whose camp was later found some of the stolen equipment. A witness said the Indians on the hillside were laughing as they fired upon the hapless detachment. They were probably in an elated mood after finding the camp so lightly defended and the resistance so spiritless.

In a diary kept by a young corporal, William B. Jett, who served at Fort Huachuca in Troop D, 4th Cavalry, in 1885 and 1886, and who would leave the Army to become a Virginia preacher, a first-hand account of the raid is given.

Well, one day while we were eating dinner, and when the sentry on lookout and watching the grazing animals had left his post and had come to the camp contrary to order, we were surprised by a thundering volley from the nearby hills. None of us had our guns with us, as we had left them with the wagons a few yards away, except the sentry spoken of, who was armed only with a pistol. At the first volley, Neihause, right by my side, was killed with a bullet in his forehead. He fell with a biscuit and a piece of meat in his mouth and did not move again. The sentry referred to above, who, being a recruit, and said he wanted to see an Indian fight, immediately ran, but was shot down before he could reach the opposite hills across the little open valley. A man named Roberts, who had deserted from the British Army three times before coming to America, ran into his tent and, falling on his knees, began praying. This made me angry, and I called on the sergeant to make him come out. This the sergeant did. But when he came out with his gun, he did not stop but made for the hills across the valley and, though in full view of the Indians, made his escape. Another man also made his escape just as quickly and safely.

This left four of us who sought some protection behind the wagons and fired about an hour at the point from where the smoke from the guns of the Indians came from behind the rocks and bushes on the bluff above our camp. Twice the sergeant was shot, and then the third time, right by my side. At the third shot he said, "Boys, I am done for." In some way the wagons caught fire, and we knew the ammunition in them would begin to explode. We four then made across the opposite hills already referred to. A German, whose name I

cannot recall . . . put his arm under the sergeant's arms and helped him across; but as they were climbing the mountain the sergeant . . . was shot a fourth time and killed in the German's arms. This German U.S. soldier afterward received a reward medal for bravery.

We three, the German, a soldier named Sprankle, and myself, fired for some time behind rocks at the smoke spots across the vale on the opposite mountains (I should have said we had hardly reached the mountain side before the ammunition in the wagons began to explode with a mighty roar, as from many Gatling guns), but we could not see an Indian. We did see, however, from the change in the source of the smoke from their guns that they were slowly surrounding us. Late in the afternoon we started down the mountain and went up the canyon in the only direction there seemed a way of escape.

Right here I want to give as truthfully as I can my reactions in this encounter with the Indians. When the firing first began, the surprise was so great and I was so shocked at the death of my old friend Neihause, that the only thing, otherwise, I thought of was to run to the wagon and get my gun, as the others did. When we four were left alone and firing from behind the wagons I thought of the fact that besides the danger from the Indians the ammunition in the wagons would begin to explode as soon as the fire reached it, I was very much scared and thought possibly it would be best to surrender, as to stay where there was certain death, and to cross the open ground to the opposite hills in full view of the Indians seemed almost as hopeless. This physical fear I felt was coupled with the thought of the great sorrow that would come to my loved ones in Virginia when they heard of my death. As the firing

continued, and I had not been shot, the physical fear gave way to a greater fear; and that was the thought that were my body killed, my soul would go straight to hell.³⁸

A sergeant with Troop I, 4th Cavalry, Emil Pauly later at Fort Bowie interviewed a Private Schnitzer, probably the German whose name Private Jett could not recall, and set down his account from memory.

It was about noontime when Cook, Oscar Niehouse, Troop D, 4 Cav., called out, "Come and get it."

Everyone got their mess kits and started for the cook tent to get their dinner, including the man on picket duty on the North wall of the canyon, leaving no one on guard.

I was about half way to the cook tent when the firing started and of course we all rushed back to our tents to get our guns.

The only protection we had were the covered Army wagons, from behind which we fired, and they soon caught fire when some one evidently fired too close to the wagon cover of one of the wagons.

About this time I thought of Sergt. Peter Munich, Troop G, 4 Cav., who was very sick with Pneumonia. I called Pvt. Jett to help me get the sick Sergt. up the North side of the canyon as he had already been wounded and was unable to walk. We got him nearly to the top when a bullet struck him in the back and he expired in my arms.

Pvt. Jett, Schillinger, and I then got behind some rocks and started firing at the Indians, when the ammunition wagons exploded with terrific force.

We held our position till late in the evening and then decided to take a chance and get into Cloverdale, which we reached late that night, pretty well exhausted.³⁹

In November 1889 Reginald A. Bradley was an out-of-work cowboy drifting along the railroad tracks from Deming, New Mexico, westward. Along his way, he ran across a heliograph station where a Sergeant Griffin, a signalman, told him about Army life in the Southwest, an adventure that consisted of “chasing Apaches.” He decided to join the Army and continued his journey along the railroad.⁴⁰

“After only a few days of training, I began regular duty in the troop.” Bradley found himself working in the barracks orderly room checking the payrolls for Major Noyes. He had the advantage of an English education. The office was a tiny cubicle, about 10 x 10 feet, and housed the first sergeant’s bunk and the troop library. Bradley became the troop clerk working for 1st Sgt. Kerr, a Tennessean who was well liked and “had everything to do with running the troop—officers didn’t do much like that.”

There was little to do in the way of entertainment. Bradley stayed at the post most of the time. Some of his friends would go on pass to Willcox, “the closest real town.” Bradley recalled that the “soldiers spent their money there and were quite welcome. Bowie Station was nothing, just a way station; a depot.” He said, however, that there were “a bunch of prostitutes camped outside the post.” Bradley would go into Dos Cabezas, the nearest settlement to Bowie. He called it an “old Mexican town” were “there were all kinds of things going on...prostitutes and everything like that. The commanding officer didn’t trouble himself about it.”

One of the favorite pastimes in the Army has always been gambling. It was no different during Bradley's enlistments. He elaborated:

There's always gambling after pay day. I don't remember any professional [civilian] gamblers allowed at Fort Bowie. I think the commanding officer kept them out, but [the soldiers] used to gamble among themselves. There were men in the fort, who I think were professional gamblers; who would actually enlist just for the opportunity to gamble. They'd put the money in a bank; then they'd serve their time or desert. There were enlisted men who used to gamble until all the money got in to the hand of one or two—then they'd quit. I think those one or two were, in this sense, professional gamblers. Gambling was done openly, in the quarters on the bunks—no attempt was made to stop it.”

All Bradley could relate about his living quarters was that the quarters had “a row of bunks on each side, with a big pot-bellied stove that kept the quarters warm.” They were adobe buildings with a “thin plaster outside that keeps the rain from digging in and destroying the wall.” He speculated that the adobe buildings would “last hundreds of years.” Some adobe foundations at Fort Huachuca, where they were constantly cared for, have lasted over 100 years. But at Fort Bowie, which would be abandoned in October 1894, they deteriorated rapidly.

When the garrison was alerted to take to the field, it could pack its supplies on mules and be ready for the trail in three hours. There was no need to issue ammunition for each soldier “kept his own belt of ammunition with him all the time in the barracks.” Rounds for his sidearm, he kept in his pockets. In what he termed a “hard chase after Apaches,” Bradley said the troop would “ride to

the scene of trouble as fast as possible—with arms, supplies on pack animals, and two canteens each of precious water.” The water was a precious commodity in Arizona. The cavalryman exclaimed, “I should say water was scarce away from the post! I don’t believe we took a drink or stopped between Fort Bowie and Rucker Canyon that night [on patrol]—40 miles. You know, all this talk about 100-mile rides. I read about ‘em, but I don’t believe half of ‘em. They might of took the 100 mile ride all right but they took ‘em in two days. Soldiering was a hard, dry business in southern Arizona 78 years ago.”

He was able to save some of his clothing allowance by not drawing blankets or new uniforms. He would buy blankets at a dollar each from potential deserters or men about to be discharged. This was a savings of three or four dollars over the cost of having one issued and deducted from his clothing account. And he bought a full dress tunic second hand, “wore it for five years and then sold it.” The dress uniform was worn by the troopers only on Sunday morning parade and, Bradley said, “then they’d only have it on for an hour or two.”

And there was the matter of style. According to Bradley, “when a person joined he was issued a suit of clothes; later he threw it to one side and purchased non-commissioned officers cloth, which was better, and had the troop tailor make a suit of clothes. Nearly all the men had this kind of suit of clothes, except for someone who just joined. The issue clothes were pretty tough looking.” Remembering the first Army clothes he was issued, Bradley complained “they had two or three sizes and just threw you out a suit of clothes.”

Private Bradley explained about his weapons: “you had to sign up for sabers and guns and

cartridge belts.” The young trooper had qualified as a marksman and sharpshooter. He said, “I had the same carbine all the time—one did, except if the bore is not right. When you got a gun you knew, you wanted to keep it, because you could shoot better with that one than any other.” The NCO in charge of the barracks would padlock the carbines in a round rack each evening and “it was his duty to see that all the guns were in there, or accounted for.”

He considered the horses at Fort Bowie as good. “They’re always inspected by the officers, and tested out. I had a pretty good horse, but he wasn’t half broke. I had a lot of breaking to do.” In one month [October] at Huachuca the 2d Cavalry reported turning into the Quartermaster ten unserviceable horses.

Bradley gave this picture of the daily life at Fort Bowie, Arizona, in 1890, a routine in which he said “day followed day, with little break.”

The first call was at 0615 hours, although he added that the time changed “all the time.” Reveille was at 0625 when you actually jumped out of bed. By 0630 “you fall in for roll call by 1st Sgt...in complete uniform—with your tunic buttoned up.” Before breakfast cavalrymen could expect to put in an hour of stable duty. “Each morning we went to care for our horses for an hour, then ate our breakfast of black coffee and baked hash.”

Fatigue call was at 0715. “Outside the 1st Sgt’s office is a bulletin board, where you can find out what your’re supposed to do the next day. I was lucky,” he said, “[I] usually had fatigue walking around behind the c.o.” Although Bradley found that “there was lots of work around a post like that,” he didn’t think the garrison was overworked. “There was

always old guard fatigue. When they came off guard they didn't do anything but groom horses for an hour. The next day, with a sergeant or a corporal, they'd go out and saw wood or do something up at the officers' quarters."

There was a sick call at 0730 when the sick men were "marched up to the doctor at the hospital on the hill." If "you had some business at the adjutant's office, then you went up to take care of it" at orderly call. According to Bradley, they didn't have drill call every day but "just layed up on our bunks in the quarters." Bradley did not remember ever being on the rifle range while with his troop at Fort Bowie. When they did have mounted drill, it was "on the flats of San Simeon Valley—a dry place of cactus and spikes."

During mounted drill, they were in charge of the first sergeant because they only had one officer. "The troop was always divided into two platoons, and the 1st Sgt. was always in command of the first platoon and the 1st duty Sgt. of the second platoon." The desert scrub and cacti of the Arizona desert made its demands upon horsemanship. During mounted drill Bradley remembered galloping across the desert on a fine horse when his saber "caught on a mesquite bush and dragged me right off the horse.... It didn't seem to hurt me, I caught my horse and got on again."

After drill they would have afternoon stables with the NCOs grooming their own mounts and the enlisted men would groom the remainder, taking turns with the animals at the command of "change horses." Retreat was at 1700 and the men were assembled outside the barracks. "The 1st Sgt. called the names, then the adjutant comes out and hears 'Troop C,

4th Cavalry present or accounted for.’”

This was followed by Mess Call at 1715. The fare was repetitious. “When in post,” Bradley reported, “we just had meat and potatoes.” Tattoo, First Call, followed. Another roll call was taken at 2100 when the “non-commissioned officers in charge would just walk around and see that the fellows were there.” Taps was at 2300 and the NCOs “checked men in bunks; they were always looking to see if anyone had run off.”⁴¹

Some men were detailed to sleep in the stables to act as a guard. The stable guard was a full time assignment. Bradley related “There was a man detailed who stayed down there all the time—even slept there—did nothing else but show up once in a while for inspection.”

In 1887 the Huachuca Mountains shuddered at the prospect of civilization advancing to the very feet of their fragile ecosystem. An earthquake roughly jostled the citizenry as far away as Tombstone, set the forests ablaze, and dropped the San Pedro River underground. That river, described by intrepid fur trappers in 1825 as a mighty concourse teeming with wildlife, now seemed to be swallowed up by some kind of subterranean maw, its course marked not by rushing water, but by a dry, tree-lined streambed. A second quake six years later was merely a shrug of resignation, and the mountains remained still for the following century and more.

Two years later there was more excitement when the Army payroll was hit. On 11 May 1889, paymaster Maj. Joseph W. Wham was carrying his strongbox of cash to pay off Arizona troops when he was ambushed at Cedar Springs and robbed of \$28,345.10. His eleven-man escort, two NCOs and nine privates from the 10th Cavalry and 24th Infantry, put up a good fight but

suffered eight of their number wounded. Seven of the outlaws were caught and held at Tucson for trial. In his final report to the War Department, Major Wham said, “. . . I never witnessed better courage or better fighting than shown by these colored soldiers.” Several of Wham’s escorts were recommended for the Certificate of Merit for their dedication. But Sergeant Benjamin Brown and Corporal Isaiah Mays received the Medal of Honor for courage and gallantry in the confrontation with the robbers.

In the 1890s another youth was growing up at Fort Huachuca. His father was the bandleader of the 11th Infantry Band and he later related his boyhood memories:

Our first Army station in Arizona was Fort Huachuca, where we arrived in the late eighties. Its location, miles and miles from urban civilization, its barren hills and bleak surroundings made it exceedingly unpleasant and undesirable for grown-ups but a paradise for a little boy. We could ride burros. Our playground was not measured in acres, or city blocks, but in miles and miles. We could do just about everything a little boy dreams of. We talked with miners and Indians. We associated with soldiers, and we learned to shoot even when we were so small the gun had to be held for us by an elder. My family had a two-room ‘dobe house, with a detached kitchen. The kitchen had a canvas roof, and the house had plank sides and flooring. It sure looked great to a small boy.⁴²

This longing for the wide open spaces of his youth are not unusual for a man who would become the Mayor of New York City. He was Fiorello LaGuardia.

The U.S. Army at the advent of the 20th century was little more than an Indian-fighting

constabulary, about 27,000 in number. Its fighting regiments, 10 of cavalry and 25 of infantry, were spread out over a constellation of distant and isolated frontier posts. One of these was Fort Huachuca, a high-desert post in a canyon of the Huachuca Mountains hard on the Mexican border.

Huachuca was a product of the Apache campaigns, most recently in 1886 against that steadfast renegade, Geronimo. It was built around a parade field, a rectangle just a little bigger than a football field that tilted and sloped downward from where the canyon widened upon a vista of the San Pedro valley. On one side of this makeshift, ankle-turning parade ground were the officers' quarters, large piles of Victorian adobe. On the opposite side, in direct line-of-sight from their watchful superiors, were a row of six enlisted barracks, long, wooden, two-story affairs that suggested a double-row of bunks on each floor to accommodate a 70-man company each. The band had single-story building of its own. A few other buildings made their way on to the perimeter—a hospital, bakery, quartermaster shop, post office, amusement hall, bachelor officers' quarters, and even a Chinese restaurant. The stables were off to the north, across Huachuca Creek and out of sight of this well-ordered garrison. Oaks and cottonwoods provided shade, while rose bushes and fruit trees added splashes of color. A double reservoir, built on the hill behind the officers' quarters, hoarded the supply of water. At this elevation, the temperature was a little cooler than on Arizona's desert floor. By most accounts it was a good place to be stationed as these western forts went.

Even though the Apache campaigns were concluded and the Army was closing most of its installations in the Southwest, Fort Huachuca had a bright future. In the Secretary of the Army's

Annual Report for 1889, the Department of Arizona commander, Col. Benjamin H. Grierson, 10th Cavalry, wrote: "Fort Huachuca is in good repair and on account of its proximity to the Mexican line and the railroad leading into Mexico, should be retained and fully garrisoned for some years to come."⁴³

Grierson's successor, Brig. Gen. A. McD. McCook, echoed these recommendations in 1891. "[Fort Huachuca] is located in a canyon of the same name about 14 miles north of the Mexican line, a convenient point for observing and scouting the frontier. It is 9 miles from a station on the Sonora and Guaymas Railroad. There are comfortable quarters here for four troops of cavalry. It is now garrisoned by two troops of Second Cavalry, and two companies of the Ninth Infantry. This is an important post, should be kept in good repair, and as soon as practicable should have additional quarters built, with an increase of troops."⁴⁴

The Department of Arizona in 1890 comprised the territories of Arizona, New Mexico, and California south of the 35th parallel. It was commanded by Brig. Gen. Alexander McD. McCook, who replaced Brig. Gen. Grierson late in the fiscal year, from his headquarters in Los Angeles. It was a subordinate command, along with the Departments of California and Columbia, of the Division of the Pacific with headquarters at San Francisco. In command in San Francisco was Brig. Gen. Nelson A. Miles. The Department of Arizona ceased to exist in 1893 when the Department of Arizona became part of the Military Department of Colorado, with headquarters in Denver.

There was an aggregate of 3,506 officers and men in the Arizona department, assigned to 54 troops and companies, spread out over 14 posts. These were Forts Apache, Bowie, Grant, Huachuca,

Lowell, Thomas, Whipple Barracks, and San Carlos in Arizona; Forts Bayard, Marcy, Stanton, Union, and Wingate in New Mexico; and San Diego Barracks, California.

The Army in the West was undergoing a base realignment and closing exercise. Forts Thomas, McDowell, Mohave, Selden, and Verde were abandoned by the Army in Arizona and New Mexico during the year and either turned over to the Department of the Interior for use by Indians or returned to the public domain. The closures were made for reasons of economy. In March 1890 the military post of Fort Selden was turned over to the Department of the Interior and converted into an Indian industrial school.

The men,⁴⁵ who would spend their time drilling and keeping up the post were without a fixed address. They would spend sometime less than a year at a given post before moving on to another. It was the result of a War Department policy that recognized that it was unfair to have any one outfit for too long at any given hell-hole. Accordingly, a regiment would relocate its headquarters from one western department to another and their companies would likewise rotate from one set of posts to others. Consequently, most of the vagabond regiments of the U.S. Army would call in at Fort Huachuca sooner or later. In the decades bracketing the turn of the century, companies or troops from these various regiments called Huachuca home: 1st, 2d, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th and 14th Cavalry; and the 9th, 11th, 15th, 18th, 22nd, 24th, 25th, 29th and 30th Infantry.

According to a survey taken by the Inspector General in 1890, the average noncommissioned officer was a native-born American. Just over 57 out of 100 fell into this category. Over 16 out of 100 were Irish and 13 of 100 were German. The largest number of recruits were drawn from the

large northern and midwestern cities, especially New York and Boston. The largest percentage were laborers [28 percent], 9.6 percent were farmers before entering the army, and 4.9 percent were former clerks. The recruit must be between the ages of 16 and 35, with those under 21 having parental permission. The average enlistee at this time was 5 foot 7 inches tall and weighed slightly over 153 pounds. The minimum for a cavalry trooper was 5 foot 3 inches, 120 lb., while the maximum for cavalry was 5 foot 10 inches, 155 lb. The enlisted man's average age in 1890 was 30.3 years and he had spent seven years in the Army. Anyone enlisting after 1884 received the *Soldier's Handbook* which outlined the basics of soldiering.

The bunk check and stables guard was a safeguard against desertion, an ever-present problem in the frontier army. The Army's desertion fell from 11 to 9 percent of enlisted strength during the year ending 30 June 1890. The 4th Cavalry in Arizona had a rate of 7.6; the 6th Cavalry in New Mexico and Colorado had a rate of 11; the 9th Infantry in Arizona had a 8.5 percent; and the 10th Infantry in New Mexico and Colorado had a 9.4 rate. Compare these rates with African-American units, the 10th Cavalry in Arizona and the 24th Infantry in Arizona and New Mexico which had rates of 1.3 and 1.4 respectively.

The 1890s were a time when the Army was preoccupied with substance abuse. An advocate of prohibition within the Army was Maj. Anson Mills, post commander at Fort Apache in 1889, and inventor of the web gear that would be worn by armies of the world in the 20th century. He was not in favor of the newly formed canteen, a forerunner of the post exchange, because they sold liquor. He thought that "young soldiers, entering to buy ordinary supplies would be brought into the pres-

ence of comrades indulging in liquor and thus induced to participate.” He and his wife rejoiced when prohibition became the law and then were confident that drinking “will soon disappear entirely, not only from this country, but from the whole world....”⁴⁶

The Assistant Surgeon at Fort Huachuca in the early 1890s was Major J. H. Patzki. After the post trader was forbidden to sell liquor to the soldiers, Patzki reported that the lowest kind of rum shops sprang up in the neighborhood. He wrote that “not only is the most vile liquor sold, but cards and prostitutes are used as additional allurements. The result is only too perceptible, the men are fleeced by the professional gamblers, crazed by the liquor, become involved in drunken brawls; or fall into the meshes of the women, and each pay day provides its crop of battered faces, empty pocketbooks and tainted constitutions, not to mention breaches of discipline and desertion, the result of hopeless indebtedness.”⁴⁷

It was at one of these rum shops near Fort Grant on March 31, 1893, that Apache Scout Rowdy lived up to his nickname and met his end. When he tried to clean the place out and rushed the bartender with a cocked Winchester, the man named Lennon shot him with a shotgun. Lennon was acquitted and Rowdy, in view of his past services, was buried with military honors. There were the occasional brawls and shootings, like the one at Tombstone in October 1893 when a 24th Infantry trooper was gunned down by a fellow soldier after the two had been drinking heavily and argued over a woman.

The Apache Wars were officially over. But fear lingered like woodsmoke in the reclusive settlements of southern Arizona. A single Apache marooned in the mountains to evade the grasp of

the white man's law could incite the terror that had been so much a part of Anglo emigrants' lives over the past decades. There were two such fugitives, one a Chiricahua and an avowed enemy of the American Army which had hunted him down, and a White Mountain who had been a member of that Army that tracked the Chiricahua renegades led by Geronimo.

While his bretheren languished in the damp prison camps of Florida, Massai breathed the dry, high air of freedom in Arizona. While aboard the train delivering the Warm Springs and Chiricahua bands into captivity, somewhere east of Kansas City, Massai jumped from the train and incredibly made his way back to New Mexico, sheltering there with the Mescaleros, and eventually Arizona. Massai first became known to the American forces when, in the fall of 1890, he kidnapped a White Mountain girl named Nastastale from the reservation, killing her mother, and taking the girl as his wife. He would elude pursuit by the cavalry over the next several years, traveling alone across the mountains of the Southwest and Mexico, and be blamed by the white press for every crime committed in the territories.

The second of these mountain exiles was a White Mountain Apache whose name, translated by one expert as "the tall brave man destined to come to a mysterious end," or, by another as "terrible tempered." To the U. S. Army in which he enlisted, he was known as the "Kid" and later by terrified Arizona settlers as "The Apache Kid." He made sergeant and took part in the Battle of Big Dry Wash, serving with Lieut. George H. Morgan's Troop E. As a first sergeant he accompanied General Crook into the Sierra Madres in 1883. The Kid reenlisted in 1885 to serve with Captain Emmet Crawford in the final Geronimo campaign.

At the San Carlos Agency in 1887, the Kid was left in charge of the scouts during the absence of Captain Francis C. Pierce and Chief of Scouts Al Sieber. He took the opportunity to drink the Apache brew, tiswin, mull over the circumstances of his father's murder, and plot revenge. Along with some other scouts he rode to the dwelling of an Apache named Rip who he thought responsible for his father's death and killed him. He and his companions turned themselves in on June 1. As he was about to be led away to the guard house with the six or seven other scouts, firing broke out and Chief of Scouts Al Sieber was shot in the foot.

The Kid fled unarmed, and after being chased hard by Lieut. Carter Johnson and scouts from Camp Thomas, arranged to surrender himself and his followers, which he did between June 22 and 25. He was tried by court-martial for mutiny and desertion, found guilty on both charges, given a disorderly discharge, and sentenced to be shot, along with four others. General Miles asked the court to reconsider. They came back with a life sentence which was reduced to ten years by Miles.

The Kid and four other Indians were returned from Alcatraz prison however, to face a trial by civil authorities who claimed they had jurisdiction. At the Globe courthouse, the Kid testified that it had been an Apache named Curly who shot Al Sieber. The Kid and his scouts were found guilty on October 23, 1889, of assault on Al Sieber and given seven years each in the Yuma Territorial Prison.

Enroute to that place under guard, the scouts jumped the deputy, seized his shotgun and killed Sheriff Glenn Reynolds who had refused an army escort. The deputy, W. A. "Hunkydory" Holmes, died of a heart attack or, as was believed in those days, of "fright." A Mexican prisoner on

the coach rode into Florence to spread the alarm of the escaped Apaches.

The other Apache broncos would be tracked down by Lieutenants James W. Watson and Powhatan H. Clarke, led by another scout, the 28-year-old Sergeant Rowdy. Lieut. Watson said Rowdy “loved campaigning and fighting and killing even better than he loved whiskey.”⁴⁸ In 1890 Sergeant Rowdy, Company A, Indian Scouts, was decorated with the Congressional Medal of Honor.

In 1892 the Apache Kid, now operating alone, emerged again. His depredations were reported by the Department Commander.

“The Kid,” a San Carlos Apache Indian, a refugee from the civil authority, is at large, living in the mountains bordering upon the White Mountain Indian Reservation. By his conduct he has caused much anxiety to white people living near the border of this reservation, as well as to the Indians who have homes upon the same. It is reported that this Indian killed an Apache woman on the 17th of May, on south side of Black River, escaping with the daughter of the murdered woman. Troops and Indian scouts were unsuccessful in capturing him. On the 30th day of May last he killed a young boy named Dobie, 30 miles north of Florence, Ariz. Upon receipt of news of the killing, two scouting parties were at once started from San Carlos upon the trail of this fugitive, commanded by experienced officers, accompanied by Indian scouts and trailers. Neither of those parties succeeded in overtaking the renegade. Two scouting parties were also sent out from Huachuca to scour the Catalina Mountains, as Kid evidently went in that direction....

Scouting parties under active young officers, with Apache trailers, are frequently out

after this desperado. He knows every foot of the country, and thus far has escaped capture. Many plans and devices have been put in operation to entrap and capture this wily savage. He eludes them all.⁴⁹

The press was critical of the Army's efforts to catch the Kid. The *Tombstone Epitaph*, published this editorial in June 1892.

According to the statement of reliable persons who were present, the pursuit of the murderer or murderers of Charlie Dobie, as far as the military party was concerned, was simply a farce. While the Kid was retreating at from thirty to fifty miles a day, the party in pursuit managed to make about ten miles a day. The scouts would be sent on ahead to follow the tracks, and made to come back and report daily. Camp was pitched early each day—from ten in the morning to two in the afternoon. From this can be seen the utter futility and nonsense of employing the military in pursuit of Indians.

At such a rate they could not overtake a cripple, hobbling ahead on crutches, much less the agile and wily Apache. And when the civilians offered to take the scouts and go on ahead and push the chase, they were blankly refused.

The people will learn from this that when settlers are killed, mutilated and plundered, the only way to capture the murderers will be to depend on individual exertions and to avoid the folly of calling on the military. The late tragedy is too solemn a matter, too far reaching in its effects on the general public, to permit this wanton trifling.⁵⁰

The Apache Kid disappeared into the fastness of Arizona and Sonora mountains to become

the subject of rumor and legend. All of the depredations in the territory, even into the 20th century, were blamed on the Kid or on Massai, the other escapee from U. S. custody.

These Apache holdouts, along with bandits who tried to make their crimes look like Apache depredations, prompted the Army to increase its vigilance around Huachuca, vigorously scouting along the Mexican border with additional Indian scouts enlisted for that purpose. A special force of Apache scouts, a few officers and troopers of Troop K, 10th Cavalry, led by Lieut. Powhattan Clarke, had a “roving commission to operate actively in conjunction with the troops already in the field, to pursue, capture or destroy any hostile Indians which may be found on the border.”⁵¹ This stepped up patrolling would, according the department commander, determine whether the marauders were Indians or not and “give assurances that nothing will be left undone by the military to prevent disorder on the frontier; while evil doers, let them be whom they may, will soon be induced to desist from their course or leave the country to seek more favorable locations for their nefarious practices.”⁵²

Back in the relative comforts of Fort Huachuca, a detailed report prepared by post surgeon Timothy Wilcox gives a wide-ranging description of the post in 1893.

“Water supply is obtained from springs 2 1/2 to 3 miles above and at an altitude of 400 to 600 feet above the reservoirs, which are 250 feet above the lowest point of distribution, the hospital. Water is conducted in iron pipes from springs, or catch basins near them, to the reservoirs, and is distributed through iron pipes. Reservoirs are double, one excavated in rock and cemented, covered by a substantial building with shingled roof, lattice and screen

protected sides. The overflow from the reservoirs irrigates the parade ground or flows at will into a canyon that leads it away from the post. Capacity of both reservoirs is 220,000 gallons. Buildings are constructed for the most part of adobe. The hospital is of two stories. All of the barracks, six in number, except one which is of adobe, are of wood and two stones. The wooden barracks are raised on stone piers above the surface, affording space for policing. No two sets of barracks are alike in division of rooms. Ventilation is by doors and windows, openings in the ceilings and covered cupolas. Heating is by wood stoves and open fireplaces. There are thirteen sets of officers' quarters not including the old hospital, which is now used as officers' mess and clubroom. The officers' quarters are commodious and sufficient for the present garrison. The bathtubs are zinc lined and of the best construction."⁵³

For the most part, the decade of the 1890s was a quiet one with more concern given to the question of whether or not to sell alcohol on Army posts than to Indian holdouts. With the exception of these few Apache loners, the Indian Wars were at an end. The U.S. Army had a chance to take a breath, to collect itself and speculate about what the next century would have in store. Its time of peace and stock-taking would be too brief. The atmosphere of tranquillity that suffused Fort Huachuca in the Spring of 1898 was swept away by an explosive gust from the Caribbean, some 2,000 miles away.

“A Splendid Little War!” That was how Secretary of State John Hay characterized the war with Spain and, sarcasm aside, it works fairly well as a definition. The overall performance of the

American fighting man, if their officers' opinions carried any weight, could only be termed "splendid." The same word could be applied to the outcome, a quick and thankful victory for a U.S. Army that was woefully unprepared for prosecuting a war far from American shores. The war was "little" in terms of its duration and scope, especially as compared to the conflagrations of the coming century. But the Spanish American War had a far larger meaning for the U.S. Army of the 20th century. It alerted military leaders to the need for reform, professionalism and modernization if the U.S. were to maintain its newly bestowed status of "world power."

While Fort Huachuca had very recently been at the farthest remove from the centers of American civilization and the Army's headquarters in Washington, D.C., now, with the nation's interests reaching into the Caribbean and South Pacific, it seemed more like home. The veterans returning from the fighting in Cuba, Puerto Rico, or the Philippines, found Fort Huachuca a welcome respite from tropical jungles and the duress of combat.

Joseph Wood Krutch, the literary and drama critic who came to live in Tucson in the 1950s and 60s, wrote two books about the Sonoran desert which he came to know so well. In 1954 he wrote that "nothing, not even the sea, has seemed to affect men more profoundly than the desert, or seemed to incline them so powerfully toward great thoughts, perhaps because the desert itself seems to brood and encourage brooding."⁵⁴

One of the men who was inclined to great thoughts by his desert environment was Vance Marchbanks who came to Fort Huachuca the first time in 1899. In an introspective and probing memoir left to his children, he shared his reminiscences.

For amusement in the early days they had baseball games, football games, hand ball, basketball, tennis, bowling, athletic meets staged two or three times a year, and we had moving picture shows and horse shows. We also had drills, maneuvers, target practice with the pistol, rifle and machine gun, which kept the soldiers in trim. ...We enjoyed devotional service on Sunday, and we had a hospital, theatre, dance hall, department store, butcher shop, barber shop, beer garden and burial ground. No city could boast of the things we did not have, except in the early days we did not have a free school. Our children attended a private school however, and the parents paid the teacher \$5.00 per month for each child.

...just outside the post, like nearly all army posts where I have been, we had stores, saloons, houses of prostitution, gambling shacks, and, during the dry period, bootlegging joints. With all of its faults, disadvantages and handicaps, we rather enjoyed our stay.”

There were no moving pictures in the early days, and the only amusement the soldiers had on the Post, they created themselves. We usually had Saturday night dances; and out near Fry there was a resort which had about everything a soldier seeks when he goes on pass. Game was plentiful and hunting was good. There was a silver mine being worked then out near Pyeatt's Ranch, about nine miles west of the post...⁵⁵

Periodically, the Army tried to crack down on the type resort referred to by Marchbanks. They were called “hog ranches” and a news item that appeared a few years earlier in the Tombstone Epitaph gives an idea of what the Army was up against when it tried to regulate the moral lives of its men.

The Hog Ranch, located within easy access of the Huachuca Post, is being strictly guarded by a detail of troops to prevent any of the men stationed there from spending their \$12 per month in riotous living at that establishment. The Hog Ranch, so called, is a large house with 13 occupants—women. The table is presided over by the proprietress, who has, on account of her solicitude for those under her charge, earned the title of “Mama.” The house has been doing a rattling business of late, but no more is the sound of revelry heard by night. Fair women and brave men, the youth and beauty of the Huachuca slope, no longer mingle at the Hog Ranch. Business is prostrated by Uncle Sam’s rude intrusion. The problem will however be solved in the near future. The lady of the ranch was in town yesterday and took steps to have the guards around her house fired by legal process.⁵⁶

In February 1902, Sergeant Claude M. Pettibone arrived at Fort Huachuca with the First Squadron of the 14th Cavalry, commanded by Major Charles M. O’Connor. Forty-six years later from his ranch in Washington, he related his experiences in a letter to the post’s Public Relations Officer.

Well in those days we thought Huachuca was certainly a swell place and we were happy in our rough daily grind and please believe me, there was something doing every minute. As I rated as No. 1 duty sergeant of the regiment, I was always being called on for Special or extra duty. One time shortly after arrival, the CO sent me out with a detachment of eight men to follow the trail west along the foot of the Huachucas, then cut thru the hills and cover the territory south of the range and to the border. We finally wound up thru Parker

Canyon, San Rafael, Lochiel and Washington Mine and there were no settlers or stragglers to me met on the way.

One day the CO got a bright idea to establish a Post school for the benefit of the younger soldiers who might wish to go on with their “schooling” where they had left off. We found the remnants of a fairly decent library in one of the buildings but not well taken care of. I picked out a couple of men and straightened things up. But not a single boy would take advantage of going to school. It looked as if we were licked in the subject of school at the start. Then we remembered that the Post Signal Sergeant had two lovely little girls about seven and nine years of age. The Major had one son of fifteen, another of thirteen and a daughter about eleven. So we started a real school for the young folks. Threw it open to any children of nearby ranchers. And a school was organized with a good number of young folks. One girl about thirteen and her brother about eleven, rode in from Montezuma ranch every day six days a week. William and Edward O’Connor were among the oldest and were prepared for West Point and the last I checked up were officers of the Regular Army.

Many a time I have left Huachuca early in the morning and rode across the mesa to the San Pedro River and down to Naco where some of our personal friends in the mercantile business would put on an all night party with an early morning breakfast, then spend the following day riding back to the Post. Or maybe it was to attend a bull fight on the other side of the line.

There were no roads, just a bee line toward some peak in the Mule mountains and

kept going til we hit the river. Remember very well that I took a three day leave to help Tombstone celebrate the arrival of the first railroad engine into Tombstone. Horse races and high old times were had and one was everybody's guest.⁵⁷

In September 1906, the Army was considering abandoning the present Fort Huachuca in favor of a post somewhere down in the San Pedro Valley where water would be more readily available.

A 1908 appropriation opened the way for a new swimming pool, bowling alley, ambulance shed, and an extension to the band's stables. In the same year the Signal Corps ran their own telegraph line from Huachuca Siding to the post, replacing the old Western Union line. A battalion of Infantry was added to the garrison in 1909 and more growth was anticipated. By 1909 citizens in the area were lobbying to move the fort so that the present site could be opened up for gold mining. In an October 18 letter to the editor of the *Tombstone Epitaph*, a Joe Bush wrote:

A strong move is on foot among the "influentials" in the southern part of the country to have Fort Huachuca's barracks moved to a point between Douglas and Bisbee, the much closer to Bisbee than Douglas, and closer to Warren than either. Whichever gets the plumb will not be envied by the Huachuca neighborhood as they argue that the present military reserve will be the site for an ideal gold mining camp, which will be bound to happen just as quick as the government sees fit to abandon it for military purposes. That the effort to move the fort will be successful there is no doubt, as some of the strongest influences, not only of the territory, but in the east are at work on it, and when it is taken into consideration that

none of the strategic points will be jeopardized in the move, but on the contrary will be strengthened by it being placed at a railroad point will be a logical reason for the final abandonment of Fort Huachuca. Another good point can be scored in favor of those bent on Fort Huachuca's abandonment, is that the air is warmer in that neighborhood than in the lofty Huachucas.⁵⁸

Nothing ever came of any plans to relocate Fort Huachuca and the water problem was somewhat alleviated by tapping springs in Garden Canyon and piping water to the main post.

In 1911 the quartermaster received \$138,000 with which he added more troop barracks, cavalry stables, a water system, and housing for four officers. At the end of that year the post could fully accommodate six cavalry troops.

On 20 April 1911, troops of the 6th Cavalry took up station at Douglas, Nogales and Fort Huachuca. According to their commander, Colonel Charles M. O'Connor, these troops were "a source of relief" to the citizens along the border who had been worried about the revolutionary fighting taking place in northern Mexico. O'Connor was also acting as commander of the Department of Colorado of which Fort Huachuca was a part. In his Annual Report of 1911, he said:

The canyons of the Huachuca Mountains afford a delightful climate and typical conditions for mounted troops.

Troops from Fort Huachuca may reach Douglas within 24 hours, Naco in 6 hours, and Nogales in 48 hours. Two squadrons of Cavalry at Fort Huachuca would be ample for any necessities likely to arise on this border within a year.⁵⁹

The expansion to a two squadron post was underway by September, under the supervision of Capt. J. L. Jordan, the constructing Quartermaster at Huachuca. He was piping water in from Garden Canyon, about seven miles southeast of the post

At least one officer, 1st Lieut. Rodman Butler, 6th Cavalry, did not understand why the Army just didn't build a new post in Garden Canyon. He wrote to the *Army & Navy Journal* on 23 September 1911:

Last month the 6th Cavalry camped two days in Garden Canyon, seven miles from Fort Huachuca. When the regiment returned surveyors were at work laying out an extension. It appears that the post is to be increased from one to two squadrons. As a matter of fact there is hardly room for one squadron; also a scarcity of water and no ground near the post, excepting the ball diamond and polo field, that is not covered with rocks.

At Garden Canyon there is abundance of water, clear ground to maneuver a regiment on and room for a regimental or brigade post. It is a beautiful spot and well wooded in addition to its other advantages.

If any of your readers can tell me why this impossible place is to be rendered still more impossible by, the expenditure of some \$120,000, while an ideal spot with plenty of water and everything in its favor, is available, I will be duly grateful.⁶⁰

Other work being accomplished at Huachuca included a new train station at Huachuca Siding, the old station having been destroyed by fire. The target range was enlarged by Lieut. J.A. Degen to accommodate ten troops instead of four. In 1914 the Army was also thinking about

building a combined power plant for supplying water, electric current, and refrigeration for the post.⁶¹ New construction continued during 1912 with work on more cavalry stables, officers' quarters, and temporary housing for civilian employees. A passenger depot was erected at Huachuca Siding and the El Paso and Southwestern Railroad, having received guarantees from the Army the Huachuca would be enlarged to a brigade-sized post, began work in August 1912 on a railway spur from Huachuca Siding to the post.

The Secretary of War personally inspected Fort Huachuca in August 1913, months before the arrival of the 10th Cavalry, and confirmed that the War Department had approved the expansion of Huachuca from a regimental to brigade post. The quartermaster at Huachuca quickly prepared estimates and specifications to accomplish that purpose. Contracts were let and by the end of 1913, five double sets of officers' quarters were completed, two company barracks, one cavalry stable, additions on the hospital and commissary, and an extension of the sewer system were finished. And the construction of the line that would bring in water from Garden Canyon was well underway.

The *Tombstone Epitaph* reported in 1913 that:

Much construction is in progress at Fort Huachuca under the direction of the government, giving that locality much life in the building line. The government is adding a large number of new structures to its equipment for the increased occupation coming about under the recent War Department order. This work will continue through the summer. Besides new buildings it includes a great deal of remodeling of quarters. [The result was the set of quarters which now line Rhea Street and the officers' quarters along Henry Circle.]

The request of the War Department on the quartermaster at Fort Huachuca for plans and estimated cost of increasing the post from a regiment to a brigade post, following close upon the inspection of the post by the Secretary of War, is taken by Army men to mean that the designation of Fort Huachuca as a brigade post is but a matter of short time.

The quartermaster has commenced work on the plans. The post at present has an appropriation of \$125,000, of which \$110,000 is being used for the construction of new barracks, headquarters building, three double sets of officers' quarters and a commissary building.

Although there are only five troops actually stationed at the fort at present, the post exchange is doing an excellent business.⁶²

Contemplated over the next several years to complete the upgrade of Fort Huachuca and comfortably accommodate the 10th Cavalry regiment, were these new buildings: four troop barracks, one band barrack, one machine gun platoon barrack, one quartermaster corps barrack, six double sets of officers' quarters, one building with eight sets of bachelor officers' quarters, fourteen noncommissioned officers' quarters, six troop stables, one stable for band and machine gun platoon, one pack train stables, one administration building, one ice and electric plant, a quartermaster storage shed, an ordnance storehouse, and an enlargement of the guardhouse.

According to a report of the Southern Department, a "Contract was entered into with J.T. Dalton & Son, Junction City, Kans., for the construction of one double set of quarters for two captains, one double lavatory, one troop barracks building, one addition to hospital, together with

hot-water heating and plumbing in the addition to the hospital and extension of the sewer system at Fort Huachuca, contract providing for completion on or before June 27, 1914. With the exception of the ward addition to the hospital, which is to be of frame, all construction is of the frame and stucco type, concrete foundation, which class of construction has proven satisfactory at that post.”⁶³

On August 2, 1916 kerosene lamps became a thing of the past. The remote outpost of Fort Huachuca was electrified. The work of wiring all of the buildings was accomplished by William R. Shadley, a civilian employee of the post since 1905. Before electricity was available for general use, Shadley generated electricity for buildings like the movie theater by using a small dynamo and steam engine. By the time of his retirement in 1932, Shadley was superintendent of a power plant which housed four diesel engines to provide Fort Huachuca’s electricity.

Second Lieutenant John B. Brooks came to Huachuca in December 1913 with the 10th Cavalry. In a 1961 interview he described some of the buildings in the old post area.

There were no BOQ’s at Ft Huachuca and the group of bachelor officers, including two lieutenants, were told they could occupy the Officers Club (now the museum) and could mess in the Chinese Restaurant (down the street).

...The Post Chaplain lived in a set of quarters to right of [the present museum] and he was the only colored officer and was disliked by the men of the regiment. He was very much disliked more particularly by the enlisted men than the officers. The enlisted men just hated him because he was constantly pulling his rank on them which they didn’t like....

The little building up there was the Regimental Headquarters, and there was a tennis

court out in front of it at that time, right in the corner of the parade ground, and the commanding officer could look out his office window and woe and behold any young lieutenant who was on that tennis court before 4 o'clock in the afternoon. He was told. An orderly came out and presented the colonel's compliments and that the colonel would say, "You go back to your quarters. Don't you appear on that tennis court or in athletic clothes until 4 o'clock. We work until 4 o'clock."⁶⁴

The revolution in Mexico was spreading fast and by 1911 internal conflicts led to increasing incidents along the border. President William Howard Taft was alarmed that the Mexican revolution would spill over the border and ordered more troops to the southwest. As the only permanent military installation on the border west of El Paso, Fort Huachuca became the nucleus for patrolling and logistic operations during the next several years. Satellite outposts sprang up all along the border at Yuma, Tucson, Nogales, Naco, Douglas, and San Bernadino in Arizona; and Lang's Ranch, Alamo Hueco, Dog Springs, Las Cienegas, Hachita, and Columbus in New Mexico.

Colonel Charles M. O'Connor was commanding the Sixth Cavalry at Fort Huachuca and concurrently the Department of Colorado, which until its disbanding on 30 June 1911, included Arizona and New Mexico. O'Connor made his headquarters in the field, at his base of operations at Huachuca, or on the border at Douglas, Arizona. He reported that year:

During the engagement between the Federal and insurrectionary forces at Agua Prieta on April 13, 1911, a large number of people congregated in Douglas, Ariz., just across the line from the scene of action, overcome with curiosity and bent on witnessing the fight.

Stray bullets, probably from both sides, fell among the sightseers, and a few were wounded and two or three killed. At the request of the Mexican Federal commander, who, with his officers and a few men, reached a position near the international line, Capt. Julien E. Gaujot, First Cavalry, entered the town of Agua Prieta and persuaded the Federal forces still engaged at the Cuartel to surrender their arms to the insurrectionary forces and conducted them for safe-keeping to the United States, where they were held as prisoners by the United States forces till ordered released by the War Department. At the same time a number of the insurrectionists who had fled to the United States territory were held by our troops until similarly disposed of.⁶⁵

An idea of the whirlwind social life at this remote but growing post can be seen from these extracts from letters written in September 1911 to the *Army & Navy Journal* by correspondents from Huachuca.

Lieut. F. W. Glover, 13th Cav., the new post exchange officer, went to Tucson Monday for a new stock of supplies. Capt. D.H. Biddle and Lieut. J.P. Hasson, 6th Cav., returned the first of the week [early October] from a month's leave spent at Fort Des Moines. Major and Mrs. R. P. O'Connor, M.C., entertained Col. C. M. O'Connor and Major and Mrs. C.Y. Brownlee Tuesday evening for dinner. A surprise reception to celebrate Colonel O'Connor's birthday was given by the officers of the post at the club Tuesday evening, followed by an informal dance.

Capt. D.T.E. Casteel, 6th Cav., left Saturday to spend a four months' leave in the

East. Major J.W. Heard, 6th Cav., has been building a new steeplechase course in the vicinity of the baseball diamond.

There was a dinner party Wednesday at the headquarters' mess, given by Colonel O'Connor's staff in honor of his sixtieth birthday. Those who attended were Major and Mrs. Brownless, Capt. and Mrs. Morris, Colonel Blocksom, Captain Ryan and Chaplain Freeland. The officers and ladies of the post are much interested in the comet which is visible every evening in the western sky. A picnic party in Garden Canyon Wednesday evening was made up of Major and Mrs. Brownlee, Lieut. and Mrs. Ross, Captain Meyers and Mr. O'Neill. It ended in a delightful moonlight ride back to the post....

The Misses O'Connell, of Tucson, Mrs. Glover, Mrs. Ross, Mrs. Jordan, Captain Morris and Lieutenant Koch were entertained today by Mrs. R.P. O'Connor at a noon luncheon. Capt. F. E. Buchan's birthday was the occasion of an enjoyable dinner party Thursday evening, followed by a moonlight ride enjoyed by quite a number of the post people.

* * *

...The orchestra of Troop I, 12th Cav., furnishes the music for the enlisted men's weekly hops in the post hall.

The officers of the 2nd Squadron, 6th Cav., gave a reception at the camp Tuesday evening in honor of the visitors, Gen. and Mrs. Manning and the Misses O'Connell, of Tucson, Mrs. F. W. Glover entertained Wednesday in honor of her wedding anniversary. Among those present were Gen. and Mrs. Manning, Mesdames Kruttschnitt, White and

Kotch, Lieutenant Maize and the Misses O'Connell. Capt. and Mrs. Morris, Lieut. and Mrs. Ross, Captain Meyers, Lieutenants Hasson and O'Neill enjoyed a camp supper Sunday near the springs of Huachuca Canyon. Mrs. R.P. O'Connor gave a delightful dinner on Monday for Capt. and Mrs. Mabee, Capt. and Mrs. White and Capt and Mrs. Moffet. A very pleasant tea was given by Mrs. Jordan Friday afternoon for Mesdames C.M. O'Connor, Sickel, Brownlee, Gienty, White, Morris, Moffet, Degen, Glover, Ross, Kotch, Manning and the two Misses O'Connell. Mrs. Mabee poured tea.⁶⁶

As 1912 began a new commander, just graduated from the War College, arrived at the fort. He was Lieutenant Colonel Jacob G. Galbraith, 4th Cavalry. An old Indian fighter, he graduated from West Point in the same year, 1877, that Camp Huachuca was founded. Now he would be faced with a different kind of military challenge—patrolling a rugged and uneasy border.

The tension at Fort Huachuca can be felt in this news story datelined Tucson, 5 September, 1912: "Because of the situation on the Mexican border all the United States troops at Fort Huachuca were ordered to move tomorrow morning. One troop will go to Elgin on the Nogales railroad. Another to Patagonia, a mining camp east of Nogales, and a third to the International line near Douglas, where it is feared trouble may be caused by organized men and cowboys eager to go to Cananea where they will defend Americans in event of a rebel attack."

But rebels and combative cowboys were not the only troublemakers that Colonel Galbraith had to contend with, as another story appearing in the *Tombstone Epitaph* in that same year attests: "Two Fort Huachuca soldiers, after imbibing too freely of Douglas firewater, hired an auto at

Douglas early this morning for a joyride to Bisbee. When out 10 miles the chauffeur was forcibly relieved of his post, being tied hand and foot and left beside the road while the reckless soldiers, in the spirit of dare devilry, appropriated the machine and proceeded across country, presumably to the Fort. The chauffeur succeeded in extricating himself and reported the bold affair to the officers. The soldiers were overtaken at Hereford, arrested and held pending the arrival of Sheriff Wheeler who left this morning to bring the prisoners and machine to Tombstone. They were brought here this afternoon. Investigation showing that there was no malicious intent and both were accordingly released, returning to the Fort.”

Later that same year, another man arrived at the railroad siding at Huachuca with a boxcar filled with his farming implements, livestock and some provisions. He was Oliver Fry who, with his two sons Tom and Erwin, would take up farming outside Fort Huachuca’s gate. The small community that would eventually grow up around his homestead would be incorporated as Fry and later be known as Sierra Vista, Arizona.

Another settler amidst the military community at the fort was Sam Kee, known to grateful troopers as the “Cantonese Paymaster.” The first American experience of this Chinese immigrant was the labor camps of the Union Pacific Railroad. Having learned cooking skills, Sam Kee took his savings and opened a restaurant at Fort Huachuca. His business became a popular gathering place at the post and he befriended many soldiers who would later rise to prominence in the U.S. Army. Among them was contract surgeon Leonard Wood. About 1911 congressional wrangling forestalled a vote to appropriate the Army payroll and Fort Huachuca’s soldiers were without their pay. Incred-

ibly, Sam Kee turned his savings over to the Post Commander so that the troops would not be without money. This generous act earned for him a revered place in Fort Huachuca's history.

In this remote mountain fastness in the early part of the 20th century, the Army's mission had turned from chasing Apaches to protecting the border, a job that was cloaked in the euphemism of enforcing the Neutrality Laws. The commander of the 5th Cavalry at Huachuca, Colonel Wilbur E. Wilder, briefed his men in 1913:

You gentlemen all understand the condition of affairs along the International Line. Arms have been smuggled across in defiance of the President's proclamation forbidding it. Guns are being sent across the line daily and the ammunition that our own people are selling to the warring factions in Mexico is being shot right back into our own territory. Our own people in border towns have been killed and wounded by cartridges furnished Mexican troops by our own people. This must be stopped. ...We've got a new kind of duty. It remains to see how well we can do it—to enforce the Neutrality Laws.⁶⁷

The regiment's orders were to enforce these laws but just how those orders were to be carried out was often less clear to the troops who sought scraps of shade under the occasional Blue Paloverde along a vast vista of Southwestern desert. How the orders from the policy-makers back east filtered down to the tactical level was described to a 10th Cavalry officer by a longtime observer of the Arizona scene.

You see, Captain, it runs like this— ...The general commanding the department gets a letter from the Adjutant General and he says: "This office views with concern the fact that

the troops under your command are not strictly enforcing the Neutrality Laws. You will at once take steps to see that this dereliction is corrected. Failure to do this will result in steps taken to ensure compliance with orders that have been frequently issued from these headquarters.”

Now o’ course that makes every colonel mad. It ain’t hard to make a colonel mad anyhow. They don’t write letters in this case. They just say to the Adjutant, “Tell Captain Jones I want to see him.” Then Jones comes and the colonel’s mad. He wants to be a Brigadier Ginral hissself and he can’t if he gets in trouble over them damn Neutrality Laws so he starts in on Jones.

“Look here, Captain,” he says, “you’re going with your troop on border duty. Part of that duty is to enforce the Neutrality Laws. That’s the most important part. I only want to warn you that if you don’t enforce those laws to the letter you’ll find you’ve started something you can’t finish. That’s all.”

The Lieutenant takes his men to the hellhole where he’s to stay and he calls his sergeant an’ tells him: “You take ten men today, Sergeant, and ride the border from Point O’ Rocks to Sadler’s Wells. You’ll take note of all activities on the Mexican side of the line, especially any movement of troops and above all you’ll see to it that the Neutrality Laws are strictly observed. Understand that?”

The Sergeant looks kind o’ dazed. He’s heard the words but they don’t mean nothin’ to him. So he says, “Yes sir. I’d like to ask the Lieutenant a question. What are these

Neutrality Laws that we're to enforce?"

"How in hell do I know what they are?" says the Lieutenant. "All I can say is, 'you enforce 'em.'"

"Yes Sir," says the Sergeant and passes the same on to his corporal.⁶⁸

Although the 9th Cavalry and the 24th and 25th Infantry regiments had all served briefly at Fort Huachuca during the 1890s, it wasn't until the 10th Cavalry, or the "Buffalo Soldiers," arrived there in December 1913 that the era of black soldiers began at Huachuca. (The nickname "Buffalo Soldiers" was first given to the men of the 10th Cavalry by the Indians of the plains who likened their hair to that of the buffalo. Over the years this name has been extended by veterans to include soldiers of all of the original black regiments.)

This proud cavalry unit had served in Arizona before, in the last century, rotating from one post to another in Arizona, New Mexico or Texas, wherever they were needed to track down Apache renegades. So the startling vistas were not new to many of the veterans. Nor was the relentless desert sun a stranger to these horsemen who doggedly followed the trail of Pancho Villa into Mexico in 1916. In Huachuca Canyon they found a home for the next eighteen years, the longest this mobile unit would stay at any one place since its formation in 1866.

Right after their arrival at Huachuca, in 1914, the men of the 10th were spread out at encampments along the Arizona-Mexico border from Yuma on the West to Naco on the east. They corralled their horses and stretched their tents at points in between like Forrest, Osborne, Nogales, Lochiel, Harrison's Ranch, Arivaca, Sasabe, La Osa, and San Fernando. Many would sweat it out

under canvas for as long as ten months before being rotated back to their home station in the cooler elevations of the Huachuca.

To some blacks Huachuca was a mountain refuge far away from the immense struggle that was taking place in America's city streets and country lanes, a fight for equality. But for others it was a way to participate in the struggle, to take up a profession that offered dignity, service to country, and maybe a warrior's death. For whatever reason they joined the Army (the Marines did not admit blacks; the Navy had only a few openings for the menial job of messboy), Fort Huachuca would be an almost inevitable stop along their way. Some found it to be "a very fine place to serve." To others it was "an infamous place." For all it was, for a time, home. Black infantrymen and cavalrymen carved out a place in history there. If the sobriquet "Buffalo Soldier" has come to stand collectively for the black men who served in the four regular army regiments from 1866 to World War II, then Fort Huachuca has earned the distinction of being "Home of the Buffalo Soldier."

Late in 1913 the regiment received orders sending it west, to the border station of Fort Huachuca. Second Lieutenant John B. Brooks had just graduated from West Point and was assigned to D Troop. In a 1961 interview, he described the consternation.

...The summer of 1913 we had spent at Winchester, Virginia, testing the new Cavalry drill regulations, and we had hardly arrived back at Ethan Allen in October when we learned of this movement which was to take place early in December. Hardly any one knew how to pronounce Fort Huachuca and nobody knew where it was. So there was a great scurrying

around, especially among the junior officers to get atlases and find out where Fort Huachuca was and see if we could get the correct pronunciation, which we eventually did.⁶⁹

On 13 January 1914, a second contingent of the 10th Cavalry arrived by train at Huachuca siding seven miles north of the post. Among them was Captain George Brydges Rodney, a troop commander who would later in his life command the regiment and Fort Huachuca. In his published reminiscences, aptly titled *As a Cavalryman Remembers*, he described the extreme weather that greeted them.

We reached Huachuca on January 13, in a driving snowstorm. The troops, detraining at a little railroad siding, marched seven miles over a rocky trail to the Post and the ladies and children drove that seven miles through a howling blizzard and a driving snowstorm. On arrival at Huachuca we found one troop of the Ninth (colored) Cavalry that was caring for the horses of the Fourth (that we were relieving). Fires had been started in the empty houses but no other preparations for us had been made. That night we slept on bedsprings laid flat on the floor and ate such food as an impromptu Chinese mess could provide. As a result one of my children got pneumonia and several grown people were laid up.

With the officers and their families banking the fires in the parlors of their new quarters, although the houses were not always their first choice; the enlisted men bunked across the way, their pool tables unloaded and leveled; with the old 4th Cavalry horses spirited and well cared for by the 9th Cavalry comrades detailed to Huachuca for that purpose; and the snow melting off the branches of the Mexican oaks of Huachuca Canyon, the regiment comfortably settled in to a 17-year tour of

duty that would include border firefights, a full-scale combat maneuver into the mountains of Mexico, and the coming of age of the American Army.

At one time in Fort Huachuca's history, the border with Mexico was the focal point of U.S. military history, just as Vietnam and the Persian gulf became so for other generations of soldiers. It was along this border that were mustered in 1916 upwards of 110,000 troops, the most Americans in uniform that had ever been brought together before, outside of wartime. The National Guard of 47 states (Nevada had no militia), the District of Columbia and the Territory of Alaska were called into federal service and rushed to the border. Many units of the regular army were also sent to reinforce those regiments dug in along the Mexican line. Virtually every Army leader of both World Wars saw service on the border between 1911 and 1917. And few of these men doubted that war with Mexico was inevitable. The Punitive Expedition was the largest scale maneuver undertaken up until that time by the U.S. Army. It absorbed the complete attention of all of the politicians and Army brass in Washington, D.C. It was the final hurrah for the horse cavalry, the elite arm of the American Army, although not all cavalymen would recognize this until decades later. For an American soldier in the second decade of the 20th century, this was where the action was.

Revolution swirled through Mexico with the force and frequency of so many desert dust devils, and federal and rebel armies waltzed for position along the border with the objective of pinning their foe up against the wall that was the boundary. For U.S. officers and their families it became a spectator sport, like the time in Naco when 5th Cavalry officers and their wives sat in boxcars along the sideline watching the fighting from what they thought was the safety of U.S.

territory until wayward volleys sent them scurrying for cover. It was only a matter of time before the U.S. would be drawn into the free-for-all.

That moment came in 1916 and the historian for the 10th Cavalry, Major E. L. N. Glass, described how the commander at Huachuca got the news.

About 11:30 a.m. March 9th, the regimental commander, Colonel W. C. Brown, and Adjutant Captain S. McP. Rutherford were going over routine work in the old amusement room that served as an office, when the telephone rang and the hard working adjutant picked up the receiver with a bored expression which soon changed to one of intense interest as he called back: 'Call up Douglas and see if you can get any further details'; then turning to the commanding officer he said: 'Colonel, the telegraph operator phones that an Associated Press dispatch has just gone over the wires saying that Villa attacked Columbus [New Mexico] early this morning, burned half the town, and killed a lot of civilians and soldiers.' It was now the commanding officer's turn to wake up, and he ordered: 'Get that word around to troop commanders at once and tell them to hold their troops in readiness for orders,' adding, 'We'll get them soon enough.' These came about thirty minutes later from Cavalry Brigade Headquarters at Douglas, directing that the command proceed to Douglas at once equipped for field service.⁷⁰

Sergeant Marchbanks, who was last at Huachuca just before the turn of the 20th century, returned in 1913 to serve with the 10th Cavalry and stayed there until 1917 when he was shipped out to Camp Des Moines for officer candidate school and eventually to the battlefields of France. The

border with Mexico was a tense place during Marchbanks second tour. There were 110,000 American soldiers amassed along the border, many of them from the National Guards of 47 states and Alaska. It was a time of national crisis.

For Marchbanks, the 1916 Pershing Punitive Expedition “was the most trying ordeal any body of soldiers had ever experienced. For more than 11 months the [10th Cavalry] was in the field, part of the time living on the country. Native beef and parched corn was the principal ration and for many days the men were without salt. They were in the mountains of Mexico following the hot trail of Mexican bandits. Men wore out their clothes and shoes, and were obliged in many instances to use their shelter tents for patches, and their stirrup hoods tied around their feet to keep them from being absolutely bare-foot.”

If the 1916 Punitive Expedition was the dress rehearsal for the United States’ part in World War I, the lead role of the 10th Cavalry would be downgraded to the part of an understudy. When the show went on the road to Europe, Huachuca’s 10th stayed behind to secure the border with Mexico, an undeclared ally of Germany. The regiment’s ranks were decimated with all of the veteran NCOs being sent off to officer’s school at Camp Des Moines. They would be commissioned to lead the newly raised regiments of the all-black 92d and 93d Infantry divisions, units that would see action in the trenches of France. Back at Huachuca the 10th Cavalry commander, Lt. Col. George B. Rodney, vented some of his frustration.

In spite of high regimental blood pressure, for every man knew that our entry into the World War was merely a matter of time, we had to again take up the endless routine duties—

border patrolling to keep arms from filtering into Mexico, for we knew, as everyone else along the border knew, that German agents were encouraging Mexico to declare war the moment the United States should enter the war against Germany. ...New officers came, and for a time even captains were in command of the regiment. Then like a thunderclap that everyone had foreseen but whose force none could guess, came—the War.

At that time I happened to be in command of the regiment and I had my hands full. Recruits coming in every day, old noncommissioned officers being taken away to be commissioned as officers in new colored regiments, green horses to be broken and trained, clothing and equipment to be obtained and every day unforeseen problems arose that required instant solution and the day had only twenty-four hours. On top of it all a most pernicious activity on the part of people not all concerned. Telegrams on every subject under Heaven came hourly. The Quartermaster General demanded immediate information as to “the amount of gross tonnage of shipping that has passed through your port.” And we were only a thousand miles from a sea coast. Another, a two-page telegram told us that the allowance of cosmoline for greasing coast defense mortars had been increased a half-ounce. A third, a pressing one, told us that cows kept for hospital purposes could be fed on Government forage. Another requested information as to the whereabouts of a veterinarian who had been lost in transit to Honolulu where he had been ordered to join a motorized artillery that did not have a horse or mule in the command.”⁷¹

At Huachuca in 1918, the men of the 10th Cavalry had time to reflect on the events in Europe

and waited anxiously to learn if they were to get in on the fighting. But they were required on the border, a place at that time that was thought to be subject to attack from Mexicans instigated by German agents. The threat from south of the border appeared to be real and intelligence reports on German activities there were received in number.

A shooting incident on 27 August 1918 led to a full-scale firefight when Lt. Col Frederick J. Herman, 10th Cavalry commander at Nogales, rushed reinforcements to the international line. Three troops of the 10th Cavalry and three companies of the 35th Infantry took up position along the American side and returned sniper fire of Mexican troops. It would be known as the “Battle of Ambos Nogales” (Both Nogales).

Capt. Joseph D. Hungerford, Troop F, 10th Cavalry, was killed while leading his men in a frontal assault on Mexican troops. Lieutenant Loftus of Company C, 35th Infantry, was killed by sniper fire as he brought his men into position. Other American casualties were three enlisted men killed, including Private W. H. Klint and Corporal Barney Lots, both of Company H, 35th Infantry, and several civilians. Two officers, Lt. Col. F. J. Herman and Capt. H. C. Caron, both of the 10th Cavalry, and twenty-nine men were wounded. Mexican casualties are not known, but found among the Mexican dead were the bodies of two German *agents provocateur*.

In 1924 10th Cavalry and post commander, Col. J. C. Rhea, was writing to the commanding general of the 8th Corps Area headquartered at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. The commander had been asked to appraise the real estate value of the post. The Army was apparently considering selling the property. Rhea placed the total value at \$325,000 in 1924 and pointed out that the most

valuable part of the post was the water system. He considered that the post might be used as a cattle ranch or a health and amusement resort. The idea of making the canyon community into a resort was suggested in an earlier 1870s reference to the post as “The Saratoga of Arizona.” The concept would be revisited in the late 1940s and early 1950s by neighboring chambers of commerce.

Marchbanks was back at Huachuca in 1923 for his final tour, nine years, at the historic fort. He was now a first sergeant and a family man. By now the presence of the mountains had left their imprint on his mind. He recalled his service in the high desert and the Buffalo regiment with a unmistakable fondness.

Take it all in all our last nine years at Fort Huachuca was pleasant and profitable. We were back with our old regiment and friends we had known so long. For the old 10th Cavalry, I shall always hold a warm spot in my heart because I had served with this regiment during the “heydays” of my life. My children were born in the regiment and I had seen many of my dear friends come and go. I loved the spirit of the old regiment and its motto “Ready and Forward.”

About Fort Huachuca he granted:

We did not hate the place, and it offered nothing to make us love it, except the everlasting hills, and babbling brook coming out of Huachuca Canyon. The wide plains covered with sage brush, grass, mesquite, and cactus of many varieties, and inhabited by rattle snakes, cotton tails, jack rabbits, and hoot owls.” The summers are not very hot and the winters are not very cold; the falls and spring are delightful, and the elevation being a

mile above sea level, the air is always delightful and fresh.”

Sports has always played an important part in the lives of the isolated Huachucans. They took their polo seriously in the cavalry, scratching out playing fields wherever they could find relatively flat spaces on Huachuca’s rocky slopes. Col. James C. Rhea, commanding in 1925, reported:

The [10th Cavalry] regiment has been very active in polo the past year in spite of its extreme isolation. Maj. John C. Montgomery, long identified with the War Department polo teams, has effected marked progress in the teams he coached. The remount depots aided materially by supplying some excellent polo types. Even a new and softer field was laid out. But polo was marred by a tragedy. Capt. Fabius Shipp received injuries when his pony fell which led to his untimely death.⁷²

In 1927 Captain Paul J. Matte was assigned to the 10th Cavalry at Fort Huachuca. He drove his Essex up to the gates of the fort and looked back on the scene.

Outside the gate was a small Mexican village which consisted, in those days, of about twelve buildings, one of which was the building that made adobe bricks for other huts. Another one was a saloon which was closed on account of prohibition but was used for a dance hall and, probably, illegal dispensation of liquor. Then there was a grocery store and then a congeries of a few residences for the people who operated these buildings.

As I remember, there didn’t seem to be much time available for plain old ordinary drilling. They were always doing something else. For instance, we’d go practice marches

or night marches or, on occasion, some special job that was allotted to us. Actually, time did not hang on our hands. There was something to do every minute. The first summer, towards the end of the summer, I took my Troop to Nogales, Arizona, to supervise the instruction of a Civilian Military Training Camp. The idea was to make officers out of civilians and it took three or four years, returning every summer, before they were able to get their commission. However, I believe it was an instructive undertaking. I was able to take my family with me and we had a pleasant vacation. We were allotted quarters, used a very nice swimming pool, and I was able to take my wife across the border to show her Mexican life.

Fort Huachuca was a bad place to send young officers. There was nothing for them to do, practically no available ladies, and most of them found the only relaxation they had was either to get down to Naco, where there was gambling, or stay home and get drunk. I would say that a two-year tour...should have been sufficient for anybody in that organization. As for the married folks are concerned, of course, they had their home and the morale was better there. But it was very difficult on the ladies who were not riders and couldn't get out and enjoy a form of exercise.

We had dances once a week. But like all Post dances, there would be the same people week after week. And, after awhile, I guess it did get boring for the young officers and I'm not so sure about the older people.⁷³

While Captain Matte thought it was a bad place to send young officers, his boss, Col. Louis C. Scherer, thought Huachuca was a great place to be assigned. He wrote in an official report:

The Buffalo Regiment and its home, Fort Huachuca, is considered by many cavalry officers, particularly those who have been fortunate enough to serve with the Tenth, as being the pick of all cavalry assignments.⁷⁴

While Matte saw little to do but gamble or stay home and get drunk, the regimental commander adopted a more positive approach. He said,

Due to the isolation of the post, the regiment must furnish its own recreation and amusement, which fact tends toward the creation of an ideal post life.

A great deal of interest is shown in athletics, particularly mounted sports, hunting, shooting competitions, etc.

Each troop maintains a camp in the mountains where the men go for hunting and individual field training. This featured, together with numerous squad, platoon and troop practice marches, furnishes welcome diversions from routine schedules.⁷⁵

A community feeling, a collective spirit has sometimes gathered like a morning mist in the more habitable hollows of the Huachucas. Sergeant Rance Richardson of E Company, 25th Infantry, expressed it when he said in 1933, "Together we stand, divided we fall. We are one big happy family."⁷⁶ It was a community feeling that was also felt by the commander of the Machine Gun Troop. "I would say that service with the Troops was very rewarding and you couldn't help but feel some degree of satisfaction. When you would go on overnight hikes and you would be laying down in your tent, you could hear these soldiers around the bonfire, laughing and having a hilarious time, sure that their morale was good and that they were satisfied with their life. They had pride in their

organization and very few did anything to dishonor it.”

The era of the 10th Cavalry at Huachuca was coming to a close. The Buffalo Soldiers of the 10th were reassigned during the period 1929 to 1931, replaced by the 25th Infantry which began moving up from Camp Stephen D. Little in Nogales, Arizona. These men who the Indians likened to the woolly Buffalo and one of their own called the “ebon beaux sabreurs,” would case their colors and move on. To sever the connection with their Huachuca home, a place that had enfolded them in its peaks ridges, would not be easy. Captain Vance Batchelor summed up his feelings.

One day the inevitable happened, the War Department decided that horse cavalry was outmoded. One of the first regiments to be disbanded was the colored tenth. We loaded the horses on the freight cars and sent them away. Next day the Pullman sleepers backed quietly into the rail yard. The colored troops boarded the train with tears in their eyes and started their trip north to become service detachments at various military schools. I watched them go. I walked back to my quarters with a heavy heart. Memories of Fort Huachuca and the service there are some of the pleasantest memories of my service in the United States Army.”⁷⁷

So the men of this regiment were gone, dispersed to the winds, to the far corners of the U.S. Army, places like West Point, New York; Fort Leavenworth, Kansas; and Fort Myer, Virginia. The 10th Cavalry was replaced at Fort Huachuca by the 25th Infantry Regiment which had been in the area manning the border outposts in Nogales and Douglas since 1918. Gone now were the horses that had been a part of the scene at this cavalry post since 1877. These men were foot soldiers. They marched to places like Douglas and Nogales. But they shared with their predeces-

sors a pride in their unit. They, too, were one of the original four black regiments and they had earned their reputation for hard soldiering in the Indian-fighting West, and in the Spanish-American War. They wore the same campaign medals over the left breast pocket. Their regimental insignia bore a picture of the blockhouse at El Caney, remembering their gallant service in Cuba, along with an iron gauntlet holding an arrow and a bolo. The arrow symbolized their Indian service in the West and the bolo recalled their service in the Philippines. The regimental motto was “Onward.”

The unit had shipped into Arizona from Hawaii in August 1918. They first took up stations along the border, with Companies B and C at Yuma; a detachment of sixty-two men from Company D at Ajo; and Companies A, D, E, F, G, H, I, K, L, M, Headquarters Company, Machine Gun Company, and Supply Company at Camp Stephen D. Little in Nogales. In 1922 the regiment was brought together at Nogales until December when the First Battalion moved out to take up stations at Douglas and Naco. Company A closed the station at Naco in December 1923 and moved into Douglas.

Shields Warren, Jr., was 15 years old when he accompanied his father to Huachuca in the Fall of 1931. His father, a lieutenant colonel, would command the 3d Battalion of the 25th Infantry. The younger Warren would also choose an Army career, becoming himself a Colonel of Infantry. In 1958 he wrote to the unofficial historian at Huachuca, Colonel Clarence O. Brunner, describing a period that he called “the happiest of my life.” About the 25th Infantry and their military bearing, Warren had this to say:

The 25th of those days was one of the finest peacetime army units I’ve ever seen, and

it had good reason to be, since every man was a career soldier. There was a saying around the outfit that a man didn't have sufficient seniority to get out of the rear rank until he had completed three hitches (9 years!). I cannot ever recall seeing a soldier whose brass didn't gleam, or whose leather wasn't perfect, and all uniforms, including fatigues, were tailor made.⁷⁸

Tragedy struck the normally quiet mountain community right after Christmas in 1932. A Quartermaster private, James Abernathy, was working at the gas station on December 29th. When Captain Wesseley, his boss, pulled in for gas, Abernathy shot him twice with a .38 revolver. Then he took the captain's car and drove to officers' row where he went to Wesseley's house and killed his wife. Next he went to the home of Captain Palmer and killed both him and his wife. The next victim was Lieutenant Matthews, who was working in his garden. Matthews survived three shots in the legs. Abernathy's shooting spree came to an end when Sgt. Peter Hardley, Jr., a member of L Company, 25th Infantry and a provost corporal, came upon the scene. He put three shots from his service rifle into Abernathy's heart. No motive was ever found for Abernathy's actions.⁷⁹

In 1934 wide-ranging construction projects began at Fort Huachuca under the auspices of the Work Progress Administration (WPA). Supervising the work was Maj. S. J. Raymond, Q.M. Corps, the post quartermaster. In the fall of 1936 he wrote a summary of the accomplishments of the WPA program.

Work falling under the supervision of the Quartermaster included rehabilitation and alteration of buildings, plants, and utilities; construction and installations required in exist-

ing barracks, in the theater, in the quartermaster warehouse, and in the quartermaster offices; placing of lightning arrestors on specific buildings; a fire look-out and cistern on Huachuca Peak; plumbing renovation and repairs; alterations and additions and replacements to existing electric lights, wiring and fixtures; and general repairs to buildings, plant and utilities.

The constructing quartermaster was given the responsibility for improvements to the emergency landing field; the construction of four miles of paved road from the post to Garden Canyon (White City); stone garages for garrison personnel; steel post and barbed wire fence about reservation; lavatory buildings at Training Camp area; concrete bases for tents at Training Camp area; and a septic tank and sewer line to serve the Training Camp area.⁸⁰

Works Progress Administration construction continued at Huachuca through the 1930s, adding by 1939 the “Million Dollar Barracks,” motor housing, new wells, a new reservoir, and a warrant officers’ quarters.

In June 1938 the El Paso Natural Gas Company was proposing to the post quartermaster that they install 26.8 miles of high pressure line to the post so that Huachuca might convert from fuel oil to natural gas. The gas company estimated that gas would cost the government about \$28,440 per year, a saving of approximately \$8,200 over the 1936 fuel oil bill. The estimated cost for the initial conversion of all the heating, hot water, and ranges was \$76,800. The post turned to natural gas shortly thereafter.

Assigned to the 25th Infantry Second Lieutenant David Bonesteel Stone was struck by the expanse of desert and sky that had been part of many a soldier's first feelings when encountering this desert outpost for the first time. He described his first thoughts on arriving at the remote post in 1935:

I came to an obscure track leading off to the south toward some mountains. A small pegged board shaped into an arrow...was lettered "Fort Huachuca" in very faded paint. I looked up into the mountain foothills this seemed to lead to and could just make out a huddle of buildings, nothing, but nothing else in all that vastness of desert and sky. My thoughts at this rather tenuous time of my life...[were] "My Lord! Here they've ordered me to a place that has been abandoned long ago! Either the War Department doesn't know what's going on—or they have played a very dirty trick on me—an unsuspecting innocent little 2nd Lieutenant."⁸¹

Huachuca's isolation recommended it in World War II for an unprecedented experiment in race relations. Two black infantry divisions were sent there for training, prior to shipment overseas. At Huachuca they would be removed from the civilian prejudices and opposition that existed in more populated areas.

With the outbreak of World War II, Huachuca was greatly enlarged to train two all-black infantry divisions, the 93rd and 92nd. The cantonment burst up onto the Huachuca plain like a flowering agave. The amazing growth of the post because of wartime mobilization was described by Private Chester A. Burrill:

Almost overnight the little village blossomed forth a city, up from the desert. The area of the reservation spread to 117 square miles and the population soon grew to over 25,000. Hundreds of buildings covered the plain below the Old Post....

The new, modern cantonment grew. Embracing now 75,000 acres of land, the training grounds covered the valley and the prairie, up to the mile-high Old Post.... Paved streets were lined with new and comfortable barracks; there was electric power, modern sewage and all the other conveniences of a city.⁸²

The wide open spaces of Fort Huachuca were a new and memorable experience for those thousands of draftees from northern cities. It is not surprising that one newcomer thought the post “spread over half the state of Arizona.”

If the place can shape the man, then Fort Huachuca has had its share of molding experiences, especially during World War II when African-American men and women from around the country poured into its confines to experience their first brush with military life. For them the times were freighted with anxiety. The nation was going to war. They were entering the unknown realm of Army discipline. They were being brought into closer proximity to white authority than they wanted to be. For most it was their first time away from home. And they were being sent to a place as isolated and far away as any city boy could imagine. Most had never heard of Fort Huachuca. But the fort, a veteran of the Apache campaigns in Arizona territory and a traditional home for black regulars, had an unmistakable effect on them.

Clarence L. Gaines was one of those men. He was drafted in Cleveland, Ohio, and had these

memories of his encounter with the draft and Fort Huachuca. “I left the reception center at Columbus feeling rather low with the knowledge that we were to be so far from home when our journey ended. But when I arrived at Fort Huachuca, I remembered being pleased with the camp because it was more beautiful than anything I had ever seen.”⁸³ Gaines met his wife, the daughter of a career 25th Infantry soldier, at Huachuca and that clearly made the experience more acceptable than the average draftee. He recalled,

“My wife and I moved into the Old Post Area, and there we lived happily ever after. I was not too keen about going to OCS, but in the meantime many of the fellows with whom I had been drafted had gone and were back at Huachuca as brand new Second Lieutenants. So I was persuaded to go much later than most of the other fellows because I thought I had a pretty good thing at Huachuca. My fondest memories of Huachuca are some of the nice people I served with. ...We had a very fine Cadre who taught us well and were nice to us. I can never forget those beautiful sunrises and sunsets at Fort Huachuca. I hope someday to see them again. ...I think it is a very fine place to serve.”⁸⁴

Gaines was discharged after the war and went to school on the G.I. Bill. In 1971 he was a senior partner in the Cleveland law firm of Gaines, Rogers, Horton and Forbes. He credited his military service and the G.I. Bill for his success.

Gaines’ respect for the “very fine Cadre who taught us well and were nice to us” is not a singular feeling. Others have echoed their regard for the veteran 25th Infantry regulars that were dispersed to various regiments to conduct the training of the new recruits. Henry Williams, one of

those green draftees from Cleveland, said of the old noncoms, “They spoke to us as if we were family members and they were the appointed heads of that family. These men really knew their business and inspired many of us.” Another said of First Sergeant Frank Little, “he was an old fashioned soldier who served as a role model for us because he knew the Army inside out. Little had a way of taking young draftees under his wing and this was very important for those of us who knew very little about the military.”⁸⁵ George Looney, who had been around these career infantrymen since childhood as a dependent, emphasized, “these men were regulars, they were soldiers, they knew their jobs, and they were good.”⁸⁶

For another Cleveland draftee, William Payne, Huachuca was a place where he found “decent housing, decent meals and decent leadership.” But he did have some problems about the dust devils that blew up in the San Pedro Valley. “We arrived in Fort Huachuca on March 1, 1941 amid a giant sandstorm. I definitely remember that. We were wearing these old uniforms. I call them “Bully Woolies” because they were of such a heavy wool variety. We were standing in line amid this sandstorm and the color of our uniforms changed entirely. When we got to the barracks we had to shake out our uniforms to get all the sand out.”⁸⁷

Private Howard Hickerson, drafted in October 1942 in Alameda, California, said of his encounter with basic training at Fort Huachuca, “I was treated very good at Fort Huachuca. ...There was no problem that I came across at all at Fort Huachuca.”⁸⁸

Lt. Wade McCree, Jr. of the 365th Infantry wrote: “I was sent to the 365th Infantry, 92d Division, at Fort Huachuca. Many persons did not like Huachuca. I did. I found it a beautiful place.

I liked the desert and the surrounding mountains. I was undoubtedly the exception rather than the rule in enjoying the physical isolation of this post.”⁸⁹

When Private George Shuffer, 25th Infantry, was reassigned in 1941, he was reluctant to leave his first Army post, one that he had a special place for in his heart. He later wrote, “I loathed leaving Huachuca, my best army post ever. It was a small, picturesque camp, nestled in the foothills of southern Arizona’s Huachuca (thunder) Mountains; self-contained and well provisioned, having year-round mild weather, abundant sunshine, fresh air, and sweet water.” Shuffer would make the Army a career and his dedication would result in a commission and the eventual rank of brigadier general.

In his book and personal memoir *Black Fire*, former sergeant Nelson Peery from Minnesota described the historic post. “Fort Huachuca is in the high desert of Arizona. The valley and its surrounding chain of mountains form a lovely jewel in the beauty of the Southwest. In the evening, the sun bathes the ragged mountains in a reddish afterglow. The sage takes a soft purple hue. The winds rise to moan through Montezuma Pass and spread their melancholy across the desert floor.”⁹⁰

The first detachments of the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps were sent to the fort in 1942. According to at least one of the women, “Fort Huachuca is one of the most beautiful army posts in the country; its frontier history is colorful enough to make any WAAC stationed there want to know something of those early days.”

The regimented family of Huachuca regulars was shocked by the rude intrusion of so many urban youth during the World War II mobilization and by the decline in law and order that larger

populations bring with them. One memory was common among all of the World War II veterans and their families who revisited Fort Huachuca in their later years. They all remembered the murders.

At 6:34 on the morning of November 5th, 1942, Private James Rowe was hanged in a warehouse at Fort Huachuca which had been fitted out with a trapdoor for the purpose. He was found guilty by a court martial of the knife slaying the previous June of Private Joseph Shields. The findings and sentence were reviewed and approved by the Army chain of command and President Roosevelt. Following the execution, the body was buried in the Post Cemetery.

The death sentence handed down to Pvt. Jerry Sykes of the 93d Division for the murder of Hazel Craig at Huachuca last 22 June was carried out by hanging on 19 January 1943 at the post's "hangman's warehouse."

Pvt. Oscar Dudley of the 25th Infantry who was being held for the murder of Pvt. Earlie Bables, escaped from the guard house on 25 January 1943. While on special assignment in Helena, Montana, with his unit, Dudley shot and killed Bables on 11 March 1942 with his rifle during a crap game. He was awaiting the death sentence. A few months later Dudley's sentence was commuted by President Roosevelt to life imprisonment at hard labor. Eleven years later, on 5 October 1954, Dudley was apprehended in Memphis, Tennessee, and returned to the penitentiary at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

The hog ranches of the nineteenth century had coalesced into a small grouping of buildings said to be known as White City because of the sun reflected off the tin roofs. This gave way to the

township of Fry which achieved a certain amount of World War II notoriety. There was a definite lack of wholesome recreational activities and prostitution outside the gate was a problem. Colonel Edwin N. Hardy, the post commander during the war, set down his description of the community for us: “The small town of Fry is dirty, unsanitary and squalid. It has been so for many years....”⁹¹ While officers frequented the Bisbee country club and the Nogales bull fights, the enlisted men sought to free themselves from the grip of Army discipline in the township of Fry.

With World War II ended, the post was closed in 1947. Local businessmen were interested in converting the abandoned post into a model community and vacation spa. A promoter wrote: “Nature blessed the Huachuca area with a mild climate and abundant plant growth and wildlife.... Fort Huachuca shows definite signs of soon evolving into a bustling, southern Arizona resort town in a beautiful setting.”⁹²

But it was not to be. The Korean War intervened and the post was reopened to train Aviation Engineers. The Secretary of the Air Force, in a January 18, 1951 letter to the Governor of Arizona, invoked the reversion clause in a 1949 deed to the State of Arizona. “I have determined that the land and facilities conveyed by the above-mentioned deed are required for purposes of national defense.” On February 1, 1951 the Air Force took official possession of the fort, making it the only active Army installation which had an existence, albeit brief, as an Air Force Base. The 419th Engineer Aviation Brigade (SCARWAF) was attached to the 6th Army and Fort Huachuca in June 1951. SCARWAF meant “Special Category, Army With the Air Force,” but the soldiers assigned to the Air Force saw themselves as a “Sorry Collection of Army Rats Without Any Fu-

ture.” The Defense Department reopened the post in 1951 to train Aviation Engineers in airfield construction as part of the Korean War buildup. As part of their training, the 417th and 419th Aviation Brigades and the 45th, 304th, 923d, and 934th Engineer Aviation Groups built Libby Army Airfield at the base.

Jac Hein, in his book *Sierra Vista: Its People and Neighbors*, interviewed a number of long-time Sierra Vista residents. Among them was Verne Hegge who was a soldier in 1952 when he first saw the area:

We came down on the train from Fort Ord, California, with orders to report to Fort Huachuca, which I couldn't even pronounce. In the train station in Los Angeles, another soldier and I went into a bar for a beer. At the bar, we met a lieutenant colonel and finally got around to asking if he knew where Fort Huachuca was. [He] answered, “Fort Huachuca? What in hell did you guys do? I've been sitting here at the bar for the past hour reflecting on my past life, [wondering what I did to deserve this!] I'm on my way to Fort Huachuca too!”⁹³

On May 1, 1953, Fort Huachuca was again placed in an inactive status, with only a caretaker detachment left at the post. This closure, however, was to be short-lived as the post reopened in 1954 under the operational control of the Army's Chief Signal Officer.

This was the result of a far-reaching survey by Signal Corps officers to find a location that would be suitable for testing electronic warfare equipment. A member of the survey team was Col. Jules Gonseth, who visited the abandoned post in February 1953, little knowing that he would make the community his home upon his retirement. His recollections were recorded by Jac Hein in his

book *Sierra Vista: Its People and Neighbors*.

We had looked at Navy and Air Force bases and several Army posts before crossing over into Arizona. The operation at Fort Monmouth had run into problems of electronic interference with civil metropolitan communication and electronic installations. The heavy amount of air traffic, radar and police communications had the environment cluttered. The Army wanted a better location for its Electronic Warfare Center and the Signal Corps Aviation Center. After taking into consideration every aspect, the four of us decided that Fort Huachuca met most of the criteria we needed. It was electronically quiet and at that time there was very little population in the area. It was a big open area where we could fly drones and test equipment without interference.

Of all the places we visited, Fort Huachuca seemed to satisfy the environmental requirements the best. The weakest part of the whole thing was the limited amount of quarters. Much of what you see on the post now came about after the Signal Corps got the base. The new post office, the theatre, the PX and the modern housing was part of the master plan for developing the fort, and that was updated each year.

We flew back to Washington and made our recommendations for the Army Electronic Proving Ground, part of Research and Development of the Signal Corps to test all types of electronic equipment. As it developed, the Computer Center was added, then drone aircraft were brought in.

A new era dawned at Fort Huachuca on 1 February 1954, when the post became the home of

the U.S. Army Electronic Proving Ground (USAEPG). World War II demonstrated the importance of electronic devices in modern warfare and the Army needed a site at which its communications and electronics systems could be developed and tested. Fort Huachuca, far from sources of electromagnetic interference, became that site when the 1st and 505th Signal Groups arrived at the post in May and June 1954.

One of the first soldiers to arrive at Fort Huachuca in January 1954 to reopen the post was Master Sgt. Harry Waldschmidt. He was transferring from Fort Monmouth, New Jersey. In Jac Hein's book, *Sierra Vista: It's People and Neighbors*, Waldschmidt tells about the experience.

I came out here with orders to reactivate Fort Huachuca on February 1, 1954. That morning, we opened the wire gates and that's the morning the Army Proving Ground was born. Col. Earl F. Cook was the first commanding officer. Two weeks later, on February 15, Gen. Emil Lenzner arrived to take command.

To say the place was a mess would be putting it mildly. The area was covered with animals: jackrabbits, skunks, white tail deer, buffalo, rattlesnakes, roadrunners, quail, coati-mundi, javelina, you name it; even wildcats and mountain lions up in the canyons.

Paul Nott was a civilian instructor at Fort Huachuca during the Korean War and later remembered the arrival of troops at the post.

One morning a few of us were having coffee—Paul Keating and some of the other fellows and I. The town was quiet at that time. It was...after the Korea shutdown of the fort. As I looked down what is now Fry Boulevard, I saw headlights of automobiles coming our

way. Soon we realized it was a convoy. The next thing we knew a staff car driven by a colonel pulled up by the cafe and I saw the flags with the stars. I went out and greeted Gen. Emil Lenzner and invited him in for a cup of coffee.⁹⁴

Syndicated columnist Westbrook Pegler was an avid cold warrior and a supporter of Senator Joseph McCarthy's purge of perceived communists from government. He reserved a good deal of venom for the U.S. Army because McCarthy and Roy Cohn said that the Army protected communists at Fort Monmouth. He visited Fort Huachuca in 1955 to see if he could ferret out any traitors. In a May column he wrote:

There is rejoicing in Arizona because much of the most "sensitive" radar research and related activity of the Army has been transferred from Fort Monmouth, N.J. to Fort Huachuca, a vast reservation of desert plain and mountain in the wild border country adjacent to Mexico. ...General [Emil] Lenzner anticipates soon a command of about 11,000 persons. Huachuca is a permanent establishment now, having been abandoned and reclaimed since World War II when it served as a training base for a Negro Division which later served in Italy. Many millions were squandered to no military profit in the '40s, but General Lenzner now reveals that in the year beginning next July 1 an amount between \$20 and \$30 million will be committed in new contracts to develop and test electronic equipment. Inventions produced by private enterprise will be tested and the general foresees that this situation will encourage private companies to set up shop and employ labor in Arizona. The press foresees great industrial and economic prosperity flowing from all this.⁹⁵

Nicolas Proffitt, a 1961 graduate of Buena High School, came to Fort Huachuca as a teen-aged dependent in the late 1950s, the son of a career noncommissioned officer. A war correspondent in Vietnam and a *Newsweek* editor, Proffitt published his first novel, *Gardens of Stone*, in 1983. The book was made into a movie by Francis Ford Coppola in 1987. In *Gardens of Stone*, Proffitt recorded his youthful impressions of the drive down from Tucson and the Fort Huachuca community.

The depth of their error was fully realized only when they had cleared the outskirts of [Tucson] and were heading south, toward Mexico, on the last leg of the long journey. The boy could not believe his eyes. It was a moonscape. Great brown boulders and faraway, mud-colored mountains. Small clumps of sagebrush and an occasional saguaro, its arms spread wide like a bogeyman's. Shimmering waves of heat came off the highway in front of them, and dust devils blew up here and there between them and the horizon. They went mile after mile without seeing a single sign of human habitation. That did not surprise the boy at all. Who could live in such country? Every now and then they would see a tarantula cross the road, black and big around as a baby's head, or snakes squished flat by trucks....

I'm not living here," he announced. "This Fort Hootchie Kootchie is at the end of the world, and I'm not going to live there. I'm running away from home first chance I get.

The author calls upon more childhood visions to describe his first school bus ride to the high school in Sierra Vista:

The bus ride was like an ascent up through the circles of Dante's hell. Fort Huachuca

spread like warm oleo across a plateau overlooking a wide valley and ringed with brown mountains....

The town and the high school were just as bad. The boy sat alone on the school bus, hunched in the corner of the long rear seat as they crawled around the post; then through the dusty town of Sierra Vista, sitting like an unlanced boil just outside the main gate; and finally into the even dustier parking lot of Buena High School.⁹⁶

A World War II vet named Robert Jones explored the depths of the Huachuca landscape in a wholly different and potentially enriching way. On January 19, 1959, he drove up to the Main Gate at Fort Huachuca, having driven from his home in Dallas, Texas, with an eighteen-year-old dream to fulfill, and an incredible story to tell post officials.

He had, he said, served at Fort Huachuca in 1941 with the 25th Infantry. In June of that eventful year, he and a friend, Pvt. Robert Mayes, took advantage of some weekend free time to hike up into Huachuca Canyon. Following the Huachuca Creek stream bed near an old spring house, Jones felt the earth give way beneath his feet and the cave-in dropped him some thirty feet into a darkened aperture which led to a walled room stacked high with what Jones could only identify in the dark as heavy metallic bricks.

Private Mayes pulled him from the pit with branches and vines and Jones returned an hour later with a rope and flashlight. With the help of the light, Jones determined that the room's floor-to-ceiling contents were white and red gold bars stacked like cordwood.

He covered the hole with a rock and marked the spot with initials on a large nearby rock.

The events on that June afternoon indelibly marked the course of Jones' thoughts for the rest of his life. And his story, which soon received nationwide publicity, quickened the pulse of thousands of treasure-seekers.

There were five distinct explorations of the site in Huachuca Canyon. The initial dig occurred when Jones first visited the fort and lasted for two days, January 20-22, 1959. Work ceased when the hole started filling with water. Since no evidence was uncovered to substantiate Jones' story, Col. C. O. Brunner, the post commander, told the post engineers to fill up the hole and informed Jones that there would be no more digging as it would jeopardize one of the principal water sources of the post. Jones went back to Dallas. Three other digs took place in the 1959, 1963, and 1968, each turning up nothing. Each time the Army considered it to be the final search and determined to deny permission for any further digging. Jones died in 1969, his dream unfulfilled.

In 1975 the Quest Exploration Corporation obtained permission from Washington for the fifth search for Jones' Gold. This was to be the most comprehensive and scientific treasure hunt ever undertaken at that point in time. After going over all the data collected with his colleagues at Stanford Research Institute, the senior physicist concluded "that neither the surface nor the drill hole data give any indication that a cavity such as that described by Private Jones exists within the area surveyed. It is our further conclusion that no future surface surveys are liable to improve upon the data already obtained for that area using instruments that either exist now or are known to be under development." So they could not even find a hole in the canyon floor that would match the room Jones said he fell into, and no traces of that precious mineral that had fired so many imaginations

since the story came to light in 1959.⁹⁷

Fort Huachuca's role in the electronic era increased when the Strategic Communications Command (STRATCOM) established its headquarters there on April 15, 1967. It was the Army's communications manager and soldiers at the post were now predominantly members of the Signal Corps. Their distinctive color was orange, the hue of a Huachuca sunset, and it overspread the post. It was an organization uncomfortable with its identity. In 1974 STRATCOM was redesignated the U.S. Army Communications Command (USACC) and in 1984 was renamed the U.S. Army Information Systems Command (USAISC). In the decade of the 90s, it became the U.S. Army Signal Command. As either STRATCOM, USACC, or USAISC, the command was the senior unit on post and host to a variety of tenant activities until 1991 when the post became part of the Training and Doctrine Command and the Intelligence Center took over.

The Army's military intelligence community found a new home in 1971 when over-crowding back east resulted in a decision to consolidate all intelligence training at a single location. That site was Fort Huachuca. As part of the Base Realignment and Closure Act of 1988, the U.S. Army Intelligence Center emerged as the post's controlling organization by 1991, performing the work of training all intelligence soldiers at its modern facilities. The distinctive color of the Intelligence Corps, created at Huachuca in 1987, was oriental blue, the color of a Huachuca dusk. From now on, every military intelligence soldier could count on calling in at Huachuca during his or her career, and for some it would be a home base. During 1992 the creosote-covered lower slopes of the Huachucas were transformed into what looked like a major college campus as the construction of six

new barracks, two dining halls, two applied instruction buildings, and a self-contained NCO Academy neared completion.

While the natural wonders of the Huachuca Mountains are compensation enough for most who have lived under their protection, the inhospitality of the waterless and unmercifully hot land has repelled others who would rather avoid the demands of the desert environs. It is not an easy place and the population is sparse. This very remoteness has produced a set of unflattering perceptions about the people who choose to live here. Some have an idea that the unforgiving terrain has given domicile only to jackrabbits, rattlesnakes and a gaggle of humans who have been in the sun too long to know better.

In 1992 when the Secretary of Defense recommended closing Fort Devens and moving the signal intelligence school there to the U.S. Army Intelligence Center at Fort Huachuca, there was an understandable outcry of protest in Massachusetts. Boston University president John Silber, a presidential candidate manque, felt betrayed just as had Senator Clarence Long from Maryland in 1971 when the Intelligence School was relocated from Fort Holabird, Md., to Huachuca. Long had expressed concern that not enough qualified civil servants could be rounded up in the far reaches of the Arizona desert. Silber was similarly apprehensive about the lack of brainpower in the cultural wasteland of southern Arizona. He said, “Eastern Massachusetts contains the richest concentration of academic and corporate research firepower in the world. Southeastern Arizona, on the other hand, is comparatively an academic desert.”

In recent years, Fort Huachuca has become increasingly known as “The Home of the Buffalo

Soldier,” a name that is derived from the long history of African-American soldiers serving at this Indian Wars post. A monumental tribute to those men stands at the fort’s main gate, where a sculpture of a Buffalo Soldier was dedicated on the post’s centennial in 1977. The eight-foot bronze cavalryman looks out over the San Pedro valley through which so much history has traversed. He looks like he belongs there, with the imposing Huachuca Mountains and the infantry-blue Arizona sky at his back.

In 1988 the world’s superpowers reached an agreement to ban ground-launched cruise missiles. Known as the Intermediate Range Nuclear Force Treaty, this historic step toward ending the Cold War was felt at Fort Huachuca on the morning of July 3d when the first Soviet officials to ever visit the post stepped off an airplane at Libby Army Airfield to inspect Huachuca’s ranges and insure compliance with the treaty. Perhaps inspired by Arizona’s cloudless azure skies and the far-reaching significance of their joint undertaking, the leader of the Russian delegation inscribed a photograph of the signing of the treaty protocols with these words: “May the sun always shine; may there be peace always for our children.” It was a sentiment that would be embraced by the several generations of warriors that have called in at Huachuca since the dimmest days of recorded history.

Why is it important to recall all these remarks by former Huachucans and the stories they recount? This question goes to the heart of the value of history itself. By knowing that others have been here before us and have formed ideas about their geography, we come to put our own lives in perspective. We make a connection to the past; we are able to find in the ideas of the forerunners some points of commonality with our own. We are able to see ourselves, not as singular entities

coming to grips with our own mortality, but as a part of a historical tradition that will live on. What the record will say about Huachuca 100 years from now will ultimately be left up to today's residents.

To be sure, the sheer volume of history that cascaded over the eastern seaboard in places like Washington, D.C., Philadelphia and Boston makes the history of the Huachuca area dwindle to a mere trickle, but the flow is just as inexorable and its presence just as essential to the survival of a man thirsty for knowledge of the past. And the waters of history are more sought after here in this arid land where they are less muddied by the thrashing about of dense populations. Washington, D.C., despite its strident monumentality, for me does not convey the feeling of history with the same immediacy as does Arizona with its isolation. One can walk through the high desert of Southern Arizona and kick up the encrusted traces of the past. Trodding the very ground where history marched on another day is using, what someone unremembered called, "the archive of the feet." In history-laden eastern cities the residue of yesterday lies mute beneath the asphalt.

Today the brothels have given way to car dealerships, crap games have been replaced by service clubs, and unlicensed casinos have been eclipsed by fried chicken franchises. But some elements have remained constant. They are the special satisfaction that is to be found in military service, the imposing presence of the Huachuca Mountains, and the shaping effect the land has had on its inhabitants. As long as this range huddles in the hub of southwestern military history, it will be a towering presence in human remembrance. Those dark, hulking mountains will preside over the shards of history that make up local life.

A tradition has formed around those soldiers who have humped the groundswell of granite and grit known as the Huachucas. For the Apache warrior, it was a “place of thunder and rain,” for the U.S. Army cavalryman of the Indian wars, “soldiering was a hard, dry business in southern Arizona,” for a turn-of-the-20th-century family member “Its location, miles and miles from urban civilization, its barren hills and bleak surroundings made it exceedingly unpleasant and undesirable for grown-ups but a paradise for a little boy,” for a World War II Womens Army Corps soldier it was “one of the most beautiful posts in the Army,” and for a 25th Infantry recruit who would become a brigadier general in the last half of the 20th century, it was “my best army post ever. ...self-contained and well provisioned, having year-round mild weather, abundant sunshine, fresh air, and sweet water.” There are three elements interwoven in the drama of the military man on this remote frontier: The challenge and hard work that comes with a soldier’s life, the isolation amid incomparable natural beauty, and the self-containment that results from being far from the comforts and conveniences of more populous environs. These strands of the Huachuca experience called up all the resourcefulness, imagination and resolve that the inhabitants could muster. Anyone who has ever served in this mountain fastness comes away with an overpowering sense of place, a feeling that they are part of a unique historic community that is grounded in the bedrock of the Thunder Mountains.

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