

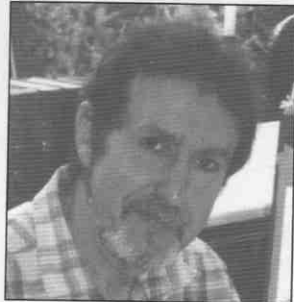
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US Army Frontier Scouts 1840–1921



Ron Field • Illustrated by Richard Hook



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US ARMY FRONTIER SCOUTS 1840-1921

INTRODUCTION

THE ROLE OF THE AMERICAN FRONTIER SCOUT was vital during the period of westward expansion between 1840 and 1890. Possessing a priceless knowledge of the geography, people and characteristics of the great American hinterland, this rare breed of pioneer had a bigger influence on the pace of settlement and control of the American West than any other single factor. The scout's keen eyesight saw the faint outline of a hoof print or a broken twig on the trail. His ears heard the call of an eagle or the sound of horses many miles away. Nothing escaped the notice of the army scout.

The word "scout" comes from the French verb *ecouter*, meaning, "to listen." Armies have long used scouts to gather information about the enemy. From the earliest days of exploration, the US Army was dependant on its scouts to guide them across the plains and through the mountains as they blazed the trails and guarded the nation's frontier settlements.

This 1852 painting by English immigrant Arthur Fitzwilliam Tait depicts trappers looking for "sign" on the Plains. Many of these stalwart mountain men subsequently became scouts for the US Army and employed their skills to track down hostile Indians. (Helen Dill Collection: Denver Art Museum)



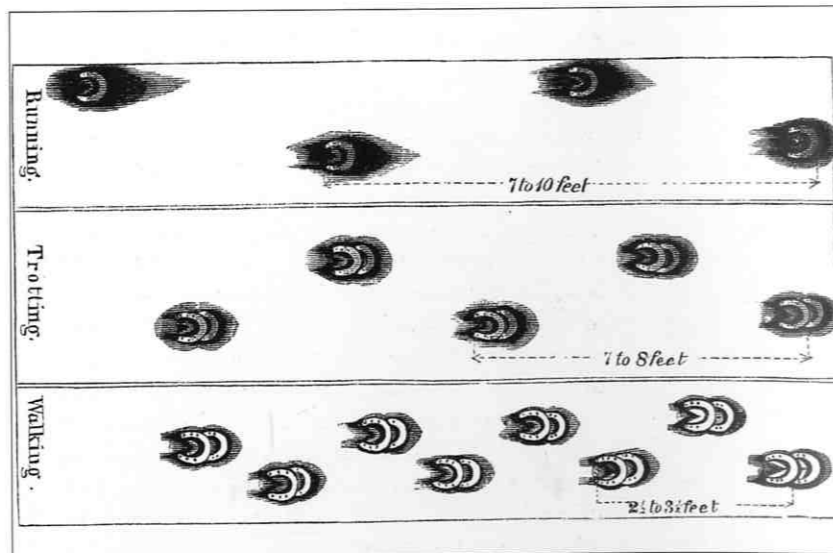
The craft of the scout

An ability to “read sign” was an essential skill for the frontier scout. This involved studying minute physical evidence and using all of the senses. Signs on the ground were vital. An army officer in Dakota Territory during 1869 described the “Indian Trailer” as “a man of close observation, quick perception, and prompt action ... often not another step is taken until a mystery that may present itself ... is fairly solved. The Indian Trailer will stand still for hours in succession, to account for certain traces or effects in tracks, and sometimes give to the matter unremitting attention for days and weeks.”

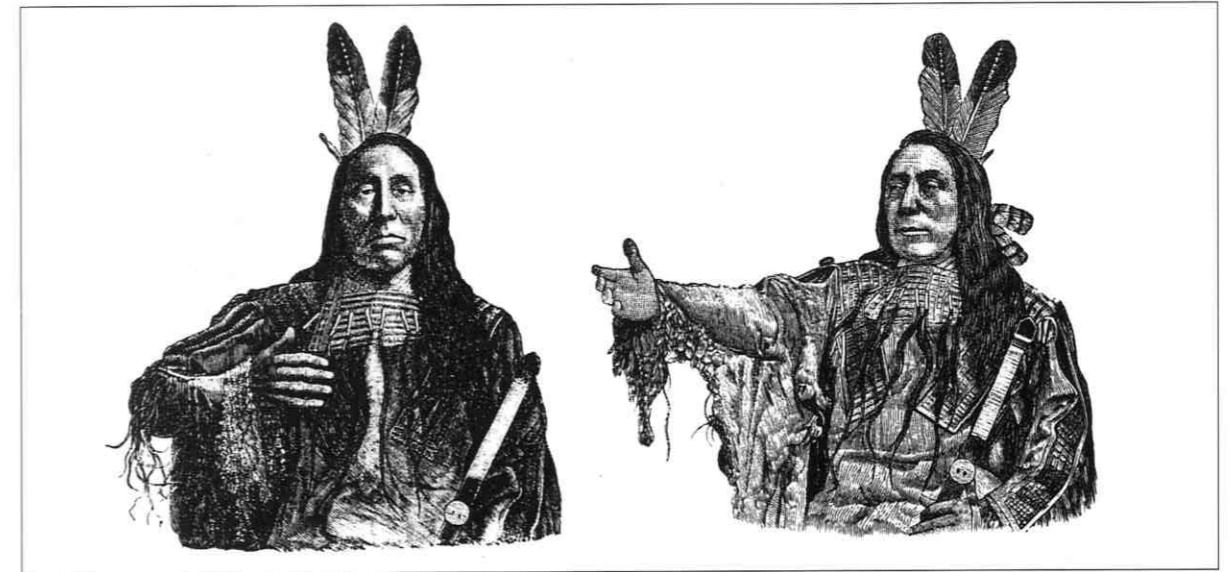
Keen eyesight was an essential asset for the scout. Despite being 60 years old, Jim Bridger was riding ahead of an army column near the Tongue River in Wyoming Territory in 1865, when he pointed out some smoke rising at a distant point. The officer commanding could see nothing, even with the aid of field glasses. But as they advanced onward, other scouts rode in reporting an Indian village with campfires ahead of the column.

Sounds heard at night meant much to the experienced scout. While scouting for the 7th Iowa Cavalry in Nebraska during 1864, John Smith listened to the howling wolves and commented: “That isn’t a wolf – that is a Cheyenne.” He informed his soldier comrades that the Cheyenne had a method of long-range signaling or communicating by wolf-calls. By this means, they passed on information such as the number of soldiers they saw and whether it was dangerous to attempt an attack or not. Unfortunately, scouts could not understand these signals as they differed on each occasion.

To survive in the wilderness, and to learn about the best trails and mountain passes, the scout needed to communicate with Native Americans who spoke a multitude of languages and dialects. Although some scouts, like Jim Beckwourth and Tom LeForge, were fluent in several of these languages and made good interpreters, most learned but a few phrases. Faced with the same language barrier, the Indians had developed a nearly universal system of hand signs, which some white



An engraving from *The Prairie Traveler*, an 1859 trail handbook by Captain Randolph B. Marcy, which shows hoof prints in three common gaits. Such information was vital to frontier scouts trailing hostile Indians, but was seldom learned from books. (Author's collection)



men also mastered. Captain Randolph B. Marcy, 5th Infantry, explained some of this system in his trail handbook, *The Prairie Traveler*, published in 1859. Another volume, published in 1884 and entitled *The Indian Sign Language*, was written by Captain W. P. Clark, who commanded a mixed battalion of Sioux, Snake, Crow and Pawnee scouts in 1876. Clark believed that knowledge of Indian sign not only helped him to communicate with many different tribes, but also to think like an Indian, a trait he considered essential for a good scout and cavalry soldier. Retired army officer Garrick Mallery compiled the first comprehensive dictionary of Indian sign language. Published in 1880, it became the standard, if rather retrospective, reference work on the subject.

Most army scouts did not work alone, but operated in groups sometimes amounting to 30 or 40 men. Scouts were also regularly required to serve as couriers to deliver urgent news of either victory or defeat. During the Ute War in Colorado Territory during 1879, a white scout named J. P. Rankin rode 180 miles in 24 hours to carry word to General George Crook of an attack at Milk Creek on a battalion of the 4th Infantry, under Major Thomas T. Thornburgh. As a result, a relief column saved the infantrymen from disaster!

Many scouts throughout the period preferred to ride mules rather than horses because, according to Lieutenant-Colonel George Armstrong Custer, they could “perform a rapid and continuous march without forage, being able to subsist on the grazing to be obtained in nearly all the valleys on the plains during the greater portion of the year.” Custer also believed that the object of the scout was “not to outrun or overwhelm the Indians, but to avoid both by secrecy and caution in his movements.” The method of deploying scouts when an army unit was on the move was particularly important. According to Captain John Bourke, who served in the Southwest under General George Crook: “Our Apache scouts ... were kept from 12 to 24 hours in advance of the main body, but always in communication, the intention being to make use of them to determine the whereabouts of the hostiles, but to let the soldiers do the work of cleaning them out.”

Sign language was a vital skill among all frontier scouts. These engravings were published in Garrick Mallery's volume *Sign Language Among North American Indians* in 1881. (Author's collection)



OPPOSITE Capturing the vastness of the western frontier lands, this photograph of scout Harry Yount was taken in 1874 at the Berthoud Pass, in Colorado, while he was a guide for the Hayden Geological Survey. (National Archives)

CHRONOLOGY

- 1846 Kit Carson guides Kearny's expedition
- 1850 Jim Bridger guides Stanbury's expedition
- 1857 Mariano Medina scouts for Marcy column during Mormon Rebellion
- 1864 Jim Beckwourth serves as guide during Sand Creek massacre; Pawnee Scouts organized in Kansas
- 1865-68 Archie McIntosh and William C. McKay scout for Crook during Paiute War
- 1866-68 Red Cloud's War, including Fetterman massacre
- 1868 Forsyth's Scouts in Battle of Beecher's Island; Custer's attack on Black Kettle at the Washita River
- 1870 Black-Seminole Scouts organized in Texas
- 1871 Apache scout companies organized in Arizona Territory
- 1873 Donald McKay and Warm Springs scouts involved in Modoc War
- 1874 Black Hills Expedition
- 1874-75 Red River War; Buffalo Wallow Fight
- 1876 Powder River Expedition, including Battle of the Rosebud; Battle of Little Bighorn
- 1877 Battle of Wolf Mountain; Fisher's scouts in Nez Percé Campaign
- 1879 Ute War
- 1881 Apache scouts mutiny at Cibicu Creek
- 1883 Crook's expedition to Sierra Madre
- 1886 Surrender of Geronimo
- 1890 Ghost Dance religion among western Plains tribes; Wounded Knee massacre
- 1891 United States Scouts established
- 1916 Apache scouts in Pershing campaign against Pancho Villa
- 1921 Separate units of Indian scouts discontinued
- 1943 Disbandment of last detachment of Apache Indian scouts at Fort Huachuca

PIONEER SCOUTS

To the pioneer period of westward expansion belong men such as Kit Carson, Thomas Tate Tobin, James P. Beckwourth, Jim Bridger and Mariano Medina. Many of these first generation non-Indian Army scouts developed from the ranks of the mountain men and trappers who plied their way to the northern Rockies via the Missouri River, and then crossed the deserts and plains into California during the first three decades of the 19th century. Skills necessary to ensure their own survival were easily adapted to the role of the scout.

Christopher "Kit" Carson

Born in Madison County, Kentucky, on December 24, 1809, and raised in Missouri, Christopher Houston "Kit" Carson ran away from home at 14 years of age to become a trapper and trader in the Arizona Territory. In 1842 he was hired as a scout for 100 dollars to accompany the survey expeditions of Lieutenant John C. Frémont of the Army Corps of Topographical Engineers. Over the next few years, Carson helped guide Frémont from Missouri to the Great Salt Lake, into Oregon and California, and through much of the Central Rocky Mountains and the Great Basin. His service with the celebrated "Pathfinder" was publicized in widely read official reports of the expeditions, and quickly made Kit Carson a national hero who was presented in popular fiction as a rugged mountain man capable of superhuman feats.

Carson next scouted for General Stephen W. Kearny's expedition to California during the Mexican-American War of 1846-48. Meeting Kearny accidentally at Socorro, New Mexico, on October 6, 1846, while carrying news of the successful California "Bear Flag" revolt back east for Frémont, Carson was asked to guide a column of about 100 mule-mounted dragoons and two mounted howitzers to the West Coast. Struggling through the rugged mountains of southern Arizona, Kearny's California column crossed the continental divide on October 19 and reached the southernmost branch of the Gila River the following

day. For the next 450 miles, the soldiers and their weary animals trudged alongside the river's course, crossing deep gullies and passing through narrow canyons where overhanging cliffs nearly shut out the burning sunlight.

On November 22, they reached the junction of the Gila and Colorado rivers, where they learned that Commodore Stockton's small US Naval squadron was off San Diego. Three days later, Carson guided the little army across the Colorado River into

Artist Charles S. Stobie successfully combined painting with frontier life. Befriending Kit Carson and Jim Beckwourth during the 1860s, he served the army as a guide and interpreter until 1875, when he returned back East and established a studio in Chicago. In the photo he proudly shows off his horse, which has a high-back saddle made by Gallup and Frazier of Pueblo, Colorado. (Denver Public Library, Western History Collection)



modern day California. Fighting their way through the Mexican, or *Californio*, forces, they arrived at San Diego six days later and reinforced Stockton in order to complete the American conquest of California by the beginning of 1847.

Carson was appointed Agent for the Ute Indians of New Mexico in 1853 and used his knowledge and experience to counsel against bloodshed wherever possible. When the Civil War started in 1861, Carson organized and commanded the New Mexico and Colorado Auxiliary Scouts, a unit that evolved into the 1st New Mexico Cavalry. With the help of Ute and Jicarilla scouts, he fought against both Confederates and Navajos in Arizona, New Mexico and Texas until hostilities ended in 1865.

Carson died of ill health at Fort Lyons in Colorado on May 23, 1868, and his remains were moved to a small cemetery near Taos, New Mexico, the following year.

Thomas Tate Tobin

Thomas Tate Tobin had an Irish father and a mother from the Delaware tribe. In 1837/38 he headed west to Bent's Fort on the Arkansas River with his half-brother, Charles Autobeas, and spent several years as a trapper and mountain man. Famous for his scouting skills, Tobin was reputed to have the ability "to track a grasshopper through the sagebrush." Scouting for the US Army during the spring of 1848, he enlisted under Lieutenant-Colonel William Gilpin who commanded a battalion of Missouri Volunteers organized to suppress Indian uprisings and protect the Santa Fe Trail. Gilpin's command endured extremely harsh winter conditions during a 3,000-mile march and skirmished with both the Comanche and Pawnee Indians.

In October 1863, Tobin was responsible for tracking down the Mexican bandit Felipe Espinosa. Inspired to butcher "gringos" by visions of the Virgin Mary, Espinosa and his followers burned and pillaged American settlements in northern New Mexico, killing 22 white settlers. Following the ambush of a drover and his wife on the Sangre de Cristo Pass, Colonel Samuel F. Tappen, commanding officer at Fort Garland, ordered Lieutenant Horace W. Baldwin of McLain's Colorado Battery, to hunt down Espinosa and end his reign of terror. As he was considered by Tappen to be the best tracker in the country, Tobin accompanied Baldwin's small detachment. Leading the party along the Sierra Madre mountain range, Tobin eventually picked up the two-day-old trail of two men, either leading or driving cattle, near the Great Cañon. After following this trail through dense, dead timberland, Tobin spied a number of crows flying over a spot near the top of a lofty mountain. Two magpies flying close by also provided a telltale sign for the scout. Sending the horses to the rear, he advanced stealthily forward with four troopers. Spotting his prey, Tobin opened fire with his rifle and wounded Espinosa, who dived behind a makeshift log breastwork. At this point a boy was shot dead as he ran from the scene. Attempting to return fire, Espinosa was also hit by "many balls" and died instantly. According to the report of Lieutenant Baldwin, the heads of the two dead fugitives were severed from their bodies and carried back to Fort Garland as proof of a successful mission. Arriving back at the fort, Tobin caused much consternation by opening up his gunnysack and rolling

them out on the floor of the officers' quarters. Tom Tobin continued to scout for the army after the Civil War, and during the 1870s became a respected citizen and racehorse owner in Costilla County, Colorado. He died in 1904, and is buried in a small cemetery north of Fort Garland.

James Pierson Beckwourth

Of African American descent, James Pierson Beckwourth played a major role as a scout during the early exploration and settlement of the West. Born in Fredericksburg, Virginia, in 1798, his mother was a black slave and his father was Jennings Beckwith, a white plantation owner and officer in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War. While he was a young man, Beckwourth's family moved to St. Louis, Missouri, where he was apprenticed to a blacksmith. Unhappy with his lot, he left home in 1822 and lived the life of a trapper and mountain man until captured by Crow Indians. He spent the next eight years living as a Native American and was even made a chieftain.

Returning to St. Louis in 1837, Beckwourth volunteered to serve in a company of muleteers and scouts being raised for the Seminole Wars in Florida (1835-43). It was hoped that their expert knowledge of tracking and Indian-style warfare would result in a final American victory in the Everglades. Following the battle at Lake Okeechobee on Christmas Day, 1837, Beckwourth was chosen to carry victory dispatches to Tampa through the tangled undergrowth of fallen trees, brush, and vines, infested with alligators and swamp moccasin. By 1848, Beckwourth was again in the employ of the US War Department as part of an escort accompanying government official Orville Pratt to California. Shortly after this, in 1850, he discovered a pass across the Sierra Nevada Mountains that further opened California to settlement.

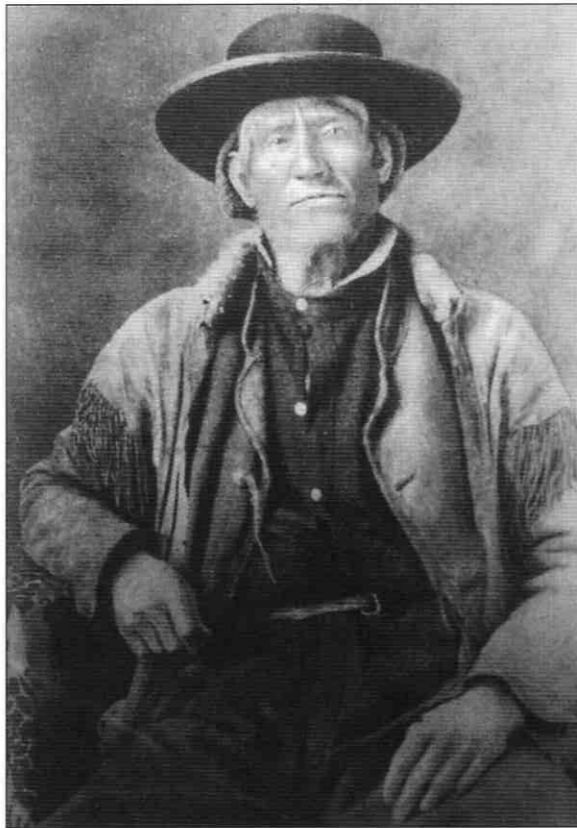
During the Civil War, Beckwourth served again as an army guide and interpreter, and, albeit reluctantly, rode with Colonel John Chivington, 3rd Colorado Cavalry, at the notorious massacre of the Cheyenne at Sand Creek on November 29, 1864. On this occasion about 200 Indians, many of them women and children, were slaughtered in a winter camp above which flew the American flag alongside a white flag. At the end of the Civil War, Beckwourth continued to scout for the army for a short time. He then returned to his beloved Crow territory where he died in 1867 and was laid to rest Indian-style in a tree near the Bighorn River.

Jim Bridger

Known variously as "Old Gabe" or "Blanket Chief," Jim Bridger was probably the most respected army scout and interpreter of the pre-Civil War period. Born in Richmond, Virginia, in 1804, he made his reputation as a trapper and guide for the Rocky Mountain Fur Company. In 1824 he was the first white man to set eyes on the Great Salt



A daguerrotype of black scout Jim Beckwourth, taken c. 1855 while he was gold mining in California. Note the large knife tucked in his belt. (Plumas County Museum)



Jim Bridger was one of the most trusted army scouts for over 20 years. This studio portrait was taken c. 1876, after his retirement due to failing eyesight. (Denver Public Library, Western History Collection)

Lake and the following year no one would believe him when he attempted to describe the geysers he and Joe Meek had found at Yellowstone. A newspaper reporter for the Cincinnati *Atlas*, who attended the 1837 fur rendezvous, described him as: "Tall – six feet at least – muscular, without an ounce of superfluous flesh to impede its force or exhaust its elasticity."

In 1850 Bridger led Captain Howard Stanbury of the US Topographical Corps, through what would become Bridger's Pass, which shortened the Oregon Trail from Fort Bridger by 61 miles and would eventually be the route to Utah for the overland mail and the Union Pacific Railroad. During this trek he saved Stanbury's surveying party from a confrontation with the Oglala Sioux through diplomacy and an expert use of sign language.

By 1857, Bridger was scouting for Colonel Albert Sidney Johnston during the Mormon rebellion in Utah Territory. Two years later, he led Captain Raynold's surveying expedition to the Yellowstone area. Although a Virginian, he supported the Union during the Civil War and, by 1864, was chief of scouts with the 7th Iowa Cavalry, which was operating against the Sioux in Nebraska Territory. Given the unofficial rank of

major, he was accompanied by other scouts, including Jules Ecoffee and Leo Palladie. An ageing Jim Bridger guided the expedition under Colonel Henry B. Carrington, 18th Infantry, which set out from Fort Laramie to guard the Bozeman Trail during the uneasy peace with the Sioux throughout 1866. According to Captain Eugene Ware, Bridger could do "anything that an Indian could do. He knew how Indians felt, and what to expect from them."

With failing sight, Jim Bridger ended his days living on his farm south of Kansas City, where he died in 1881.

Mariano Medina

One of many army scouts of mixed racial origin, Jesus Garcia Mariano Medina had French, Jicarilla Apache and Spanish blood flowing through his veins. Born in Taos, New Mexico, in 1812, his ability as a scout came to the fore when he worked with Kit Carson for Lieutenant Frémont in his exploration of the West in 1842. He also made his mark as a guide during the Mormon Rebellion of 1857–58. In the face of a scorched earth policy conducted by the Mormons as his column advanced towards Utah Territory and, cut off by the winter snow, Colonel A. S. Johnston was forced to send a column south to New Mexico for fresh supplies and horses. Commanded by Captain Randolph Marcy, who shortly afterward wrote *The Prairie Traveler*, a military column composed of 40 soldiers and 25 mountain men, and guided by scouts including Mariano Medina, set out from Fort Bridger on November 24, 1857. According to the report of Secretary of War



Mariano Medina was of Spanish, French and Apache descent, and worked as an army scout with Kit Carson during the 1840s. He wears a fringed and fur-lined buckskin coat, trousers with beaded strips and moccasins. (Denver Public Library, Western History Collection)

John B. Floyd:

Their course lay through an almost trackless wilderness, over lofty and rugged mountains, without a pathway or human habitation to guide or direct, in the very depth of winter, through snows, for many miles together, reaching to the depth of five feet. Their beasts of burden very rapidly perished until very few were left; their supplies gave out; their luggage was abandoned. They were driven to subsist upon the carcasses of their dead horses and mules; all the men became greatly emaciated; some were frostbitten.

After a march of 51 days, the column emerged from the forests and found themselves at Fort Massachusetts, New Mexico. Marcy eventually returned to Utah with supplies and reinforcements on June 9, 1858.

Following this trek, Mariano Medina established a trading post and ferry at Big Thompson Canyon in Colorado, but constant Indian raids would not permit him to forget his tracking skills. In April 1861, Ute Indians stole 60 of his ponies. Thrown into a rage, he spent four days hunting them down. According to a reporter for the *Rocky Mountain News*, he and two companions discovered the remains of a campfire on the banks of a creek and

spotted the culprits. Discharging his rifle, the scout rushed forward scattering the Utes in all directions. "Cowards!" yelled Medina, "Come back and fight for the horses!" The Indians wheeled around in response and charged him. Coolly taking off his hat, Medina waved it as though signaling for help, whereupon the Indians fled thinking that they were outnumbered. The scout arrived back at his post several days later at the head of 50 of his horses and with several Ute scalps dangling from his belt.

Living out the rest of his life as a trader, Medina died of natural causes in 1878.

NATIVE AMERICAN SCOUTS

Since the earliest days of colonial settlement, white settlers had employed friendly Indians as guides, trackers and scouts. Indeed, during the Revolutionary War (1774–87) George Washington reported that they made "excellent use as scouts and light troops." For his last expedition across the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific in 1853, during which he surveyed the 38th parallel, Colonel John C. Frémont employed the services of 10 Delaware chiefs. A member of the party commented: "A more noble set of Indians I never saw, the most of them six feet high, all mounted and armed *cap-a-pie*, under command of Captain Wolff, a 'Big Indian,' as



Shoshone scout Rabbit-Tail served the US Army as a member of Captain Ray's scout company. He wears metal armbands and bracelets and holds a wooden brass-studded mirror board. (National Archives)

he called himself. Most of them spoke English, and all understood it."

In 1859, Randolph Marcy commented in his trail handbook that it was essential for parties making expeditions through an unexplored country to secure the services of the best guides and hunters, and that none were superior to the Delaware and Shawnee Indians. "They have been with me upon several different occasions," he declared, "and I have invariably found them intelligent, brave, reliable, and in every respect well qualified to fill their positions."

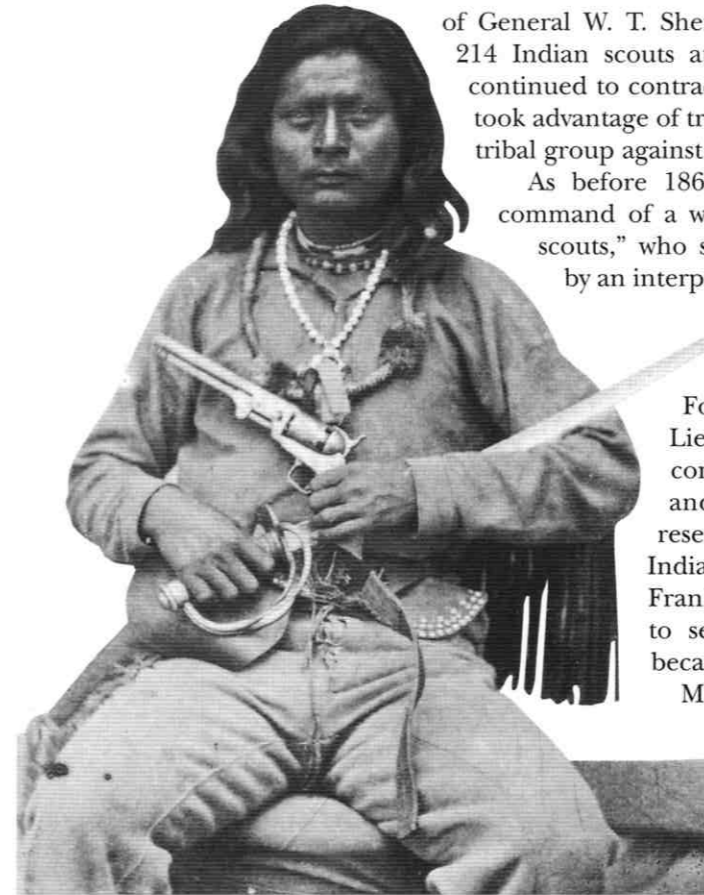
The function of Native Americans as scouts was manifold. As long-range patrols they would disappear for days and return with valuable information about the movement of the enemy. Another less known duty of larger bodies of Indian scouts was to fulfill the role of auxiliaries and engage in combat, often independently of regular soldiers. The Powder River Expedition under General Crook set out from Fort Fetterman, Wyoming Territory, on June 14, 1876, accompanied by 86 Shoshone scouts who had American flags sewn to their clothing to prevent them being mistaken for hostiles. Their chief, Washakie, was described as having his face "painted with vertical white streaks that made him look like the Devil." In his right hand, hanging to the end of a window blind rod, were the two fingers of a dead Sioux. Another rod

had a white flag nailed to it, an extra precaution to prevent them from receiving friendly fire.

According to a *New York Herald* reporter, who accompanied the expedition, these Indians marched:

sometimes in column, and nearly every Shoshoni in going to war, carries a long white wand ornamented with pennants or streamers of fur, hair and red cloth. They wear parti-colored blankets, and ride usually either white or spotted ponies, whose tails and manes they daub with red or orange paint. Nothing could be more bright and picturesque than the whole body of friendly Indians as they galloped by the long column of the expedition.

The post-Civil War use of Native Americans as army scouts became more official when Congress authorized "a force of Indians, not to exceed one thousand" to be enlisted for US service in the Territories and Indian country via an Act of Congress approved on July 28, 1866. These scouts were to receive the same pay and allowances as cavalry soldiers, but could be discharged whenever they were not required. The length of service was usually six months, although some scouts found the duty to their liking and re-enlisted repeatedly. The ceiling of 1,000 scouts was never fully realized. According to the Annual Report



This Ute scout wears reinforced US Army cavalry trousers and holds a Model 1860 Light Cavalry saber and a Colt "Navy" revolver. Also note the brass-tacked knife sheath tucked through his belt. (Nebraska State Historical Society)

of General W. T. Sherman of December 1876, there were only 214 Indian scouts at that time. Hence, military commanders continued to contract informal alliances with certain tribes and took advantage of tribal rivalry to sponsor raiding parties by one tribal group against another.

As before 1866, Indian scouts were usually under the command of a white army officer, plus a civilian "chief of scouts," who spoke their language or was accompanied by an interpreter. Those scouts who showed exceptional loyalty and good discipline were often rewarded with official promotion to the rank of noncommissioned officer.

For example, on the recommendation of Lieutenant G. S. Wilson, 12th Infantry – who commanded a detachment of 20 Bannock and Shoshone scouts attached to the reserve column of troops near Mount Idaho, Indian Territory, on August 23, 1877 – Bannock Frank and Charley Teotoby were promoted to sergeant, while To-qui-o and Little Horse became corporals.

Many Indian scouts acted with extreme bravery. Several of those involved in the Yellowstone Expedition, which escorted surveyors for the Northern Pacific Railroad in 1871–73, were recommended by General Alfred Terry, commanding the Department of the Dakota, for the "Certificate of Merit."

Carrying dispatches to Fort Rice, in Dakota Territory, five Santee scouts were attacked by over 100 mounted Sioux warriors at sunrise near Heart Butte. Determined to outride their assailants, they were pursued all day over about 50 miles of wilderness. During the chase, they threw away blankets, clothing and accoutrements in order to lighten their load, and had two horses shot from under them. As they were well armed, with 100 rounds each, they managed to keep the Sioux at bay and finally reached the safety of the fort to deliver their dispatches.

WEST COAST WARS

The war against the Walapais Paiutes in Oregon and California lasted from 1865 to 1868. Led by the war-chief Paulina, these hostile Indians attacked gold camps, farms and stage stations in the Cascade Mountains, and successfully frustrated the Oregon Volunteer troops in all their efforts to contain them. Lieutenant-Colonel George Crook arrived at Fort Boise, Idaho, in December 1866 with orders to crush the Paiutes. As a result of pre-Civil War experience in California and Oregon, Crook possessed a great understanding of the Indian way of fighting and knew the importance of using skilled scouts like Archie McIntosh and William C. McKay.



Indian scouts often took pride in the army uniforms they were issued. This Yavapai scout wears an 1882-pattern cavalry dress helmet complete with yellow cords. His 1872-pattern officer's dress coat has regulation shoulder knots and his officer's sword belt has a Model 1860 Light Cavalry saber attached. (Denver Public Library, Western History Collection)

Archie McIntosh

Described as "a wonderful man in any country," Archie McIntosh was born at Fort William, Michigan, of mixed Scots and Chippewa ancestry. He first served as an army scout in 1855, when he saved a column from annihilation at the hands of the Columbia River Indians. He became Crook's favorite scout and chief guide, particularly after he led that officer through a blizzard to the safety of Camp Warner in 1867. Crook also enlisted Shoshone Indian scouts from Idaho, who took part in 14 fights with the Paiutes. At Steins Mountain and Camp Harney in Oregon, and at Surprise Valley, California, they fought as an independent command under the leadership of McIntosh. At the former encounter on June 19, 1867, they killed 12 hostiles. After the close of the Apache campaign Archie McIntosh married a San Carlos Apache woman and settled on the San Carlos reservation in Arizona. There he gained a reputation as a great teller of stories.

William C. McKay and the Warm Springs scouts

Born in 1824 of mixed Scots and Chinook ancestry, William C. McKay became a prominent trader and local leader in Oregon and, in 1856, also served as an army scout during the operations against the Snakes, Cayuses and Walla Walla Indians. In 1866 McKay and his 30-year-old brother Donald were placed in charge of a company of scouts raised among the Indians on the Warm Springs Reservation in north central Oregon. Known as the Warm Springs Indian scouts, they operated with great success against the warlike Paiutes. According to the recollections of William McKay, they would:

march from place to place by night, camp in some obscure retreat during the day, sending out scouts to discover signs and

traces of the enemy. When a trail was discovered, it was followed with the keenness of a pack of hounds by lynx-eyed pursuers. The camp of the enemy was discovered; and that night the hapless Indians were swooped down upon and destroyed as the hawk darts upon its prey.

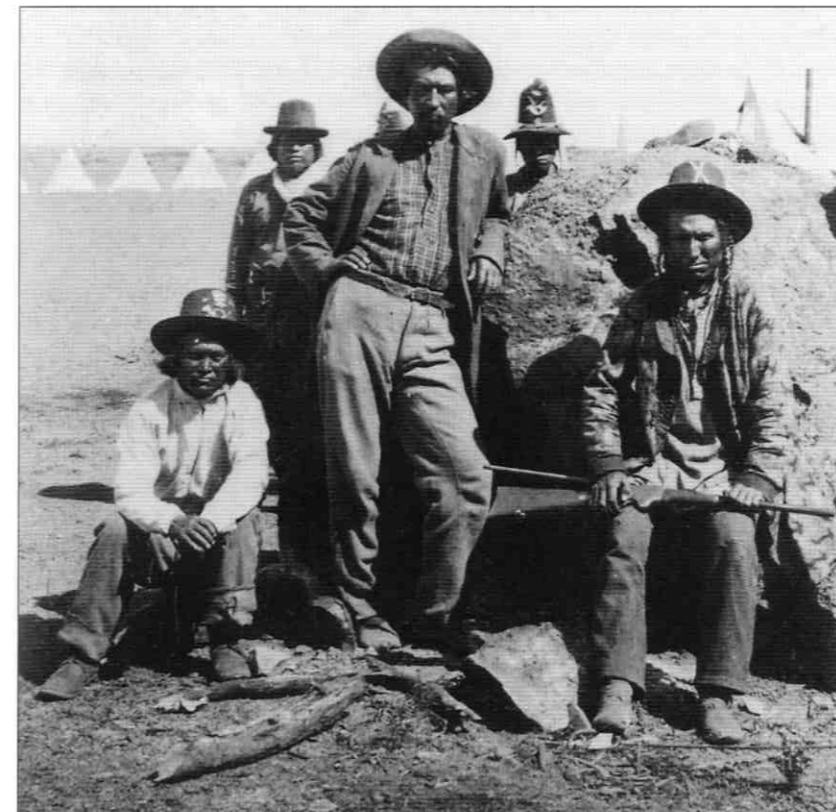
Following the defeat of the Paiutes in June 1868, a re-enlisted Warm Springs Indian scout company saw action under Donald McKay against the Modocs in the Lava Beds of northern California during 1873. Refusing to accept reservation life, the Modocs under "Captain Jack" Kintpuash withdrew to "The Stronghold," a vast lava bed honeycombed with outcroppings, caves and caverns turning it into a virtually impregnable rocky fortress. The 72 Warm Springs scouts who arrived at the Lava Beds on April 10 of that year became the eyes and ears of the troops involved in the operation. They also served as auxiliaries during several major assaults – especially the three days' fighting which took place from April 15 to 18, 1873. During an attack on a reconnaissance expedition led by Captain Evan Thomas, 4th Artillery, on April 26, 14 Warm Springs scouts "got in the rear" of the enemy position and killed and scalped four Modocs.

A correspondent of the *Sacramento Record* described the Warm Springs scouts as "a fine-looking body of men, many of them being six feet tall and even taller. They are very decent and orderly, much better behaved than an equal number of ordinary soldiers." Regarding their tactics against the Modocs, this source stated: "When their line was formed, the

extreme right and left end, or flank men, carried a little flag on a pole, that their true position could be determined at all times. They fight under cover generally, 'hunting in twos,' one covering the other."

The Warm Springs Indians were not the only scouts used in the Lava Beds. By May 28, 1873, some of the Modocs had surrendered, and four of them – Bogus Charley, Schack Nasty Jack, Hawker Jim, and Steamboat Frank – were "furnished with four day's rations, horses and Springfield rifles and started on the trail of Captain Jack." The fact that the former had been involved in the killing of General Edward Canby on April 12 seemed to matter

Donald McKay, leader of the Warm Springs scouts, leans against a rock during the Modoc War in 1873. His scouts wear 1858-pattern hats, which formed part of the "sixty privates' suits" issued to them before they left for the Lava Beds. Two wear the infantry bugle horn insignia, while the man seated on the right holding a Model 1867 Spencer repeating rifle has artillery insignia worn on its side. (National Archives)





William Simpson, a reporter and artist for the *Illustrated London News*, visited California during the Modoc War and sketched one of Donald McKay's Warm Springs scouts called Eskenawah, or Bob. (Author's collection)

little to his successor, General Jeff C. Davis, who was "satisfied with their loyalty."

However, it was the Warm Springs scouts who finally tracked down Captain Jack and the remains of his band on June 1, 1873. Encamped at Willow Creek, the Modocs attempted to escape but the Warm Spring Indians "struck the trail" and surrounded the hostiles. A white flag was displayed. Captain Jack announced that he wished to surrender and three scouts were sent to escort the Modoc leader into captivity. As the wagon carrying Captain Jack rumbled into the headquarters of General Davis at Yreka, 40 mounted Warm Springs scouts followed in the rear and made up for the lack of a band of music "by sounding their war whoops!" Donald McKay and the Warm Springs Indian scouts were mustered out on June 24, 1873.

NORTHERN PLAINS WARS

Plains War scouts, 1866-68

The massacre of 78 officers and men under the command of Captain W. J. Fetterman, 27th Infantry, near Fort Phil Kearny, Nebraska Territory, on December 21, 1866, did much to stir up the Plains Wars in the years following the Civil War. By March 1867, a column composed of 11 troops of the 7th Cavalry and seven companies of the 37th Infantry, plus a battery of the 4th Artillery, was on the march from Fort Larned, Kansas, under General Winfield S. Hancock to punish the Sioux. Regarding guides for this expedition, the ill-fated Custer recalled that it was accompanied by "a detachment of white scouts or Plainsmen, and one of friendly Indians, the latter belonging to the tribe of Delawares, once so famous in the Indian wars. Of the Indians one [Edmund Guerrier] only could speak English; he acted as interpreter for the party."

The white scouts accompanying Hancock's expedition included "Wild Bill" Hickok and Billy Comstock.

"Wild Bill" Hickok

Born James Butler Hickok in Illinois in 1837, "Wild Bill" settled in Kansas Territory prior to the Civil War, and served as a Union Army spy and scout from 1864 until April 1865. By 1866 he was again hired as an army scout at Fort Riley in Kansas. Custer described him as:

a Plainsman in every sense of the word, yet unlike any other of his class. In person he was about six feet one in height, straight as the straightest of the warriors whose implacable foe he was; broad shoulders, well-formed chest and limbs and a face strikingly handsome ... Add to this figure a costume blending the immaculate neatness of the dandy with the extravagant taste and style of the frontiersman, and you have Wild Bill, then as now the most famous scout on the Plains.

Hickok went on to serve with distinction with both the 5th and 10th Cavalry during 1868. On one occasion he volunteered to ride 80 miles through blizzards and deep snow from Palo Duro Creek to Camp Supply

to fetch provisions for Colonel Eugene Carr's 5th Cavalry after other scouts had refused the assignment. According to a newspaper report in the *Arkansas Traveler*, on arrival at his destination Hickok was "rubbed with whiskey, both inside and out," and then made the return trip with the much-needed supplies. His practical days as a frontier scout lasted until February 1869, when he was badly wounded in the thigh by a Cheyenne lance thrust while riding alone toward Fort Lyon in Colorado Territory. Dragging himself along using the lance as a crutch, Hickok was eventually discovered by an army wood detail and rushed to a surgeon. Following recuperation, he became a civilian peace officer until he was shot dead in Deadwood on August 2, 1876.

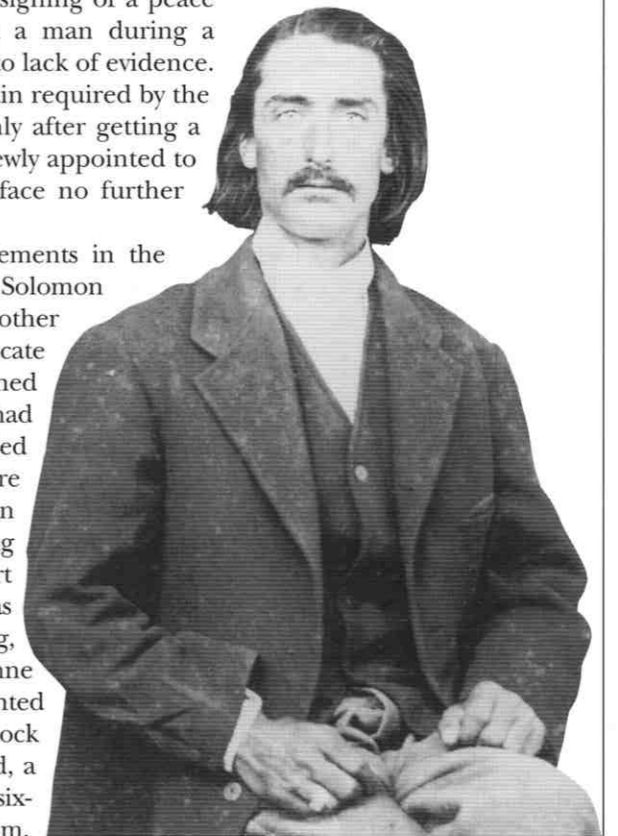
William Averill Comstock

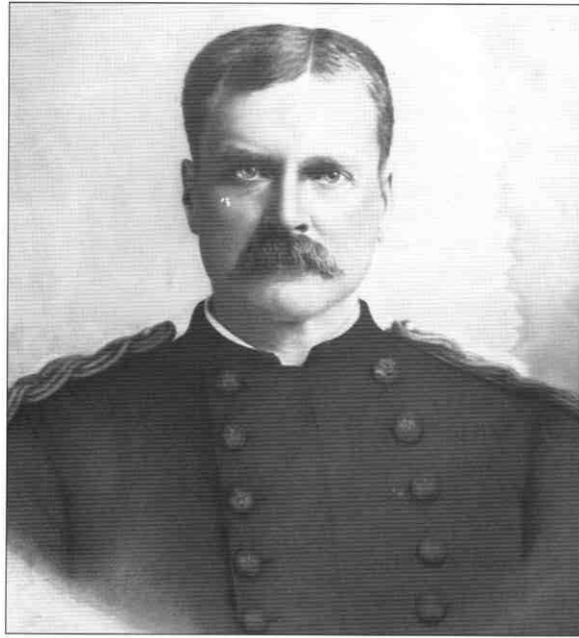
William Averill Comstock was born in 1842 at Comstock, Michigan, a town named after his father, "General" Horace Hawkins Comstock, a lawyer and prominent citizen. His mother was Sarah Sabina Cooper, niece of the famous novelist James Fenimore Cooper, author of *The Last of the Mohicans*. Billy Comstock headed west at an early age and was one of the original Pony Express riders. Later he became an Indian trader and first served as an army scout with the 1st US Volunteer Infantry at Fort Rice, Dakota Territory, in 1865. According to Captain Richard Musgrove, Comstock could read all the "signs" Indians left for the information of other Indians and had the ability to "interpret their smoke columns used in telegraphing, and after a party had passed, could tell with remarkable accuracy from its trail how many were in the party."

During a lull in hostilities that accompanied the signing of a peace treaty at Medicine Lodge, Kansas, Comstock shot a man during a dispute over a wood contract, but was acquitted due to lack of evidence. Tradition has it that when his scouting skills were again required by the army in the spring of 1868, he returned to duty only after getting a personal assurance from General Philip Sheridan, newly appointed to command the army on the Plains, that he would face no further charges for the killing.

Following renewed Indian attacks on white settlements in the Saline River valley, and along the Republican and Solomon Rivers, during August 1868, Billy Comstock and another scout named Abner "Sharp" Grover were ordered to locate the hostiles. Shortly after setting out, the scouts learned that Captain Frederick Benteen of the 7th Cavalry had attacked some Indians at the Saline River and killed several braves. Realizing the increased danger they were in, Comstock and Grover continued with their mission and found a friendly village of Sioux near Big Spring Station, on the Solomon River, about 50 miles from Fort Wallace. Grover knew these Indians well, as his wife was a member of the same band. Their chief, Turkey Leg, warned the scouts that Roman Nose and his Cheyenne dog soldiers were in the vicinity, and that they wanted revenge for the Benteen attack. Taking heed, Comstock and Grover started back to the fort. As they departed, a young brave noticed the beautiful ivory-handled six-shooter Comstock carried and tried to trade it off him,

Chief of Scouts at Fort Wallace, Kansas, Billy Comstock was killed by a Sioux warrior on August 16, 1868. At the time of his death, he earned \$125 a month as a scout, which was almost 10 times the pay of an enlisted soldier. (Kansas Collection, University of Kansas Libraries)





Major George Forsyth formed a company of civilian scouts in 1868. Badly wounded during the Battle of Beecher's Island, he recovered and went on to serve with the 4th Cavalry in the Southwest during the 1880s. (Denver Public Library, Western History Collection)

but the scout refused. Other Indians joined in the argument and several drew out rifles and fired, killing Comstock instantly and wounding Grover in the back. Using Comstock's body as a shield, Grover fought off the Indians until nightfall, then made his way to a set of railroad tracks where a passing train picked him up. General Bankhead, commanding Fort Wallace, subsequently sent out an expedition that brought in Comstock's body and gave it a Christian burial. Shortly after, Custer gave the scout the following tribute: "Thoroughly reliable in his reports, brave, modest and persevering in character, with a remarkable knowledge of the country and the savage tribes infesting it, he was the superior of all men who were scouts by profession with whom I have had experience."

Forsyth's Scouts

On August 24, 1868, Major George Forsyth, 9th Cavalry, who served as Acting Inspector General on the staff of General Sheridan, received orders

to "employ 50 first-class hardy frontiersmen," to be used as scouts against hostile Indians. These men, it was believed, would have an advantage over unskilled soldiers on the frontier. Recruitment began at Fort Harker, Kansas, and was completed at Fort Hays, Kansas. Lieutenant Frederick H. Beecher, 3rd Infantry, nephew of the famous reform activist and humanitarian Henry Ward Beecher, also accompanied the command. In the ranks were Civil War veterans from both the Union and Confederate armies. One of the more colorful volunteers was Isaac "Doc" Thayer, who had been a seaman, gambler and Indian fighter. Others included 19-year-old Simpson Everett "Jack" Stilwell, George Oaks, and Elijah A. Gilbert. Gilbert had enlisted under the alias Louis McLaughlin, as he had served as a government agent to track down gunrunners in 1867 and had been forced to change his name to avoid reprisals. Still suffering from an unhealed gunshot wound, "Sharp" Grover was hired as "Chief Scout."

Forsyth armed his scouts with seven-shot Spencer repeating carbines and Colt revolvers. Several of the better marksmen, such as Louis Farley, were given Springfield rifles. Regarding clothing, Forsyth, Beecher and Company Sergeant William McCall wore army uniforms. The rest of the unit wore civilian dress, although many of them drew articles such as military boots, ponchos, shirts and trousers from the quartermaster at Fort Wallace. In order to look the part, Young Jack Stilwell acquired a new buckskin shirt, while an Irishman named Martin Burke is reputed to have worn a sailor's suit that he won in a card game!

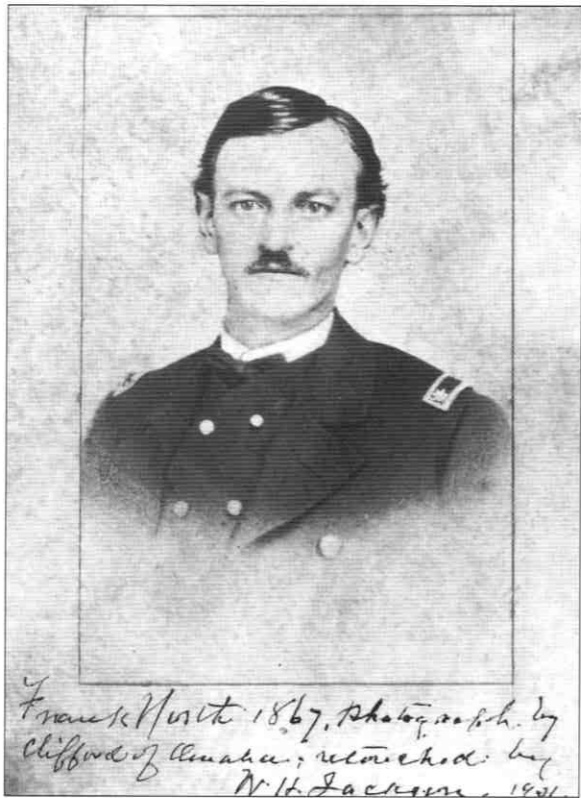
Forsyth's Scouts left Fort Wallace on September 10, 1868, having received news that a freight wagon train had been attacked near Sheridan, Kansas. Arriving at the scene, the scouts found that the Lakota and Cheyenne war party had departed leaving two Mexican teamsters dead. As they followed the broad trail of Indian pony tracks, some of the more experienced scouts began to doubt the wisdom of pursuing such a large body of hostiles with so few men. In response, Major Forsyth announced that he was determined to find the Indians and punish them.



Forsyth's Scouts prepare to meet another attack from Lakota and Cheyenne warriors during the Battle of Beecher's Island in September 1868. Relief finally reached the beleaguered scouts after nine desperate days. (Denver Public Library, Western History Collection)

Encamped by the Arickaree fork of the Republican River a week later, Forsyth's Scouts awoke to find a large body of Indians massing upstream and preparing to attack. On the suggestion of Jack Stilwell, they hastily crossed to a small island in the nearly dried-up bed of the river where they made their stand. With no natural defenses some of the men shot their horses and lay down behind them. During the repeated attacks that followed, Lieutenant Beecher was mortally wounded, surgeon J. H. Mooers was killed and Major Forsyth was shot in the head and leg. "Sharp" Grover was therefore placed in active command. Within a few hours nearly half the scouts were either dead or wounded.

At nightfall, Scouts Jack Stilwell and Pierre Trudeau volunteered to go for help. Crawling silently through the Indian lines for about two miles, they made their way back to Fort Wallace. Meanwhile, the attacks continued the next day, but the scouts were so well entrenched that no further casualties were sustained. Fearful that Stilwell and Trudeau had not succeeded in reaching the fort, the beleaguered force sent more men for help. By the third day of the siege the hostile Indians became frustrated and began to melt away, especially after their medicine man was shot down. Suffering from dreadful wounds and exposure, and surviving on horseflesh and prickly pears, the scouts were too weak to move. They had almost reached the limits of their endurance when, after six more days, they were rescued by a company of the 10th Cavalry under Captain Louis Carpenter. Named after the fallen Lieutenant Beecher, the Battle of Beecher's Island was over. "Sharp" Grover received praise for his actions, but was killed the following year in a shooting affray at Pond Creek, Kansas. Jack Stilwell went on to serve with distinction as an army scout for a further 14 years. The remnants of Forsyth's Scouts continued to operate in conjunction with regular troops on the Kansas plains. Under the command of Lieutenant Silas Pepoon, 10th Cavalry, they took part in



Frank North commanded a battalion of Pawnee Scouts protecting workmen building the Union Pacific Railroad at the time this photo was taken in 1867. His shoulder straps denote the rank of major. (Nebraska State Historical Society)

an attack on a hostile encampment near Shutner's Creek on October 25, 1868, killing 10 Indians. As Forsyth's Scouts charged into action, this officer encouraged his men to exact revenge, shouting, "Come on, boys, pick your men, give them hell and let the devil take care of the rest."

The Pawnee Scouts

Organized in 1864 to protect settlers on the plains of Kansas and Nebraska due to the absence of regular soldiers because of the Civil War, the Pawnee Scouts were one of the most successful groups of Indian auxiliary troops employed on the frontier. During August of that year, Major General Samuel R. Curtis, commanding the Department of Kansas, ordered the recruitment of 77 Pawnee warriors under Captain Joseph McFadden, to join his expedition against hostile Sioux bands.

The Pawnee relished the job, as they were the hereditary enemy of the Sioux and Cheyenne. In order to avoid being mistaken for hostiles, the Pawnee Scouts were issued with army uniforms that General Curtis commented gave them a "distinct and graphic appearance" during their 11 years of service. Captain Eugene F. Ware, 7th Iowa Cavalry, recalled them in Nebraska Territory in 1864:

At Fort Kearney there had been issued to each of these Indians a hat, blouse, and pair of trousers. All the balance they furnished themselves. They rode their own horses, with Indian saddles and bridles. These saddles were shaped like sawbucks, and on the forks were hung their lariats and belongings. They did not care much for hats, and ... most of those were on the tops of their ponies' heads, with holes cut in the top for the ponies' ears to stick out.

Regarding weapons, the Pawnee Scouts were initially armed with Model 1861 Springfield Rifle Muskets, but by 1867 these had been replaced by seven-shot Spencer carbines plus Model 1860 Colt army revolvers and sabers. In addition they carried their own tomahawks, lances, and bows and arrows.

When first in service, the Pawnee Scouts lacked discipline. Captain Ware witnessed them in action in 1864, and recalled: "Our Pawnee allies were acting like monkeys; they scattered out all over the country, bouncing on and off their horses, now deployed out, as if in flight from some unseen foe behind them ... they were wholly uncontrollable." Nevertheless, General Curtis authorized Frank North, a 24-year-old Indian Agency clerk, to raise a new Pawnee company during fall 1864. Mustered-in at Columbus, Nebraska, on January 13, 1865, this unit was officially designated "Independent Company 'A' Pawnee Scouts," and was initially stationed at Fort Kearney with elements of the 1st Nebraska Cavalry. Commissioned captain, Frank North whipped the unit into a disciplined and efficient military outfit.

The Pawnee Scouts first proved themselves in battle during the Powder River Expedition of 1865. On August 16 they wiped out a war party of 26 Cheyenne at Fort Connor, Dakota Territory, without loss. Two weeks later, they helped locate and destroy an Arapahoe village on the Tongue River in Wyoming. This unit continued to operate on the Plains protecting emigrants and lines of communication until they were mustered-out on April 1, 1866.

A new battalion of Pawnee Scouts was raised in spring 1867 to protect the workmen building the Union Pacific Railroad across Nebraska into Wyoming. With the rank of major Frank North, assisted by his brother Luther, now commanded four companies each containing 50 scouts. In August, the Cheyenne band under Turkey Leg destroyed a railroad culvert four miles west of Plum Creek, Nebraska, and derailed a freight train. Captain James Murie, with Company A, Pawnee Scouts, pursued and attacked these Indians killing 15 and capturing two.

In early 1869, Frank North again enlisted three companies of Pawnee Scouts to guide the Republican River Expedition against the Cheyenne. Accompanying Major Eugene Carr, commanding eight troops of the 5th Cavalry, plus civilian scouts William "Buffalo Bill" Cody and "Texas Jack" Omohundro, they discovered the encampment of Tall Bull's band of Dog Soldiers hidden in the sand hills at Summit Springs by the South Platte River. Charging unexpectedly into the village, they killed 52 warriors and captured over 400 horses and mules, plus about \$1,500 taken from white victims. Captain S. S. Sumner, who rode alongside the 50 Pawnee Scouts involved in the action, recalled that they "stripped for the fight, and went in like red devils!" Sergeant Co-rux-te-chod-ish (Mad Bear) was praised for his "bravery and gallant conduct" on this occasion.

For the next two years the Pawnee Scouts continued to guard and patrol the Union Pacific Railroad, making it possible to run regular trains to the Pacific Ocean. During January 1871, they were mustered-out, while Major North remained in service as civilian scout and guide.

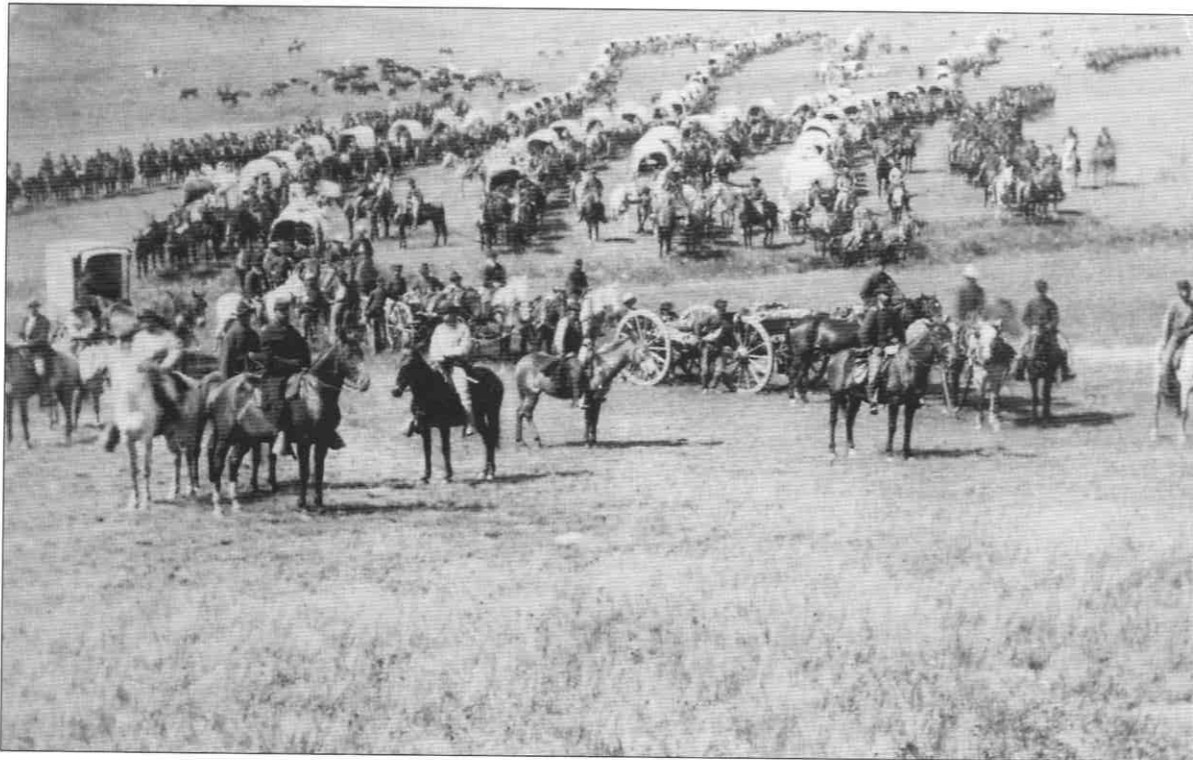


Pawnee Scouts Coming Around the Herd and Blue Hawk wear leggings decorated with typical Pawnee beaded strips and 1858-pattern infantry frock coats. Note that the man on the right has added brass studs to the shoulder and cuffs of his coat. (Nebraska State Historical Society)

The Pawnee Scouts were mustered-in for the last time during August 1876, in the wake of the Custer massacre at the Little Bighorn. Under orders from General Philip Sheridan, Frank North raised 100 scouts, who he assembled at Sidney Barracks in western Nebraska. Marching out to the Pine Ridge country on October 22, they launched a dawn attack on the encampment of Chief Red Cloud near Chadron, and captured the whole village without firing a shot. As a final insult, the Pawnee humiliated the captured Sioux by making them walk to Fort Robinson, while their ponies were driven to Fort Laramie.

On November 25, 1876, the Pawnee Scouts participated in their final battle when they joined the Powder River Expedition led by General George Crook, which culminated in the defeat of the Cheyenne under Dull Knife. Besides the Pawnee Scouts, Crook's column included about 300 Sioux, Snake, Shoshone and Crow Indians, all of whom were under the overall command of Captain W. P. Clark, author of *The Indian Sign Language*. Locating a large Cheyenne camp in a part of the Bighorn mountains so well concealed that it was impossible to approach by daylight, Crook ordered Colonel Ranald S. McKenzie, 4th Cavalry, to conduct a night march with 800 cavalymen and 70 Pawnee Scouts. Toward morning this force heard the sound of Indian drums and found the Cheyenne performing a scalp dance after the return of a successful war party. Waiting for the hostiles to tire and fall asleep, McKenzie's men charged into their camp. The Cheyenne fought desperately and most of them escaped to the high ground from which they fired on the troops, who destroyed their village and captured all their possessions plus 650 ponies. McKenzie's losses were five killed, and 25 wounded including Anzi, a Shoshone scout.

This stunning view of an army column, commanded by Custer, crossing the plains of Dakota Territory during the Black Hills Expedition of July 1874, was taken by photographer W. H. Illingworth. Civilian scouts and officers stand in the foreground, with artillery immediately behind them and cavalry on either flank protecting the supply wagons. The photographer's mobile studio stands on the far left. (National Archives)



Five months later, Dull Knife surrendered the remains of his band to General Crook at Camp Robinson. This was followed shortly afterward by the surrender of Crazy Horse and about 1,200 Cheyenne and Oglala, who had recently been defeated by the infantry of General Nelson A. Miles, with the help of his Crow scouts, at the Battle of Wolf Mountain near the Tongue River on January 8, 1877. With their mission accomplished, the last Pawnee Scouts were mustered-out on May 1, 1877.

Plains War scouts, 1868-76

As part of General Sheridan's winter campaign strategy, the 7th Cavalry established a forward base of operations at Camp Supply in Indian Territory during 1868. In response to Indian raids on white settlements in Kansas, Sheridan ordered an attack on the Indians in the dead of winter, when their ponies were weak and unfit for battle. On November 23, Custer and nearly 800 troopers set out in almost a foot of snow and, four days later, arrived in the Washita valley. Attached to the expedition were a number of civilian scouts including "California Joe," Ben Clark, "Broken Hand" Fitzpatrick, Jack Corbin, a Mexican interpreter called Romero (nicknamed "Romeo"), plus some Osage Indians led by Chief Little Beaver.

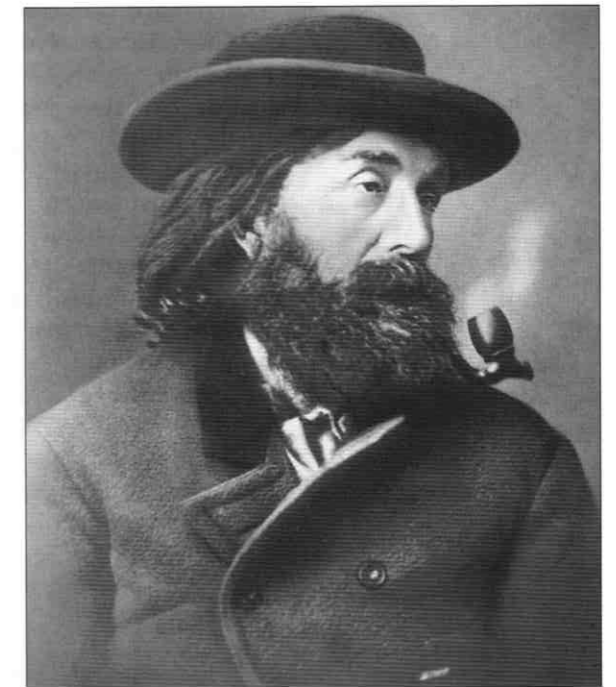
Other scouts operating at this time under Chief of Scouts Colonel Thaddeus H. Stanton included "half-breeds" Baptiste "Big Bat" Pourrier and Baptiste "Little Bat" Gagnier; Louis Richaud, who was accompanied by "ten of his relatives from the Red Cloud Agency;" Louis Archambeau, "a quarter breed, born north of the Yellowstone;" Ben Clarke, "an experienced scout from Fort Sill;" Edouard Lajeunesse, "a half-breed Snake;" "Buckskin Jack" Russell; "Bloody Dick" Seymour; Speed Stagner, the Fort Fetterman post guide; William Grabbs; Charles Ward; Jules Ecoffee, who had earlier worked with Jim Bridger in 1864; and a male-impersonator called "Calamity Jane."

Born Martha Jane Canary in Princeton, Missouri, on May 1, 1852, "Calamity Jane" was a wandering frontierswoman who dressed like a man and frequented bars, telling exaggerated stories of her exploits as an army scout and Pony Express rider. It seems that she may have taken part as a scout in the geological survey under Walter P. Jenny, conducted in the summer of 1875, which established that gold definitely existed in the Black Hills of Dakota. When an officer in Crook's command discovered she was a woman, she was summarily dismissed, but subsequently served as a nurse during the Nez Percé war in 1877.

"California Joe"

General Sheridan described "California Joe" as an "invaluable guide and Indian fighter." Born Moses Embree Milner in Kentucky during 1829, he acquired his nickname after taking part in the California gold rush of 1849. He served with both Kit Carson and Jim Bridger during the Civil War and subsequently became a scout in the Indian Wars.

"California Joe," whose proper name was Moses Embree Milner, served as a scout under both Generals Custer and Crook between 1868 and 1876. He was eventually shot dead by a rival at Fort Robinson, Nebraska Territory. (Denver Public Library, Western History Collection)



Custer was so impressed with his tracking skills that he appointed him chief of scouts. In celebration, California Joe got uncontrollably drunk while guiding a column and was placed under guard.

During the surprise assault on the Cheyenne encampment of Chief Black Kettle on November 27, 1868, California Joe again acted as a "free spirit." According to Custer, he spent his time "moving about in a promiscuous and independent manner," but then reported seeing a large herd of Black Kettle's ponies in a nearby canyon. Refused help as every man was engaged in the attack, he was authorized to collect and drive in the herd on his own, if practicable. When he returned about half an hour later, Custer recalled:

I saw a herd of nearly three hundred ponies coming on the gallop toward the [Indian] village, driven by a couple of squaws who were mounted while bringing up the rear was California Joe, riding his favorite mule and whirling about his head a long lariat, using it as a whip in urging the herd forward. He had captured the squaws while endeavoring to secure the ponies, and very wisely had employed his captives to assist in driving the herd.

Following this success, Custer entrusted California Joe and Jack Corbin to carry dispatches announcing the victory over Black Kettle to General Sheridan through 100 miles of hostile and snowbound country, a task that they completed in only 18 hours.

Frank Grouard

Frank Grouard was eulogized as a "scout of national fame" when he died in 1905. The son of a Polynesian woman and a Christian missionary, he was brought up in California and Montana, where he became an express rider and stage driver. Captured by the Sioux in 1869, he learned their language and customs, and became acquainted with Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse. Named Standing Bear, he was probably accepted as an Indian because his Polynesian features were similar to those of the Sioux. Grouard took leave of his Sioux hosts in 1875 and soon after was employed as an emissary by the Indian Peace Commission at the Red Cloud Agency in Nebraska. Described at this time as being "about 25 years old, tall, broad shouldered, long limbed, and very dark," he was hired by General Crook as an army scout, and joined the column that left Fort Fetterman on March 1, 1876.

The ensuing campaign against the Sioux, which included the Powder River fight on March 17 and the clash at the Rosebud on June 17, added much to Frank Grouard's growing reputation as a successful scout. While attempting to locate the village of Crazy Horse on the former occasion he was ordered to follow the trail left by two hostiles seen the previous day. This he did through the entire night in the face of a snowstorm that obliterated pony tracks. A newspaper correspondent who accompanied the 300-man expedition reported:

Over rugged bluffs, up narrow valleys, through gloomy defile and break-neck declivities, plunged the indomitable Frank; now down on his hands and knees in the deep snow, scrutinizing the faint foot prints; then, losing the trail for an instant, darting to and fro until it

was found, and again following it up with the keenness of a hound, and a fearlessness that would have imbued almost any one with fresh vim and courage.

Despite the work of the keen-eyed scouts, the resulting Battle of the Powder River was considered a failure. Colonel Joseph J. Reynolds, the indecisive officer commanding the strike force, distrusted Frank Grouard because he had lived with the Sioux. Refusing to follow up the initiative after the first attack, he permitted the Indians to escape into the surrounding hills. The fleeing braves were thus able to warn Sitting Bull's band camped about 60 miles away. Ultimately, poor weather conditions drove Crook's whole force back into barracks at Fort Fetterman, following which the unfortunate Reynolds was court marshaled for mismanagement of the expedition and Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull went on to achieve a series of victories at the Rosebud and the Little Bighorn.

At the Battle of the Rosebud the following June, the Shoshone and Crow scouts accompanying General Crook saved the day by dashing out to fight the attacking Cheyenne and Sioux warriors under Sitting Bull, which gave the surprised soldiers time to form battle lines and enter the fray. Frank Grouard recalled, "The coming together of the Sioux, Crows, and Shoshone, I think, was the prettiest sight in the way of a fight that I have ever seen. They were all mixed up, and I could hardly distinguish our allies from the hostiles."

Frank Grouard continued in the service of the US government until the end of the Indian Wars, and finished his army career as an advisor to Colonel James Van Horn during the Johnson County Cattle War of 1892. He eventually died in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1905.

"Lonesome" Charlie Reynolds was chief of scouts during the Black Hills Expedition of 1874. A trusted scout and excellent shot, he died guiding Reno's column at the Little Bighorn on June 25, 1876. (Denver Public Library, Western History Collection)

Little Bighorn, 1876

The civilian scouts with the 7th Cavalry in the campaign that resulted in the massacre of Custer's battalion on June 25, 1876, included Charlie Reynolds, George Herendeen and Billy Jackson. Nicknamed the "Black White Man," African American guide and interpreter Isaiah Dorman was also specially requested by Custer because of his ability with the Sioux language and his knowledge of the land.

"Lonesome" Charlie Reynolds was one of the most successful scouts to serve under Custer. Born in Illinois in 1842, his family joined a wagon train bound for California when he was 16 years old.

Attacked by Indians near the Platte River, most of the emigrants were killed, but Reynolds escaped. At the outbreak of the Civil War, he enlisted for three years in a Kansas regiment and served mainly as a scout. During the summer of 1866 he hunted buffalo in western Kansas and was again recruited by the army as a scout. He accompanied the troops north in 1873 and was Custer's chief of scouts during the Black Hills expedition in 1874. It was Charlie Reynolds who carried word of gold being found in the "roots of the grass" of the Black Hills, which led to the fateful gold rush of 1875-76. On the eve of the Battle of the Little Bighorn, he gave away the contents of a



bag of personal items and accessories, saying that he knew he was going to be killed.

George Herendeen was initially assigned to Custer's column for the purpose of scouting the upper reaches of Tulloch's Fork and carrying the results of that scout to General Alfred H. Terry. Frank Grouard remained with Crook, while a detachment of 45 enlisted Indian scouts, commanded by Lieutenant Charles A. Varnum, 7th Cavalry, was attached to Brigadier-General Terry's column. Enlisted on April 10, they included Crow scouts Curley, White-Man-Runs-Him, Hairy Moccasin, White Swan, Half Yellow Face, Goes Ahead and Stab, and were accompanied by an interpreter called Minton "Mitch" Bouyer.

The son of a Santee Sioux woman and a French trader, Bouyer had served his apprenticeship under Jim Bridger. Also present were Arikaras named Bob Tailed Bull and Bloody Knife, who was Custer's favorite Indian scout.

Most of the scouts with Custer's column did their best to convince the impetuous cavalry commander that he was vastly outnumbered. On June 25, 1876, they reported seeing a hostile village from a knoll atop a divide that separated the Rosebud and Little Horn rivers. Hiding his command in a ravine, Custer and several orderlies galloped to the hilltop, coincidentally named the "Crow's Nest," to look at the Indian encampment. Looking through binoculars he claimed he was unable to find what the Crow scouts had seen. Custer was next informed that his whole column had been discovered by several large bands of hostiles. Concerned that he was losing the initiative and that the main Indian camp would break up and disperse, Custer felt he had little choice but to attack regardless of the odds. His Crow scouts insisted that he was hopelessly out-



OPPOSITE Bloody Knife was Custer's favorite scout. As the 7th Cavalry approached the massive hostile encampment by the Little Bighorn River in 1876, he is believed to have said in "sign:" "We go home today by a road we do not know." He died shortly afterwards as Reno's command withdrew to the bluffs east of the river. (National Archives)

OPPOSITE BELOW Crow scout Curley claimed he survived the massacre at the Little Bighorn by wrapping himself in a Sioux blanket and escaping during an attack. (National Archives)

BELOW Interpreter "Mitch" Bouyer also died at the Little Bighorn. Minutes before Custer's column engaged with the hostiles, he ordered the Crow scouts back to safety and then rode off to meet his fate with Custer. (Denver Public Library, Western History Collection)

numbered and urged him to wait for reinforcements. Bloody Knife even shed his uniform, saying that since he was going to meet the Great Spirit he wanted to be dressed as an Indian not a white man.

Custer divided his command into three detachments: one commanded by Major Marcus Reno, consisting of 140 officers and enlisted men; one by Captain Frederick Benteen, composed of 125 officers and men; and the third led by himself with about 225 troopers. "Mitch" Bouyer and some of the Crow scouts, including Curley, White-Man-Runs-Him, Goes Ahead and Hairy Moccasin, remained with Custer. George Herendeen, Charlie Reynolds, Isaiah Dorman, Bloody Knife and about 25 Crow scouts, including Bob Tailed Bull and Stab, went with Reno's column.

Bouyer and the Crows followed along behind Custer and watched from a hill as his men descended a ravine that turned toward the Indian encampment. From the size of the camp that stretched for miles in the valley below they knew that Custer was starting his last fight. After advising the Crows to turn back, Bouyer rode down to join the troopers. Thereafter he was wounded, lost his horse and had no choice but to share the fate of Custer and his command. According to Tom LeForge, one of Gibbon's scouts, Bouyer's back was broken after which he was found by the Sioux on the bank of the Little Bighorn. He pleaded with the Indians to kill him and they obliged before throwing his body into the water. However, Gibbon stated that Bouyer's corpse was found several hundred yards away from the river among those who fell near Custer. Charlie Reynolds was killed attempting to stave off the rush of

Sioux warriors as Reno tried to retreat across the Little Bighorn.

Bloody Knife died from a bullet in the head shortly before Reno made his stand on the bluffs to the east of the river. Isaiah Dorman died a slow, painful death as his legs were shot full of bullets and Sioux and Cheyenne women pounded him with stone hammers. George Herendeen survived the battle even though he became dismounted when his horse stumbled. He managed to escape by foot and rejoin Reno's command taking 10 stragglers with him. On July 7, 1876, he recalled: "I told them I was an old frontiersman, understood Indians, and, if they would do as I said, I would get them out of the scrape, which was no worse than scrapes I had been in before!"

On their way back three of the Crow scouts met Reno's stragglers and joined them. However, without their interpreter, the Crows were unable to communicate. By the time they reached the hill where Reno made his stand, nearly all the hostiles had drawn off toward Custer. Taking advantage of the momentary calm, the Crows rode on. By the next morning, they had reached the mouth of the Little Bighorn River where they found General Terry and informed him that Custer had been "wiped out."



Curley, the youngest of the Crow scouts, claimed he was with Custer at the end, stating: "the fight lasted over one hour, Custer contending against ten times his number. The men fought splendidly until the Big Chief [Custer] fell." After this, the Crow claimed that he donned a Sioux blanket and joined in a charge towards the white men, but escaped to safety up a ravine. Briefly listed as "absent without leave," Curley was back on detached service at Fort Shaw by August, and was discharged on September 30, 1876.

Guided along the Bighorn Valley from the north by scout John Xenophon Beidler, nicknamed "X," General Gibbon's column found the remains of Custer's battalion. Beidler began scouting for the army in the late 1860s. According to an 1876 description, he was a "stout, heavy-built man of forty years of age. Hard service had rendered rugged his set determined face, and exposure had grizzled his beard and hair." Wounded in the hip during "one of the wild forays of the border," he walked with a limp, but maintained an uncanny ability to track down Indians. Word of Custer's defeat had to be carried back to Fort Ellis along

a 400-mile trail infested with hostile Sioux. Gibbon was reluctant to ask his scouts to perform such a dangerous duty, but Beidler volunteered and slipped away at dusk to successfully complete the mission.

Frank Grouard and Baptiste Pourrier were involved in a memorable incident a few days after the Little Bighorn fight. Ordered by Crook to locate the whereabouts of the hostiles, they left Cloud Peak Camp, Wyoming Territory, on July 6, 1876, with Lieutenant Frederick W. Sibley, 2nd Cavalry, and a detachment of 20 men. Twenty-four hours into their mission, they were near the head of the Little Bighorn River when discovered and pursued by "swarming bands" of Cheyenne and Sioux who chased them across the prairie toward the mountains. Ambushed in a ravine, they made a dash for the nearby tree line where Grouard suggested they abandon their horses and

escape on foot. Taking the ammunition from their saddlebags, they slipped behind some projecting rocks and climbed up the slippery slopes. Creeping along under cover until they had gained the higher ground, they marched without stopping for two days and nights, pursued by the Indians across steep precipices and through swift torrents and almost impenetrable forests. At dawn on July 9 they reached the bank of the Tongue River, where two of the troopers were so worn out that they could not ford the swift, deep current and had to be left behind in a thicket. Discovering a packer about four miles from Crook's camp, Grouard borrowed his mule and eventually fetched help for the exhausted troopers.

Crook continued to pursue the Sioux during September 1876, until Grouard discovered a hostile village at Slim Buttes, South Dakota, consisting of 40 large lodges. During the ensuing attack on September 9, which completely surprised the Oglala and Miniconjou Sioux, Private W. J. McClinton, Troop C, 3rd Cavalry, retrieved one of the guidons of the 7th Cavalry taken during the massacre at the Little Bighorn.

War Bonnet Creek, 1876

William F. Cody

One of the most illustrious scouts of the Plains Wars was William F. Cody. Born in 1846 in Scott County, Iowa, Cody was raised near Leavenworth, Kansas, where he worked for a wagon-freight company as a mounted messenger and later rode for the Pony Express. During the Civil War he served first as a Union scout in campaigns against the Kiowa and Comanche, then in 1864 he enlisted in the 7th Kansas Cavalry, which saw action in Missouri and Tennessee. In 1867, Cody took up the trade that gave him his nickname, hunting buffalo to feed the construction crews of the Kansas Pacific Railroad. By his own estimation, he killed 4,280 head of buffalo in 17 months.

From 1868 until 1872 Cody was again employed as an army scout, serving first in Kansas and later in Nebraska. He became Chief of Scouts with the 5th Cavalry under Colonel Eugene A. Carr. In fact, the men of the 5th considered him to be a "good luck" charm because his scouting skills kept them from ambush and guided them to victory. He took part in 16 battles and skirmishes, including the defeat of the Cheyenne at Summit Springs, Colorado, in 1869. For bravery in action near Fort McPherson, Nebraska, in April 1872, he earned the Congressional Medal of Honor, although this award was revoked shortly before his death in 1917 on the grounds that he was not a regular member of the US Army when he received it. The award was restored posthumously in 1989.

Cody became a legend in his own lifetime partly because of the dime novels written by Ned Buntline. These books enlarged his reputation as a buffalo hunter, Pony Express rider and army scout. In 1872, Buntline also persuaded Cody to star in a melodramatic theatrical production

One of the guidons of the 7th Cavalry, retrieved at Slim Buttes on September 9, 1876, leans against the tipi of American Horse. Scout Frank Grouard, responsible for discovering the Sioux village, stands at left. Private W. J. McClinton, 3rd Cavalry, who made the capture, is seated in front of the flag. (Denver Public Library, Western History Collection)



This photo of William F. Cody was taken in 1889 after he had become a showman and entertainer. He made one last appearance as a frontier scout at Wounded Knee the following year. (Denver Public Library, Western History Collection)

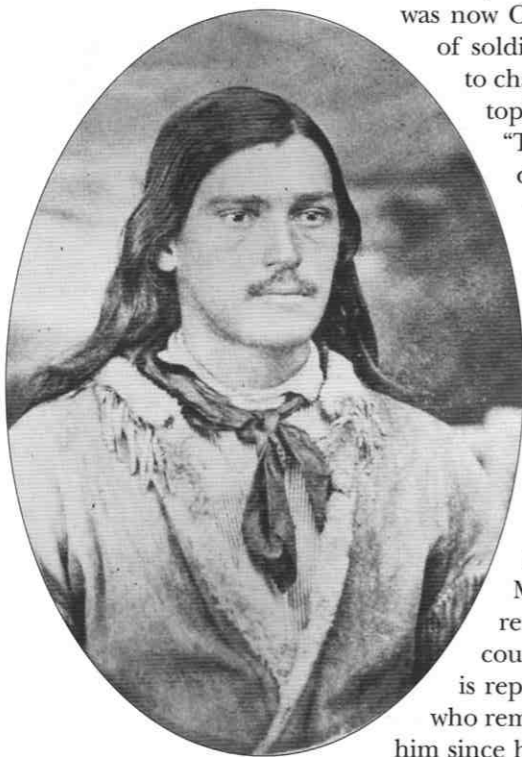
called "The Scouts of the Prairie." After this Cody formed his own theatre company and produced stage shows from 1875 to 1882 involving fellow scouts such as Jack Crawford, "the Poet Scout," "Wild Bill" Hickok and "Texas Jack" Omohundro. In partnership with Dr. W. F. Carver, he opened a show, the "Wild West, Rocky Mountain and Prairie Exhibition," in Omaha during May 1883. The first truly successful entertainment of its kind, tours of the US and Europe followed from 1883 until 1913.

Cody still managed to punctuate his various stage appearances with further service as an army scout. In the wake of the Custer massacre, he hurried back West to serve once more with the 5th Cavalry in company with German-born scout William F. Schmalsle. During this campaign he fought the famous "duel" with Cheyenne Chief Yellow Hair near Hat, or War-Bonnet, Creek on July 17, 1876. While reconnoitering for 800 Cheyenne warriors who had escaped from the Red Cloud Agency and were making their way to the Powder River country, Cody spied a small party of Indians closing on an army wagon train. Obtaining permission from General Wesley Merritt to go to the aid of the train, he galloped off accompanied by six troopers and two other scouts. In the ensuing skirmish, a warrior rode out in front of his men and called out in his own tongue, which Cody could understand, "I know you, Pa-has-ka [Long-haired Chief]! Come and fight me, if you want to fight!" The scout rode forward fifty yards, and the warrior advanced a like distance. Their rifles were discharged simultaneously. The Indian's horse fell; but at the same moment Cody's horse stumbled in a gopher-hole and threw its rider. Both duelists were instantly on their feet, confronting each other across a space of not more than twenty paces. They fired again and though Cody was unhurt, the Indian fell dead. The duel over, some 200 warriors dashed up to recover Yellow Hair's body and to avenge his death. It was now Colonel Merritt's turn to move. He dispatched a company of soldiers to Cody's aid, and then ordered his whole regiment to charge. As the troopers advanced, the scout lifted the Indian's topknot and war-bonnet, which he had secured, and shouted: "The first scalp for Custer!" These trophies were later displayed in his "Wild West Show" until a church group persuaded him to desist.

Miles' Scouts

Luther "Yellowstone" Kelly served as Chief of Scouts for Colonel Nelson A. Miles from 1876 to 1878. Born in New York on July 27, 1849, Kelly fought in the Civil War, and then finished his enlistment in the West, where he hunted, trapped and guided government expeditions throughout the Yellowstone area. During the massive troop build-up on the northern plains that followed the Custer massacre, Miles was ordered to establish Cantonment Tongue River, one of two new posts in Montana. In preparation for a winter campaign he also recruited white and mixed-blood guides familiar with the country, plus a complement of Crow scouts. Yellowstone Kelly is reputed to have stopped by and talked with an army captain, who remarked that his commanding officer would be eager to meet him since he knew the surrounding country. Kelly agreed to send the

Chief of Scouts Luther "Yellowstone" Kelly guided the infantry under the command of Colonel Nelson A. Miles from 1876 to 1878. He acquired his nickname because he knew the Yellowstone area in Wyoming like the back of his hand. (Denver Public Library, Western History Collection)



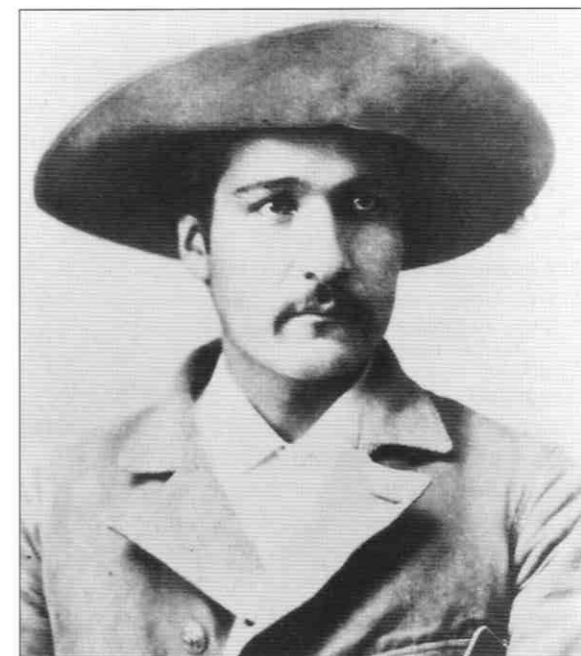
colonel his calling card, which turned out to be the severed paw of a recently killed cinnamon bear with his name carved in it. He was hired on the spot to scout for the army. Other scouts hired by Miles included John "Liver-Eating" Johnston, so-called because he claimed to eat the liver of his enemies, and Johnnie "Big Leggings" Bruguier, a "half-breed" wanted for murder who had served Sitting Bull as an interpreter until he defected to the army in 1876.

Upon receipt of news that the confederated bands of Oglalas and Cheyenne, under Crazy Horse and Two Moons respectively, were encamped about 120 miles away, Miles set out to attack them with 436 men of the 5th and 22nd Infantry. On January 5, 1877, after 9 days march through deep snow in temperatures 30 degrees below zero, Kelly captured a small group of Cheyenne women and children and brought them into camp. Shortly after this, the Crow scouts reported seeing a few hostile warriors in the hills to the south. Hearing the news Yellowstone Kelly, plus "Big Leggings" Bruguier, Tom LeForge, "Liver-Eating" Johnston and others, rode out hoping to take more prisoners. A little more than a mile to the southwest, the five scouts observed several warriors milling around the area where their women had been captured, apparently looking for signs. Thinking the warriors were unaware of their presence Kelly drew his rifle and, with his fellow scouts close to his side, charged the Indians. Suddenly a group of about 200 warriors sprang from cover and fired on the unsuspecting scouts. Realizing they had been caught in an ambush, Kelly and his companions sprinted for a grove of scrub oak a few hundred yards to their right. They reached the trees, but not before two of the scouts had their horses shot from under them and an Indian bullet had parted a few locks of "Liver-Eating" Johnston's hair! Narrowly escaping the warriors' initial rush, the scouts threw up breastworks of fallen trees and large rocks, and waited for the relief force that arrived shortly afterwards.

About a month later, General Miles asked "Big Leggings" Bruguier to return several of the captured Indian women to their people as a gesture of peace. Faced with a hostile reception from the Indians, Bruguier forced his way into the tipi of Coal Bear, keeper of the Cheyenne Sacred Hat, where he was given sanctuary. After two days of debate and argument, 19 Indian chiefs and sub-chiefs agreed to depart with the scout to negotiate surrender terms with General Miles. The courage and diplomacy of "Big Leggings" Bruguier marked the beginning of the end of the Indian wars on the northern Plains.

The Nez Percé Campaign of 1877

The discovery of gold on land set aside for the Nez Percé tribe developed into a conflict when members of that tribe refused to sign a treaty in 1863, which effectively reduced their reservation by 90 per cent and forced them into new boundaries, mainly along the Clearwater River in Idaho.



Nicknamed Tahunska Tanka, or "Big Leggings," by the Sioux, Johnnie Bruguier was a "mixed blood" who spent most of his youth living with Indians. Fluent in English and various Sioux dialects, he served as an interpreter for Sitting Bull, but defected to the white man in 1876. (Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma)

Known as "non-treaty" Indians, they were led firstly by the venerated Chief Joseph. When he died in 1871, his son, also named Joseph, picked up the mantle. After the failure of a negotiated settlement and the refusal of the Nez Percé to accept monetary compensation instead of land in 1877, the Federal Government sent in the army.

US forces involved in this campaign consisted of four troops of the 1st Cavalry, six companies of the 21st Infantry, and a battalion of the 4th Artillery under General Oliver Otis Howard commanding the Department of Columbia. Elements of the 7th Infantry were under Colonel John Gibbon, who commanded the District of Montana. These were joined by six troops of the 7th Cavalry under Colonel Samuel D. Sturgis, who had been operating against the Sioux from the Tongue River Cantonment, and the 5th Cavalry under Colonel Wesley Merritt.

Chief of Scouts with General Howard was Stanton G. Fisher. Appointed on August 16, 1877, he had charge of some friendly Nez Percé guides plus about 40 Bannock, Sioux and Cheyenne Indians who had enlisted for one month. Gibbon's civilian scouts included Augustus K. Gird. Born in Ohio in 1838, Gird was listed in the 1860 territorial census of Montana as a resident of Washington Township, Bitterroot Valley. Colonel Sturgis and the 5th Cavalry hired John J. Groff and J. S. Leonard as scouts, plus a 15-year-old Warm Springs Indian boy. Sturgis later recruited the services of six Crows and a French guide named Rogue.

Following the clash by the Big Hole River on August 9–10, 1877, in which some 90 Nez Percé hostiles were killed, a company of "volunteer scouts" was formed under Stanton Fisher. This unit was possibly designated Company M, 7th Cavalry. Described as a "brave and dashing a little outfit of dare devils as ever followed a warm trail," it consisted of Bannock Indians plus about 33 civilians including A. K. Gird, Milan Tripp, William Schmalse and John W. Redington. These scouts kept on the heels of the hostiles and were often miles ahead of the footsore soldiers. At Canyon Creek on September 13, they found themselves in "rather a warm place," according to Fisher, when they were momentarily caught in a crossfire as the troops ascended the plateau behind them. At this same battle, a "mixed-blood" Bannock with Fisher called Charley Rainey went into the fray sporting "a scarlet war rig topped [*sic*] out with an eagle-feathered war-bonnet." Although Rainey warned the soldiers not to shoot at him, apparently not everyone got the word. As he and another scout named Baptiste Ouvrier huddled among the sage cleaning their weapons after the fighting was well under way, a company of passing troopers spied them and, mistaking them for Nez Percé, leveled a volley their way, "cutting the feathers out of Charley's bonnet and shooting several holes through their clothing, tearing up the brush and dirt on all sides of them."

Not constrained by military discipline, the scouts at Canyon Creek "bushwhacked around," according to John Redington, and got involved in several small-scale skirmishes. During one of these, Redington received a wound in the knee. "One of my fellow Boy Scouts took his mouthful of tobacco and slapped it onto the wound," he recalled, "making it stay put with a strip of his shirt. It smarted some, but caused hurry-up healing, and the few days' stiffness did not hinder horse-riding."

Later in the campaign during the three-day siege of the Nez Percé camp near the Bear Paw Mountains, Milan Tripp, one of Fisher's scouts,

continued on page 41

PIONEER SCOUTS 1846–64

1: Kit Carson 2: Jim Beckwourth 3: Mariano Medina



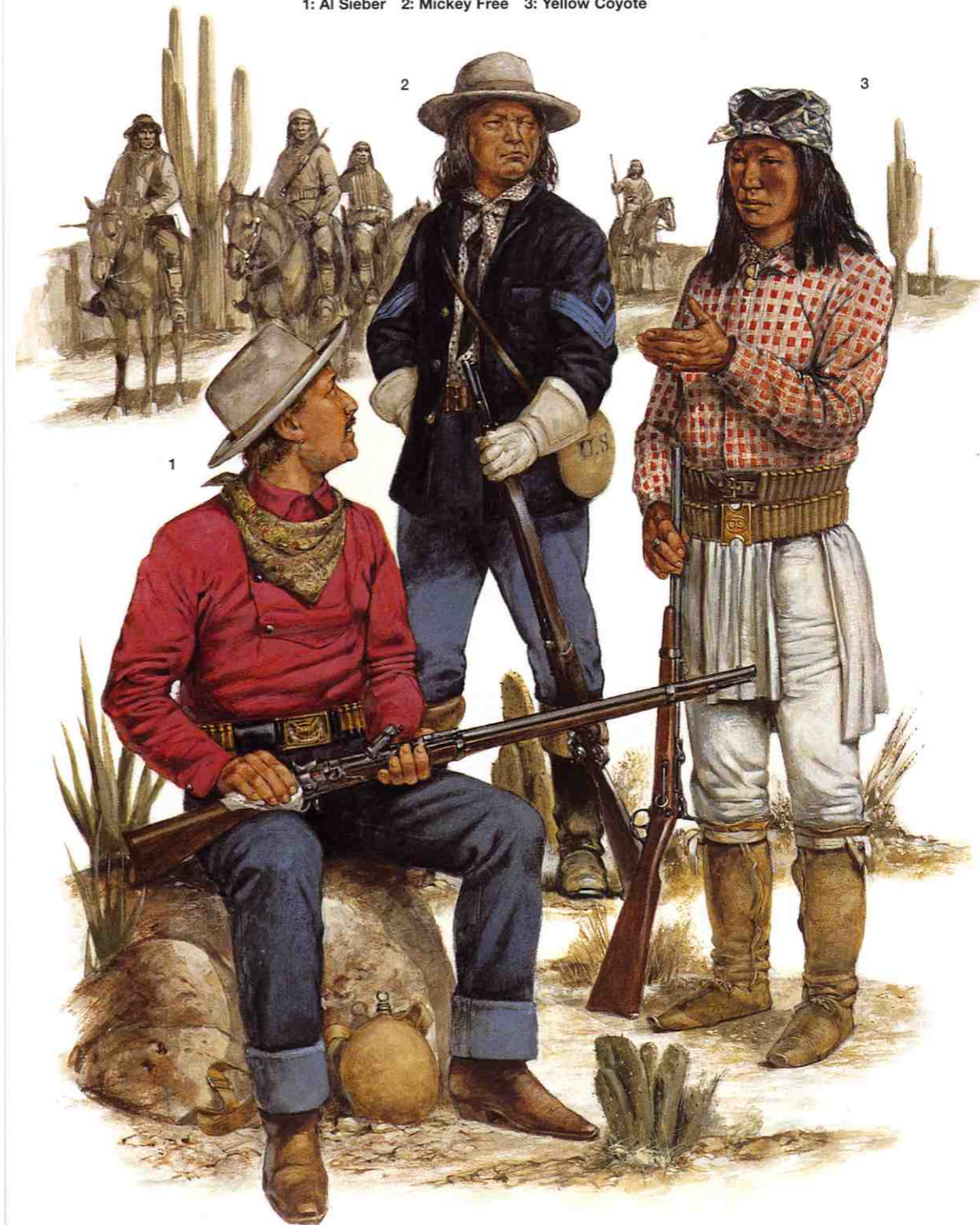
SCOUTS OF THE PLAINS WARS, 1867-76

1: "California Joe" 2: "Mitch" Bouyer
3: Bloody Knife 4: Pawnee Scout



CROOK'S SCOUTS, 1872-83

1: Al Sieber 2: Mickey Free 3: Yellow Coyote



THE SHOWMAN SCOUTS, 1872

- 1: William F. Cody
- 2: James Butler Hickok
- 3: John Burwell Omohundro Jr.



SCOUTS OF THE SOUTHWEST 1870-87

- 1: Black-Seminole scout
- 2: White Mountain Apache scout
- 3: Apache corporal





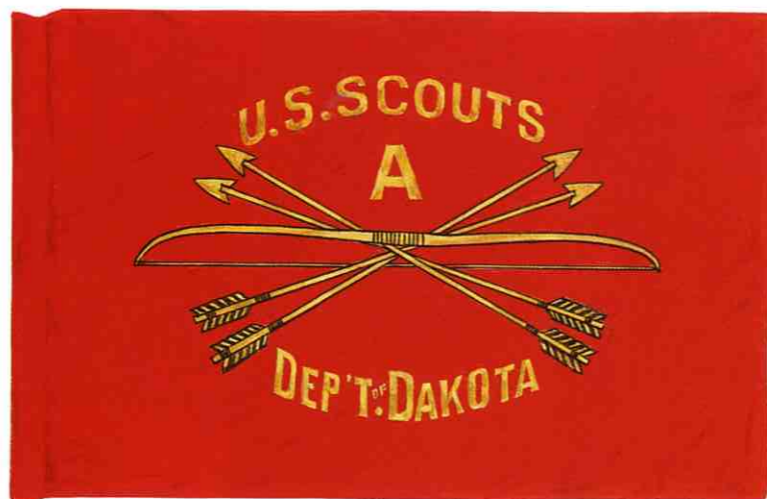
PLAINS INDIAN SCOUTS, 1879-90

1: Mounted Cheyenne, "Troop A, US Indian Scouts" 2: Oglala scout 3: Arapaho scout



INDIAN SCOUTS, 1890-1905

1: corporal 2: sergeant 3: Indian scout



INSIGNIA AND GUIDON 1890-1902
See plate caption for details



As a commander of black troops during the Civil War, Lieutenant John Lapham Bullis was the ideal man to lead the Black-Seminole Scouts on the Texas Plains from 1873 to 1881. (The UT Institute of Texan Cultures at San Antonio No. 68-1093).

is alleged to have shot sub-chief Looking Glass in the head after a meeting between Joseph and General Nelson A. Miles on October 5, 1877. That same day, the Nez Percé surrendered and Chief Joseph made his famous promise to "fight no more for ever."

SOUTHERN PLAINS WARS

Black-Seminole scouts

According to a contemporary account, the Black-Seminole Indian scouts were exceedingly brave, excellent trailers and guides. Due to their speed of movement, and ability to stay on the trail for months, it was a severe ordeal for soldiers to keep up with them. They could subsist indefinitely on half-rations and, when necessary, live off the land – eating rattlesnake if no other game was available.

The first Black-Seminole scouts were recruited for six months' service on the Texas Plains on August 16, 1870, when Major Zenas R. Bliss, 24th Infantry, enlisted 13 scouts from a group of approximately

100 Black-Seminole Indians who had recently arrived at Fort Duncan in Eagle Pass, Texas. The ancestors of these people were runaway slaves from the plantations of South Carolina and Georgia who had sought refuge in the northern bush lands of Spanish-controlled Florida during the late 17th century. They lived among the Seminole Indians, but preserved their own culture and traditions. Following the First and Second Seminole Wars, in 1817-18 and 1835-42 respectively, they were removed with their Native American allies to the Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma). Fearing that they might again become slaves, many ran away to Mexico. Following the Civil War and the passage of the 13th Amendment to the US constitution that freed the slaves, the Black-Seminole were offered protection back in America. Demoralized by outbreaks of smallpox and continued Indian raids, they accepted. Upon arrival, some joined the Lipan and Tonkawa Indian Scouts at Fort Duncan, Texas, under sub chief John Kibbitt, also known as Snake Warrior.

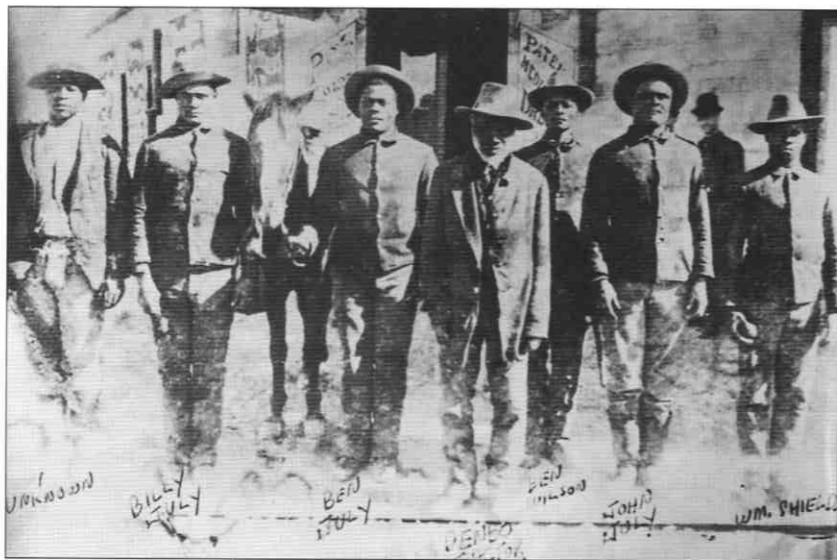
The first small group of 13 Black-Seminole scouts carried out their tracking duties so effectively that Major Bliss raised their number to 31 by the end of 1871. The following year they were elevated to a permanent military status as the "Detachment of Seminole Negro Indian Scouts." Paid the standard salary for privates in the army, they were provided with government arms, ammunition and rations. Although they were responsible for furnishing their own horses, the scouts received some monetary compensation and forage. They were dressed in a mixture of Indian dress and army uniforms, and some were even reported to be wearing buffalo-horn war bonnets.

Lieutenant John L. Bullis, 24th Infantry, who had considerable experience leading black troops during the Civil War, commanded the Black-Seminole from 1873 to 1881. In 1873, the US government adopted

a tougher policy against hostile Indian raiders crossing the border from Mexico and 24 scouts guided six troops of the 4th Cavalry, commanded by Colonel Ranald S. Mackenzie, from Fort Clark across the Rio Grande to destroy a Kickapoo and Lipan village at Remolino in Coahuila Province.

The Black-Seminole scouts next joined forces with Tonkawa Indian scouts and accompanied Mackenzie during the Red River War, when he led a successful expedition against the Southern Plains tribes at Palo Duro Canyon in Texas during September 1874. Private Adam Paine became the first Black-Seminole scout to earn a Congressional Medal of Honor when he and three other scouts fought their way out of an Indian ambush during the Battle of Canyon Blanco on September 26–27. Twenty Black-Seminole scouts accompanied an equal number of black troopers of the 10th Cavalry in another expedition over the Mexican Border on July 30, 1876, during which they smashed a Lipan village near Zaragossa. A similar expedition under Colonel William R. Shafter during the following year narrowly missed clashing with Mexican cavalry near Remolino and heightened tension between the two nations. Further clandestine operations over the border involving Black-Seminole scouts continued until the Mexican regime of President Porfirio Díaz clamped down on the activities of raiding Indian bands in 1878.

One of the most famous events in the history of the Black-Seminole scouts occurred on April 25, 1875, during a patrol led by Lieutenant Bullis, who was accompanied by scouts Sergeant John Ward, Trumpeter Isaac Payne and Private Pompe Factor. Near Langtry, at the Eagle's Nest crossing on the Pecos River in Texas, they followed a trail of Comanche horse tracks leading toward the river. Finding about 25 Indians encamped, the scouts dismounted and attacked. After a 45-minute firefight, Bullis ordered a withdrawal and the scouts obeyed. However, the officer's horse bolted, leaving him in danger of being ridden down and killed by the Indians. At great risk to their own lives, the scouts went back to rescue their commander. Sergeant Ward pulled Bullis up on the back of his own horse and they made their getaway. All three scouts were awarded the Medal of Honor for bravery in this action.



Black-Seminole Scouts stationed at Fort Clark, Texas, c. 1885. The elderly scout stood at center is Denbo Factor, brother of Pompe Factor, who earned the Medal of Honor for saving the life of Lieutenant Bullis in 1875. (The UT Institute of Texan Cultures at San Antonio No. 74-1111)

The exploits of a Black-Seminole scout patrol in 1879 gained the small group further respect. Ordered to apprehend some Mescalero Apaches who had left their New Mexico reservation, 39 scouts tracked the Indians across the desert during the entire month of February in freezing weather. Ever resourceful, they were able to forage food but were unable to find water toward the end of the month. About to perish, they were saved by the discovery of an underground spring by Sergeant David Bowlegs and were able to complete their mission after 80 days in the field.

The Black-Seminole scouts under Lieutenant Bullis took part in their last action of the Frontier Wars when they attacked a hostile band of Apaches in the Sierra del Burro Mountains of Mexico, killing four of them and capturing two on May 3, 1881. However, the unit continued to serve the US Army until 1914 when it was finally discontinued.

Baldwin's scouts

Tension between buffalo hunters and the Southern Plains Indians led to the Red River War in the Panhandle and north Texas plains during 1874–75. On August 14, 1874, Colonel Nelson A. Miles set out from Fort Dodge, Kansas, with two battalions of the 6th Cavalry; a battalion of the 5th Infantry; a detachment of artillery, including one Parrott gun and two Gatling guns; and one company of 25 Delaware scouts plus 25 newly hired civilian scouts and guides commanded by Lieutenant Frank Baldwin, 37th Infantry.

Among Baldwin's scouts were William Schmalsle (who had also served in the Sioux and Nez Percé campaigns), Amos Chapman and Billy Dixon. Born in Ohio County, West Virginia, on September 25, 1850, Dixon was orphaned at the age of 12 and headed west where he became a trapper and buffalo hunter. He was among 28 buffalo hunters attacked by about 700 Comanche led by "half breed" Chief Quanah Parker at Adobe Walls (site of a Civil War victory for Kit Carson in 1864) in the Texas Panhandle on June 26, 1874. On the second day of the siege, Dixon, who was a renowned sharpshooter, spied several Indians on a ridge nearly a third of a mile away. Taking aim with a Sharps rifle, he cleanly dropped a warrior off his horse. This apparently so discouraged the Comanches that they gave up the fight and withdrew.

Several weeks later Dixon enlisted as an army scout under Frank Baldwin, and found himself in the eastern Panhandle where he took part in the skirmish at Chicken Creek. He achieved further fame on September 12, during the Buffalo Wallow Fight. Carrying dispatches from General Miles' headquarters at McClellan Creek to Camp Supply, Dixon and Amos Chapman, with four troopers of the 6th Cavalry, were surrounded and attacked by Kiowas and Comanches. Taking refuge and entrenching themselves in a buffalo wallow, this small detachment held off persistent Indian attacks for two days until foul weather drove the hostiles away. With a soldier dead and the rest wounded, all five survivors were subsequently awarded the Medal of Honor for their bravery.

SOUTHWEST WARS

Apache scouts

The Indian wars in the Southwest were far different from those waged on



Two prominent leaders of Apache scouts are seen in this image. Seated in the middle, Lieutenant Stephen C. Mills was appointed to command Company D, Indian Scouts, in 1878. Standing on the right is Lieutenant Charles Gatewood, who finally accepted the surrender of Geronimo in 1886. The Native American is unidentified. (USAMHI)

the Great Plains, and required different tactics regarding the use of scouts and guides. Labeled "Apacheria" on ancient maps produced by the Spanish rulers of Mexico, the terrain consisted of some of the most rugged and desolate country in North America, with temperatures approaching 120 degrees Fahrenheit in the summer. The Apache Indians inhabiting the region were a tough and elusive breed that knew every canyon and crevice. To overcome these Indians, the white man had to be especially cunning.

The idea of pitting Apache against Apache was not a new one. Indeed, as early as 1786 the Spanish had employed Chiricahua and Mimbres Apaches to track down their hostile fellow tribesmen. But it was George Crook, still Lieutenant-Colonel of the 3rd Cavalry, who introduced the idea of recruiting whole companies of Apache scouts to track down other Apaches, an idea based on his successful use of Shoshone scouts against the Paiutes in Oregon during the late 1860s. By 1871, the army had established the reservation system and over 3,500 Apache, amounting to about half their total population, had settled in relative peace on government land where they were fed, protected and policed. The remainder, who became known as renegades, continued to ambush and terrorize those who attempted to settle in their territory.

Crook arrived at Tuscon, Arizona Territory, in July 1871 with five companies of the 3rd Cavalry and a detachment of scouts. Captain John G. Bourke, who served as an aide de camp throughout the period, described these scouts as "a curious ethnographical collection." There were, he claimed: "Navajoes [*sic*], Apaches, Opatas, Yaquis, Pueblos, Mexicans, Americans, and half-breeds of any tribe one could name. It was an *omnium gatherum* – the best that could be summoned together at the time; some were good, and others were good for nothing."

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Unimpressed with the caliber of such material, Crook began to recruit an all-Indian scout unit as soon as he reached Camp Apache. A small number of Coyotero and White Mountain Apaches enlisted and this group evolved into Company A, Indian Scouts. When Apache prisoners could be induced to change sides, they were welcomed into the ranks of this unit because, according to Crook, "the wilder the Apache was, the more he was likely to know the wiles and stratagems of those still out in the mountains."

Crook next moved to Camp Verde, where he raised another scout unit during 1872. Designated Company B, Indian Scouts, this organization was initially not all Apache, as insufficient numbers were prepared to volunteer. Thus, Crook cast his net as far north as Utah, where he found Walapais, Yavapais and Paiute Indians who were prepared to offer their services. After Crook's departure for the Dakotas, Company C, Indian Scouts, was established at the beginning of 1877 by his successor, Colonel Augustus V. Kautz, in response to renewed Apache raids in south-eastern Arizona. Company D, Indian Scouts, originally commanded by Lieutenant Stephen W. Mills, 12th Infantry, was founded by 1878.

In his annual report of 1876, Colonel Kautz observed:

These scouts, supported by a small force of cavalry, are exceedingly efficient, and have succeeded, with one or two exceptions, in finding every party of Indians they have gone in pursuit of. They are a great terror to the runaways from the Reservations, and for such work are much more efficient than double the number of soldiers.

The following example illustrates one of the many successful expeditions using Apache scouts. On January 9, 1877, Lieutenant J. A. Rucker, 6th Cavalry, conducted a successful operation against a band of about 40 hostile Chiricahua in the Leidendorf Mountains 40 miles south of Ralston, New Mexico. Rucker's command consisted of 34 members of Company C, Indian Scouts, plus 11 men of Companies H and L, 6th Cavalry. After making a difficult night march across the mountains, this force launched a surprise attack on an Apache encampment and, in a two-hour firefight, killed 10 hostiles with only one Indian scout seriously wounded.

General Crook also employed some experienced white and "half breed" guides and interpreters including Archie McIntosh, whom he brought with him from the

Lieutenant Mills poses for the camera at Fort Apache, Arizona Territory, with some of the Indian scouts he commanded. Several wear army blouses and woven ammunition belts, while they all hold .45-70 Springfield "Trapdoor" rifles. (USAMHI)



West Coast. Others used were interpreter Antonio Besias, plus guides Mason McCoy, Edward Clark, Al Spears, Joe Felmer, Dan O'Leary, Lewis Elliott and Al Sieber. Destined to become the most prominent scout in the South-west, Sieber was the son of a German miller. Born near Heidelberg in the Rhineland during 1844, he migrated to America with his widowed mother in 1849 and, by 1861, he had moved west to Minnesota. At the outbreak of the Civil War Sieber enlisted in the 1st Minnesota Infantry. He saw action at Antietam, Fredericksburg, and Gettysburg, and received wounds that were to plague him the rest of his life. After the war, he headed west to Arizona Territory, where he worked as a ranch manager and became an experienced tracker and Indian fighter.

Throughout 1872-73, Sieber was chief of scouts for most of Crook's major actions in central Arizona and demanded both fear and respect from the Indians under his command. Using Apaches, such as renegade-turned-scout Alchesay, Blanquet and Nantaje, and traveling light with mule trains to transport soldiers and supplies he hunted the hostiles down. About 76 were eventually discovered and killed at Skull Cave in December 1872, while 90 more were attacked and shot at Turret Peak shortly afterward. Such actions broke the spirit of Apache resistance and, by the spring of 1873, various renegade bands had surrendered, including that led by Apache-Mojave chief Cha-lipan, nicknamed Charley-Pan.

Following the issue of General Order No. 14, by which General Crook congratulated his forces on a remarkable victory at little cost to his own small army, he recommended ten Indian scouts, including Sergeant Alchesay and Private Nantaje, for the Congressional Medal of Honor, which was awarded several years later. At the same time, Al Sieber and Archie McIntosh were acknowledged for "good conduct."

Despite Crook's declaration of victory, several renegade Apache bands remained to be captured. Rewards were offered for the death of their leaders - Chunz, Chan-deisi, Cochiny and Delchay - who were tracked down and killed or captured using Apache scouts. Following his surrender with 132 warriors to forces that included Company A, Indian Scouts, on April 25, 1873, Delchay stated that the best trailers from among his own people had followed him "day and night."

During May 1875, Crook was given a new assignment on the Great Plains, where his expertise was needed to conquer the hostile Sioux and

Apache scouts drill with Springfield carbines at Fort Wingate, New Mexico, in the 1890s. All wear the 1883-pattern blouse, while three combine this with sky blue kersey trousers. Five appear to be wearing 1883-pattern drab campaign hats. The man second from the right also wears 1890-pattern canvas leggings. (National Archives)



Cheyenne. Under the authority of his replacement, General Kautz, Al Sieber remained on duty at Camp Verde. Commanding Company B, Indian Scouts, he took part in the removal of 1,500 Yavapais and Tonto Apaches to the San Carlos Reservation by the Gila River. This action severely undermined all the work that Crook had achieved. Carried out in the dead of winter, approximately 1,500 people, mostly elderly, women, and children, were force-marched over the Mogollon Rim through blizzards and snow drifts to their new location. Many Apache leaders, including Geronimo and Juh, refused to be moved and melted back into the wilderness where they continued to fight against white encroachment.

Mutiny at Cibicu Creek

The hitherto unblemished record of the Indian scouts was marred in 1881, when an Apache medicine man and mystic called Noch-ay-del-klinne revived hopes of Indian victory by declaring that whites would be vanquished and that two slain chiefs would rise from the dead. Some White Mountain Apache scouts absorbed these ideas and took part in his ceremonial dances. Returning to Fort Apache in a rebellious mood, they were disarmed and their weapons locked in the guardhouse.

Following this, fort commandant General Eugene Carr was ordered to arrest the medicine man. Setting out on August 29 with 35 officers and men of the 6th Cavalry, Carr reluctantly re-armed the 23 Apaches of Company A, Indian scouts, and placed them at the head of his column in the hope that they would remain loyal to the army. The arrest of Noch-ay-del-klinne the next day at Cibicu Creek, 46 miles north of Fort Apache, went smoothly until some of his followers from the reservation attempted to speak with the medicine man. These Indians ignored the warnings of Captain Edmund Hentig and surged forward with weapons cocked. At

These Apache scouts are mostly dressed in regulation uniform, although the two at right wear buckskin war caps decorated with owl feathers. Two also wear 1884-pattern gauntlets, while the man on the extreme right has strapped a revolver in a civilian holster over his ammunition belt. (National Archives)



White Mountain Apache Panayotishan, also known as Peaches, served as a scout for General Crook during the Sierra Madre campaign in 1883. He wears a fringed buckskin war shirt with some beaded decoration, and high-topped moccasins. Note his civilian revolver belt and holster. (National Archives)

the same time, all of the Indian scouts, except a sergeant called Mose, loaded their rifles and both groups fired on the soldiers. Captain Hentig and six troopers fell at the first volley, while the mystic was killed in the subsequent action. The firefight ended at nightfall, with further dead and wounded on both sides. Most of the mutinous scouts were captured, but five escaped only to turn themselves in. Tried for mutiny, three were hanged and two faced long prison sentences. The remainder were eventually discharged and returned to the San Carlos Reservation.

Indian affairs in Arizona were in such a deplorable state by 1882 that General Crook was re-assigned to command in the Southwest. Realizing that the Apaches were seeking refuge over the border in Mexico, Crook negotiated a two-year agreement with the Mexican governors of Chihuahua and Sonora provinces that permitted the armies of either government to cross the border in pursuit of renegade Indians.

On May 1, 1883, Crook set out for the Sierra Madre Mountains to find the Chiricahua and Warm Springs renegades. His force consisted of only 42 white troopers, but had 193 Apache scouts under Captain Emmet Crawford and Lieutenants Charles Gatewood and W. W. Forsyth, with Al Sieber and Archie MacIntosh as chiefs of scouts and Mickey Free, Severiano, and Sam Bowman as interpreters. Locating the renegades in camp near the Bavispe River, the scouts attacked and killed nine of them. With nowhere left to hide, the hostiles, including Mangas, Chato and Geronimo, surrendered and were taken to the San Carlos reservation.

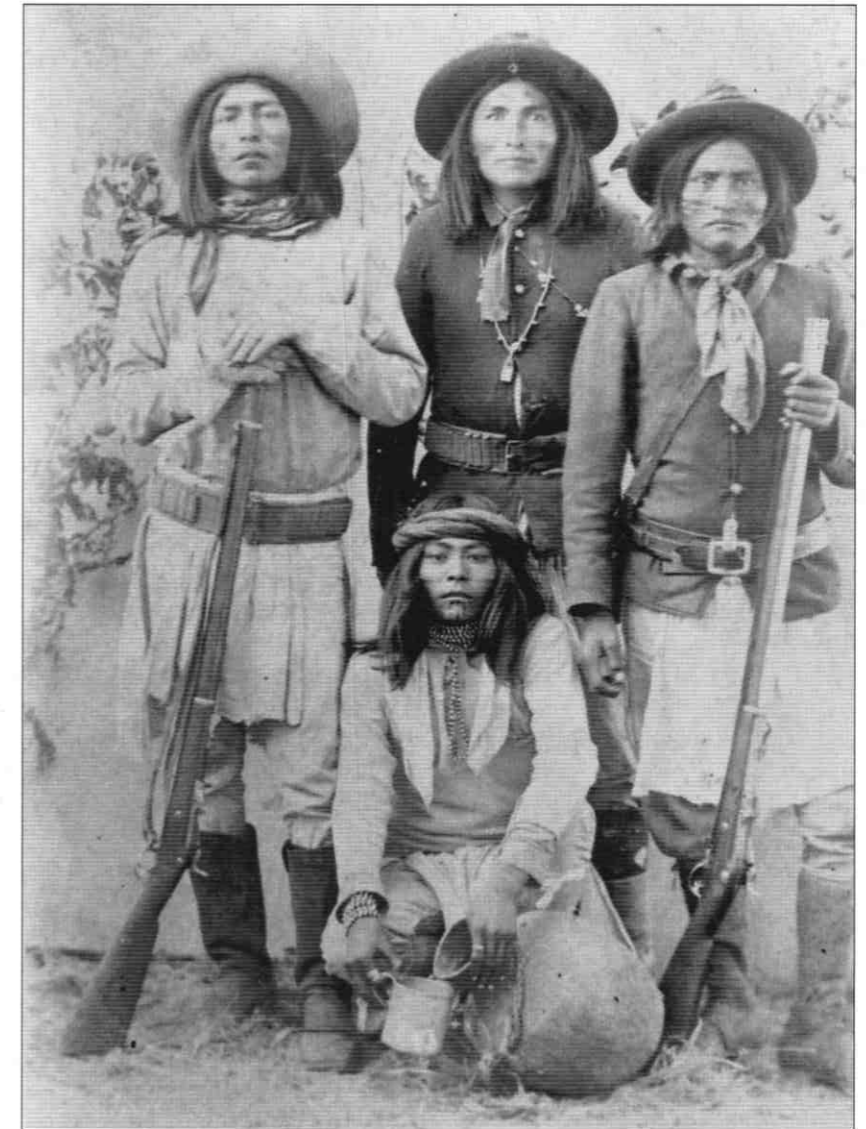
After several years of uneasy peace, during which the Apache warriors smarted under the white man's rule, 124 Chiricahua and Warm Springs Apaches broke out of the reservation on May 17, 1885, and headed back to Mexico. The ensuing campaign was less successful than previous ones and, despite the use of about 200 Apache scouts, the renegades managed to evade capture for the rest of that year. Finally, on January 10, 1886, a battalion of 100 White Mountain and Chiricahua scouts composed of Companies A, B and C, Indian scouts, under Captain Crawford, with Tom Horn as chief of scouts, discovered the renegades about 50 miles southwest of Narcori, near the head of the Aros River in Mexico. While preparing to attack, the braying of their mules gave the alarm and the scouts found themselves involved in a general battle, during which the hostiles retreated to the rocks. In the midst of this action, Crawford's scouts were suddenly fired on from a different quarter as a unit of Mexican irregulars, also hunting for renegades, happened on the scene. Within minutes, Crawford lay dying from a Mexican bullet in the head while five scouts, plus Tom Horn, were wounded. Assuming command,

Lieutenant Marion P. Maus, 1st Infantry, eventually persuaded the Mexican forces to cease firing. Maus subsequently received a Medal of Honor for bravery in this action.

Following the withdrawal of the Mexicans, Geronimo sent word to Lieutenant Maus that he wished to parley. Tired of being hunted by his own people, the renegade wished to surrender and yielded nine hostages as an act of good faith. Maus took word to Crook and negotiations eventually began at Cañon de los Embudos, 12 miles south of the border, on March 25, 1886. Between formal meetings, Apache scouts such as Kaytenna did much to persuade the renegade leaders to accept the terms offered, which included two years imprisonment back east and then a return to reservation life. The renegades finally agreed to surrender, and Crook returned to Fort Bowie to relay the good news to General Sheridan. However, his action was premature. After Crook's departure, Geronimo and about 20 other hostiles acquired some mescal from a passing trader. Drunk and out of control, they melted back into the Sierra Madre and the campaign continued.

At the end of yet another expedition, Crook returned to San Carlos in April 1886 with a total of only 75 recaptured renegades. Disappointed with his performance, Sheridan replaced Crook with General Nelson Miles. A successful campaigner on the Great Plains, Miles did not share Crook's faith in Apache scouts, claiming that they could not be wholly depended upon to fight and kill their own people. In order to find Geronimo and his small band, Miles assembled a force of 5,000 regular soldiers – approximately one quarter of the strength of the entire US Army. He also established a network of 27 heliograph stations that flashed news of Indian and troop movements from the highest mountainpeaks in seconds. To guide his troops, Miles recruited "trailers" among the Papago, Navajo and Yaqui tribes. Although depend-

The Apache youth kneeling in the foreground is pouring Tiswin, an alcoholic drink banned on the reservations. Two of the scouts wear 1874-pattern five-button army blouses, while the man at left has on a Model 1883 cartridge belt. The belt worn at center is an earlier Model 1876 version fastened by a brass-framed buckle. The man on the right appears to be wearing a custom-made belt without ammunition loops. Both weapons seen are "Trapdoor" Springfields. (Robert Kotchian collection)





able as scouts, these Indians refused to take part in any fighting and the army now operated without an auxiliary force.

Overwhelmed by numbers and pursued once more into Mexico, Geronimo sought refuge in the mountains near Fronteras. Despite vastly superior forces, Miles was unable to locate the wily warrior and was eventually forced to rely once more on Apache tracking skills. He therefore ordered Lieutenant Gatewood and about 30 Apache scouts to find the renegade and negotiate his ultimate surrender. On August 24, 1886, Geronimo finally laid down his rifle and surrendered to Gatewood and two Chiricahua Apache scouts called Martinez and Ki-e-ta.

Apache scouts were involved in a final incident in the spring of 1887, when Al Sieber left a scout called "The Apache Kid" in charge of Company B, Indian Scouts, at the San Carlos Reservation. "The Kid" took this opportunity to kill another scout whom he believed was involved in the murder of his father during a drinking spree. Upon his return, Sieber ordered the arrest of those involved, but "The Kid," and several others, struggled free and escaped. During the ensuing fight, Sieber was severely wounded in the foot and remained crippled for the rest of his life. Apprehended several weeks later, the renegades were sentenced to imprisonment. On his way to jail, "The Apache Kid" escaped once more and was never recaptured, despite a \$5,000 price on his head. In 1894, an Apache woman reported that she had left him dying of disease, probably tuberculosis, in the Sierra Madre, but the scout's body was never found.

The Apache Kid (centre) and two other men from Company B, Indian Scouts, pose in front of their wickiups, or dwellings, at the San Carlos Reservation. They wear Model 1883 cartridge belts and hold Springfield rifles. (Fort Huachuca Museum, Fort Huachuca, Arizona)

OPPOSITE After involvement at Wounded Knee, Casey's Cheyenne scouts arrive back at Fort Keogh, Montana, on March 4, 1891. At their head sits Lieutenant R. N. Getty, who took command after the death of Lieutenant Casey. This unit has just completed a 400-mile march through blizzards and deep snow, which took them 40 days. Getty wears the blanket lined brown overcoat approved for officers in 1883, while his scouts wear the overcoat prescribed for them in 1890. (National Archives)



Lieutenant Edward Casey's Cheyenne scouts leave Fort Keogh, Montana, in December 1890. In keeping with Casey's insistence that Indian scouts should be properly dressed, his men are smartly turned out in full uniform. (Denver Public Library, Western History Collection)

WOUNDED KNEE, 1890

Indian scout companies continued to operate on the Great Plains during the remainder of the 1880s. They enlisted for a period of six months, and received the pay and allowances of cavalry soldiers. They were also paid an additional 40 cents a day if they provided their own horse and equipments. Drilling to "a simplification of the cavalry tactics," their officers gave orders via "hand signs or the voice." Via General Field Order No. 5, issued in camp at the Pine Ridge Agency, South Dakota, on December 23, 1890, the Oglala and Cheyenne scouts enlisted by Lieutenant Charles W. Taylor, 9th Cavalry, were designated "Troop A, US Indian Scouts," and were trained to serve as cavalry. One of the most efficient units was the company of Cheyenne scouts raised by Lieutenant Edward L. Casey, 22nd Infantry, near Fort Keogh, Montana, in 1890. Strict discipline and regular drill forged Casey's scouts into a crack outfit. Indeed, when artist Frederic Remington visited Fort Keogh, he remarked that they "filled the eye of a military man until nothing is lacking." The size of Casey's company was set at 100 enlisted men, which included six sergeants, four corporals, two trumpeters and one teamster.



Frederic Remington sketched this member of Casey's Cheyenne scouts when he visited Fort Keogh in 1890. (Anne S. K. Brown Military collection, Brown University Library)



These scouts performed valuable work during the summer of 1890 when the Ghost Dance religion swept through the western Plains tribes. Begun as a peaceful cult by a Paiute mystic called Wovoka, some of the Sioux translated it into a "call to arms." Donning "ghost shirts" that their priests assured would repel the white man's bullets, they gathered together in camps like that by the North Canadian River in Oklahoma Territory and indulged in the Ghost Dance. The hysteria and excitement generated by the incessant drum beat accompanying these occasions convinced the frightened white settlers that the Indians were about to unleash a final bloodbath.

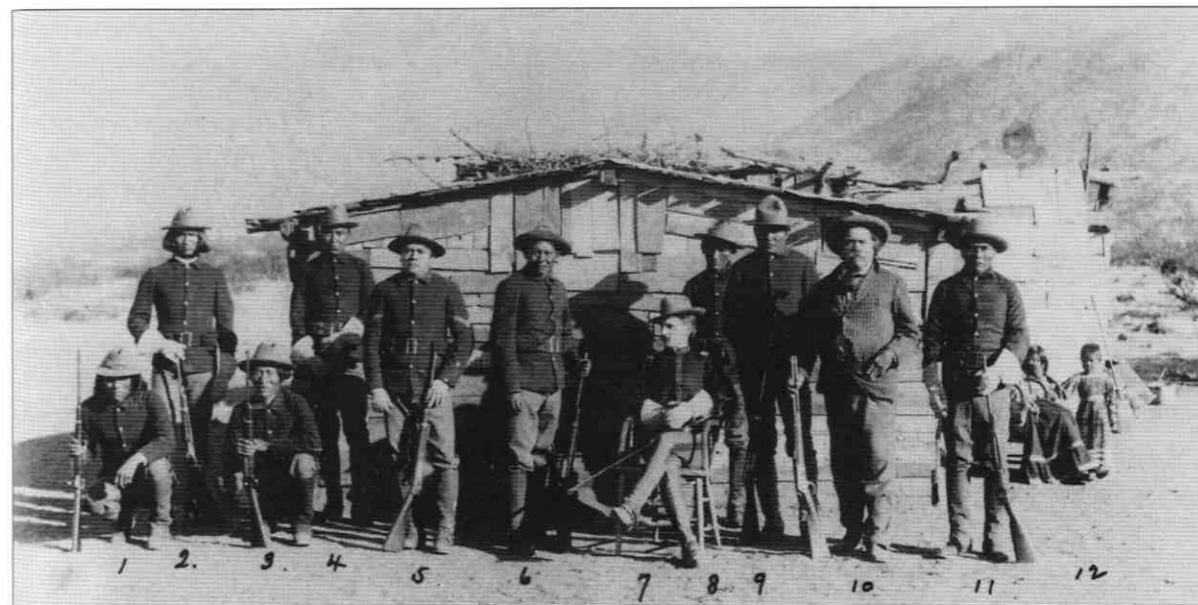
Based at Fort Custer, Montana, the Cheyenne and Crow scouts under Lieutenant S. C. Robertson, 1st Cavalry, carried word of the imminent danger to the whites in the region. One scout took only two hours to ride 26 miles over rough mountain trails to warn workers at a government sawmill. Another two scouts rode 120 miles in 24 hours to reach a white hunting party in the Bighorn Mountains.

Large elements of the US Army were eventually called out to break up the Ghost Dances and were accompanied by several white scouts, including William F. Cody and "Little Bat" Gagnier, plus two companies of Indian scouts, the Oglala Sioux scouts under Lieutenant Charles Taylor and Casey's Cheyenne scouts. On December 29, 1890, a squadron of the 7th Cavalry, led by Colonel James Forsyth, surrounded the Ghost Dancers under Big Foot near Wounded Knee Creek and ordered them to surrender their weapons. Angered when Taylor's Oglala scouts were sent in to disarm them, the hostiles opened fire and killed 25 soldiers. The troops fired back using four Hotchkiss cannon leaving 146 Indians dead.

The Indian scouts managed to persuade other Ghost Dancers to return to the Pine Ridge Agency. Standing Soldier, an Oglala scout, safely escorted a party of Hunkpapa into the Agency on December 29, 1890 – the day of the massacre at Wounded Knee. On January 7, 1891, Lieutenant Casey was shot dead by a Brule warrior called Plenty Horses while attempting to negotiate with recalcitrant Sioux Indians. Lieutenant R. N. Getty subsequently took command of Casey's scouts. After Getty's promotion to regimental quartermaster of the 22nd Infantry, Lieutenant Godfrey H. MacDonald, 1st Cavalry, led the Cheyenne scouts. When the unit's term of service expired in June 1891, they enlisted in Company L, 8th Cavalry, which retained the designation "Casey's Scouts" in honor of their fallen commander.

UNITED STATES SCOUTS

During the last decade of the 19th century, an end to hostilities on the western frontier meant a reduction in the strength of the Indian scouts. Army General Order No. 28, issued on March 9, 1891, reduced the number of scouts to 150, distributed as follows: Department of Arizona, 50; Departments of the Dakota, Platte and Missouri, 25 each; Department of Texas, 15; and the Department of the Columbia, 10. The same order required the conversion of Troop L in certain cavalry regiments, and Company I in selected infantry regiments, to consist of 55 Native American enlisted men. In so doing, it was



believed that those who had once been nomadic warriors would be assimilated into white culture as conventional US soldiers.

The Indian scouts that remained were spread very thinly within each department, and by official nomenclature the classification of their unit was changed from "company" to "detachment." Within the Department of the Dakota they were distributed as follows: ten scouts were assigned to Fort Meade; five to Fort Bennett; four to Fort Yates; two each to forts Assiniboine and Buford; and two to Camp Poplar River. Those in Arizona were mainly employed in border patrol work. About 20 of the 39 Apache scouts in service in 1916 saw field duty in the Pershing campaign against the Mexican bandit/revolutionary, Pancho Villa. Arriving too late to be involved in many active operations, they still performed an invaluable role as guides and couriers, much as their forefathers had done.

Following new regulations issued in 1917, the period of enlistment for Indian scouts was changed from three to six months, to seven years – the same as for regular soldiers. The separate units of Indian scouts, which had existed since 1866, were finally discontinued on June 30, 1921, and after that time those that remained were carried on the Detached Enlisted Men's List. The Detachment of Apache Indian Scouts at Fort Huachuca was finally disbanded as a US Army unit in 1943, although its last three sergeants, Joe Kessay, William Major and Joe Quintero, were not retired until November 30, 1948.

Uniforms and guidons

Civilian scouts and guides attached to the US Army on the frontier were employees of the Quartermaster Department and as such were not officially issued military uniforms or equipment, although some items were clearly either acquired informally or traded between the troops and scouts. Hence, their appearance was mostly that of plainsmen or mountain men, with fringed buckskin jackets and trousers much in evidence. During the Powder River Expedition in November 1876,

Company A, Apache scouts, at Camp Grant, Arizona Territory, on November 12, 1898. The seated officer is Lieutenant George B. Pritchard, while the man standing second from the right is Captain Allen Smith. Most of the scouts hold .30 Krag caliber carbines and wear Mills cartridge belts fastened with brass "C" clips. (USAMHI)



After visiting Fort Keogh and producing this sketch, artist Frederic Remington described the Indian scout in his distinctive overcoat as looking "something between Russian Cossacks [sic] and Black Crooks." (Anne S. K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University Library)

Pawnee Scout commander Luther North commented that he wore "a buckskin suit with porcupine quills and fringe, just like a real scout!"

From July 1866, when Indian scouts were officially enlisted in the army for short periods of time, they were issued old pattern uniforms from surplus stock legally exempt from sale. This was often worn in less than regulation style mixed with native costume. For example, before they set out from Oregon for the Lava Beds in California during April 1873, the Warm Springs Indian scouts under Donald McKay were issued with "sixty privates' suits." According to photographic evidence, this included 1858-pattern hats, which were also still being issued to regular army soldiers, and 1851-pattern dismounted greatcoats.

Some Indian scouts continued to prefer their native dress. In 1870, Captain Bourke, 3rd Cavalry, described Apache couriers in Arizona as being "almost naked, their only clothing being a muslin loin-cloth, a pair of pointed-toed moccasins, and a hat of hawk feathers." Many of the Crow scouts with General Crook during the summer campaign of 1876 wore a headdress formed from "an old black army hat, with top cut out and sides bound round with feathers, fur, and scarlet cloth." Others took full advantage of the availability of army clothing, no matter how haphazardly they were supplied. Of the scouts posted at Fort Abercrombie, North Dakota, in 1878, Lieutenant J. M. Burns remarked: "At each inspection they paraded in full dress, and were as proud of their glittering uniforms as any soldier in the Army." By the late 1880s, units such as Casey's Cheyenne scouts, and Taylor's Oglala Sioux scouts, were immaculately dressed in 1889-pattern campaign hats, wool five-button blouses and medium blue kersey trousers.

Not satisfied with a smart turnout, Lieutenant Casey campaigned for a special uniform for all Indian scouts. Indeed, in an 1890 letter he wrote: "I think it best that they should have enough distinction to wear a facing [color] of their own." A uniform and guidon specifically for "enlisted Indian scouts" was finally prescribed by the Adjutant General's Office via Circular No. 10, issued on August 11, 1890. Accordingly, Indian scouts adopted the following:

Fatigue hat.- Of black felt, brim 3½ inches in width, crown 3½ inches high; brim to be well stiffened.

Hat cord.- Of white worsted cord, one strand of scarlet, terminating in two tassels 1¼ inches in length, same color and material as the cord.

Hat ornament.- Two arrows crossed, to be made of nickel or some white metal, 3 inches in length, the letters U. S. S. in the upper intersection.

Dark blue shirt.- Same as now furnishes enlisted men, except that the collar is to be made deeper, to hold a neck hand kerchief, as follows: Collar 2 inches wide at the back of the neck, 3½ inches in front.

Overcoat.- To be made of Irish frieze [rough, heavy woollen cloth], or imitation of that material of some dark color, to be cut ulster shape, large and full enough to cover all accoutrements; to reach within 10 inches of the ground; to be closed in front with two rows of brass buttons; to be slit well up in rear to admit of the seat in the saddle; to be provided with warm hood of same material as the coat, lined with black Italian cloth, or other suitable material, made to button around the neck, under the collar, and large enough to cover the head; to be worn at night and in inclement weather; and on each hip to have a horizontal slit covered by a flap, this for access to the revolver and ammunition. The coat to be lined throughout.

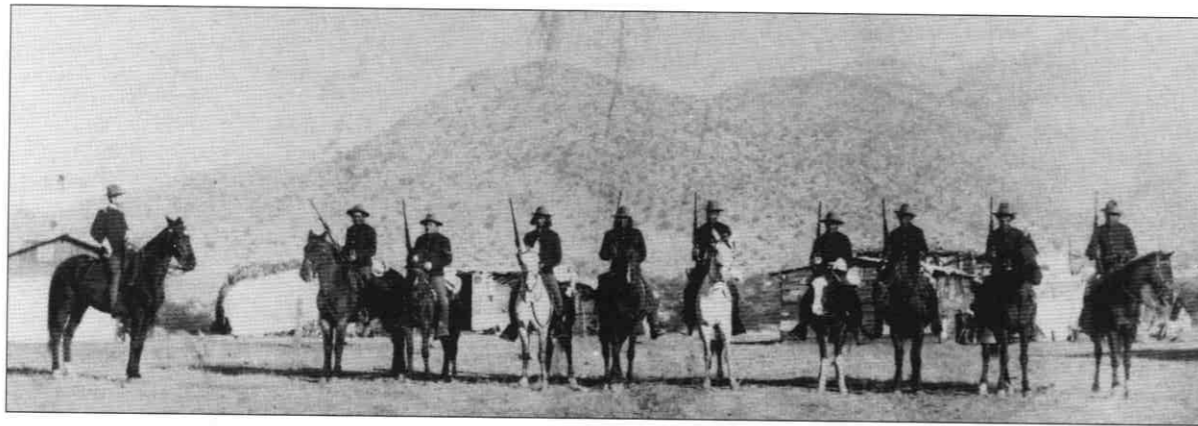
Chevrons and noncommissioned officers' stripes.- To be of white cloth, piped with scarlet.

Trumpet cord.- Of white mohair, with strand of scarlet.

Guidon.- To be cut square, 3 feet 5 inches fly, and 2 feet 3 inches on the lance; to be made of scarlet silk, trimmed with white silk fringe 1½ inches wide; in the center and on both sides of the guidon two crossed arrows; in the upper inter section the words (in semicircle) "U. S. Scouts;" the arrows to be made of white silk, held in place by a needlework embroidery of appropriate width; letters to be embroidery, arrows 18 inches in length, letters 2 inches; in the lower inter section of the arrows there should be the letter of the troop and the name of the department to which it belongs; lance, same as prescribed for cavalry guidon, head and ferrule of nickel plate. This guidon will be used only on occasions of ceremony. There shall also be furnished to each troop a guidon similar in every respect to the foregoing, except that it shall be made of bunting and other suitable material; to be

Lieutenant (later General) John Joseph Pershing's Troop B, Oglala scouts, relax off duty at Pine Ridge on June 30, 1891. The NCOs' chevrons and trouser seam stripes are white trimmed with scarlet, and a number appear to be wearing the black hat also prescribed in 1890. (Denver Public Library, Western History Collection)





Lieutenant Pritchard, at far left, inspects his Apache scouts at Camp Grant in 1898. He is wearing the 1895-pattern officer's blouse. (USAMHI)

used on drills, marches, campaigns, and all other service other than occasions of ceremony. This guidon will be known as the "service guidon."

Dress coat.- Same as prescribed for mounted men, with facings of white piped with scarlet.

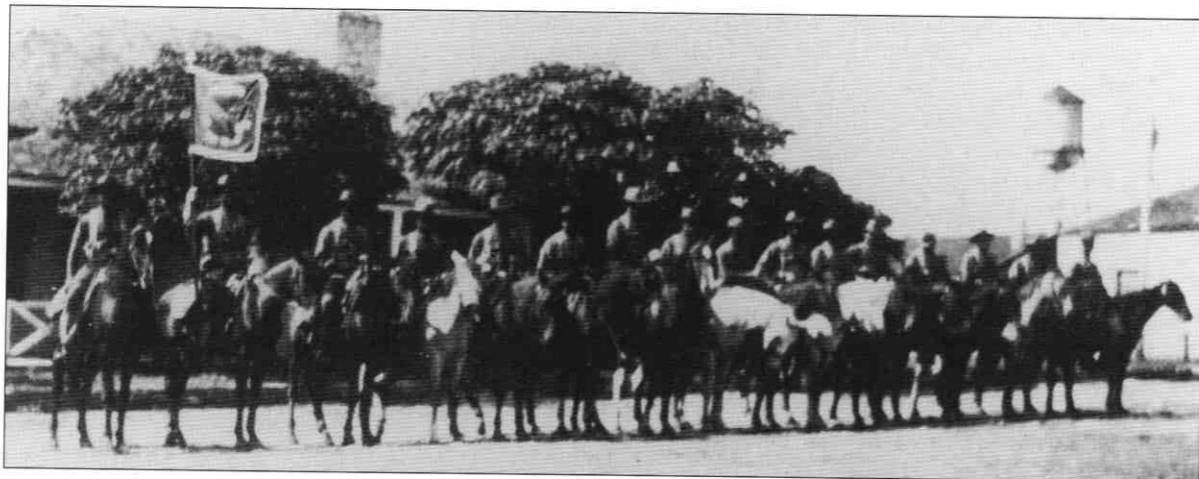
Blouses.- The same as prescribed for enlisted men of all arms.

Trousers.- The same as provided for cavalry (except as prescribed above for noncommissioned officers' stripes).

Helmet.- Same as prescribed for mounted men; cords to be of white mohair with one strand of scarlet; plume to be long enough to reach 6 to 8 inches below the edge of rear visor, of white horsehair, with four strands of scarlet; ornament in front to contain crossed arrows, of white metal.

Much of this clothing was quickly issued. Both Casey's and Robertson's scouts were reported to be wearing "the new Indian scout uniform" by January 1891. Inevitably there was some variation from the prescribed dress, for the *Army and Navy Journal* reported: "Lieutenant Robertson retains the moccasin and leggings for his Crows, while Lieutenant Casey adopts the boot for the Cheyenne."

The choice of a black "fatigue hat" was influenced by Lieutenant Casey, who felt that the "broad cheek bones and masses of hair of the



The Black-Seminole Scouts parade at Fort Clark, Texas, in 1910. They wear the olive drab service uniform adopted in 1905. Their flag bears the designation "U.S. Scouts" and "Dept. of Texas." (USAMHI)



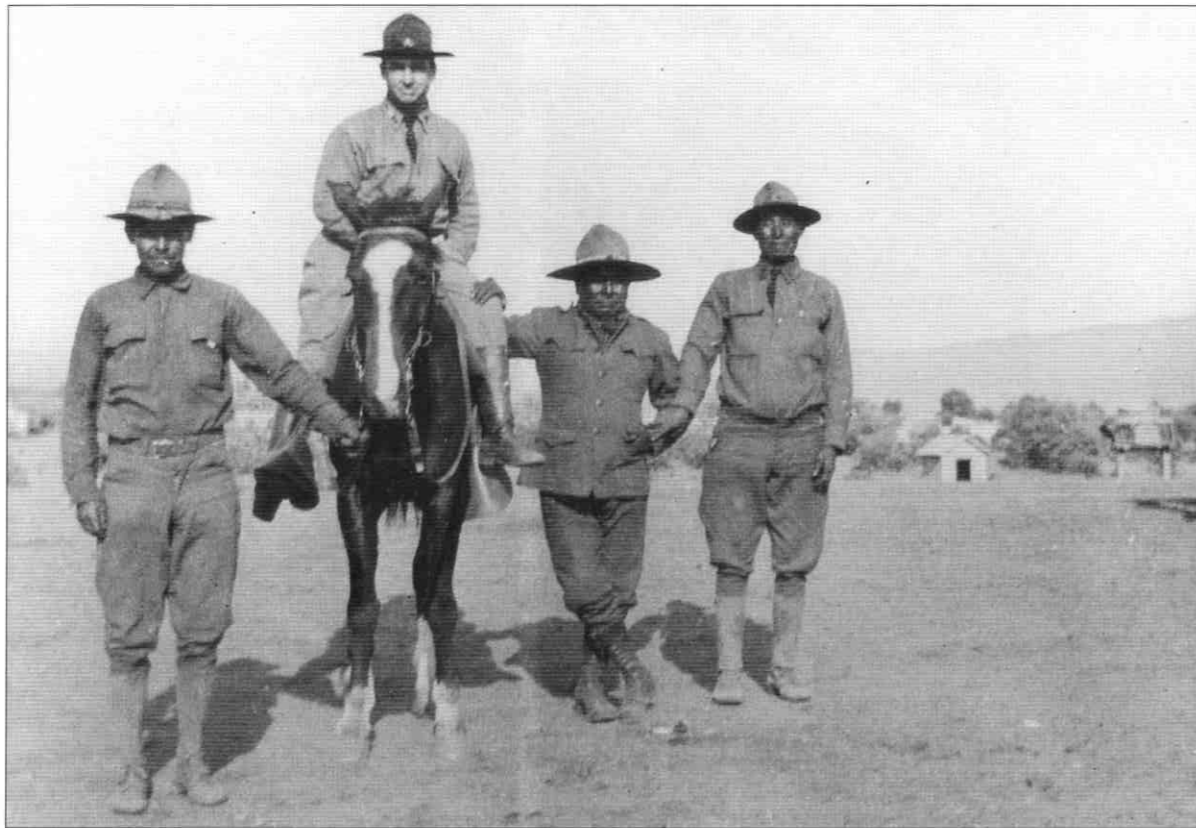
Apache scout Sergeant Sinew Riley sits in a McClellan saddle astride his horse "Peanut" at Fort Huachuca, Arizona, in the 1920s. He wears a 1916-pattern olive drab shirt complete with flaps on the pockets, and 1912-pattern service breeches, over which are canvas cavalry leggings. His chevrons are also 1916-pattern, and possibly white trimmed with scarlet. Headgear consists of a 1911-pattern campaign hat, complete with "Montana Peak." (Fort Huachuca Museum, Fort Huachuca, Arizona)

Indian make a cap a very unbecoming headgear." The "crossed-arrows" device was the first one ever specifically sanctioned by the US Army for wear with the campaign hat. It appears that only small numbers of full dress helmets and uniforms were issued, although examples of helmets and their accessories survive in the Fort Sill Museum in Oklahoma. A noncommissioned officer's full-dress coat surviving in the Smithsonian Museum has gold lace, not white, and chevrons trimmed with scarlet.

The overcoat adopted for Indian scouts was of a distinct pattern, with a sharply pointed hood. The only surviving example of these overcoats is at Fort Sill. Of medium gray cloth, both coat and hood are lined with medium blue material - in spite of the specifications that required a black cloth lining for the hood.

A month after the original guidon with "two crossed arrows" was authorized a modified pattern was in use, which makes it questionable whether the first was ever produced. The second version contained the same general pattern, but instead featured four crossed arrows dissecting a horizontal bow.

In 1902, the US Scouts received a new uniform as part of the regulations introduced on March 3 of that year. For undress, this included the olive-drab mounted-service uniform with a subdued block "USS" insignia pinned on each side of the collar of the service coat and on the front of the campaign hat. For full dress, scouts wore the dark blue cap and sack coat, plus sky blue kersey trousers, as prescribed for all other branches of service, with the block "USS" insignia. For the remainder of their time in service, the dwindling numbers of United States Scouts adopted items of uniform as prescribed for other branches of the US Army, such as the 1911-pattern olive drab shirt and "Montana Peak" campaign hat. Lieutenant Harold B. Wharfield, commanding the scouts at Fort Huachuca, Arizona, in 1918, recalled that they wore cavalry-issue clothing, shoes and leggings.



Apache scouts Andrew Paxton, Charlie Shipp, and Joe Quintero stand by a mounted officer at Fort Apache in 1918. One wears the 1912-pattern service jacket, while the others are in 1916-pattern shirts. The man on the right has a 1905-pattern subdued block "USS" insignia pinned at the front of his hat. (Fort Huachuca Museum, Fort Huachuca, Arizona)

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THE PLATES

A: PIONEER SCOUTS 1846–64

One of the most respected scouts of the pre-Civil War period, Kit Carson (A1) wears a fringed buckskin coat based on that held in the collection of the Santa Fe Trail Museum at Trinidad in Colorado, which is attributed to the legendary scout. Carson holds at the ready his trusty Hawken rifle, as do his comrades. Produced in St. Louis, Missouri, from the 1820s to the mid-1850s by brothers Samuel and Jacob Hawken, these weapons were much prized by the frontiersmen who spearheaded westward expansion. Known at the time as the "mountain rifle," this single-shot, muzzle-loading percussion weapon was renowned for its strength and reliability.

Typical of many scouts of mixed-racial origin, Jim Beckwourth (A2) is fluent in Spanish, French, and several Native American dialects. Tall in stature, his patterned silk coat is modeled on that worn by the black scout in a daguerreotype taken in the 1850s. According to contemporary descriptions, he never donned a hat but wore colored braid twisted into his long hair, which gave him "a picturesque appearance." He carries his rifle in a Crow gun case and wears Crow leggings and moccasins.

Mariano Medina (A3) is dressed in a vulcanized rubber topcoat, which he wears over a citizen's coat. Check, or "hickory," shirts were commonly worn in the mid-19th century, and he combines this with gray leather breeches and a Mexican-style waist sash. These three scouts often served together on the frontier during the 1840s and 1850s.

B: SCOUTS OF THE PLAINS WARS, 1867–76

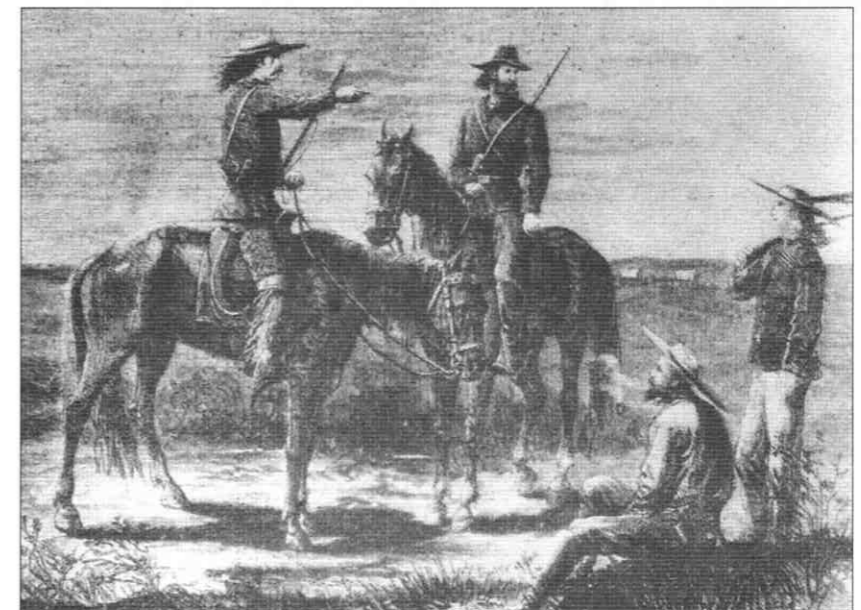
According to an 1868 description by General Custer, Moses Embree Milner, alias "California Joe" (B1), wore a huge sombrero or black slouch hat: "whether asleep or awake." The rest of his winter apparel usually included a double-breasted 1851-pattern mounted soldier's overcoat with large

circular cape. He holds a US Model 1868 Springfield "Trapdoor" rifle and carries a revolver and hunting knife in his waist belt. Like many frontier scouts, "California Joe" preferred to ride a mule, and was very rarely seen without his trusty dog, and pipe, which was always in his mouth.

"Mitch" Bouyer (B2) was a "mixed blood" scout and interpreter who died with Custer at the Little Bighorn. His headgear consists of an unusual fur cap with two filigree brooches attached to the front and ermine tails either side above which are two stuffed blue jays. A lone eagle feather is fastened at the back. He wore a vest made from "the skin of a spotted calf" when he perished at the Little Bighorn. A knife in a Crow painted sheath is suspended around his neck. A blanket decorated with fringes and mother-of-pearl is wrapped around his waist. He is also armed with a Sharps Model 1874 rifle, which some of Custer's scouts are believed to have carried.

Known as Custer's favorite scout, Bloody Knife (B3) also died at the Little Bighorn. He wears an 1874-pattern, 5-button cavalry enlisted man's blouse with collar and cuffs piped in branch service trim, plus corporal's chevrons on each arm. His trousers are also army issue, with 1/2 inch wide cavalry seam stripes. At the time of his death, he is believed to have worn a distinctive abalone, or clamshell, pendant with a single bear claw attached and a star-patterned neckerchief given to him by Custer. His footwear consists of Arikara-pattern moccasins. He holds a lever action, .44 caliber Winchester 1873 rifle with octagonal barrel, sling swivels, and personalized studwork on butt and stock.

The Pawnee Scout (B4) is stripped for battle, and wears a breechclout and leather leggings decorated in Pawnee style with block-stripe beadwork on the front of each leg. Below each knee are loom-woven beaded garters. His black-dyed moccasins are also pure Pawnee. His hair has been "roached" and a scalp lock hangs at the back. He wears a mass of "ball and cone" earrings and bead-wrapped neck-laces, and is armed with a Model 1867 Spencer repeating rifle and tomahawk.



This engraving showing scouts who served with Custer was published in *Harper's Weekly* on June 29, 1867. William Comstock and Edmund Guerrier are mounted at left and center, while Thomas Atkins and Thomas Kincaide are in the right foreground. (Anne S. K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University Library)



Probably taken sometime in 1885, this photo features white scout Tom Horn, who holds a .44 Winchester rifle. Mickey Free sits to his left with chevrons and lozenge on his sleeves denoting the rank of First Sergeant. All of the Indian scouts hold Model 1873 Springfield "Trapdoor" carbines, while two wear 1884-pattern gauntlets. (Wyoming State Archives)

C: CROOK'S SCOUTS, 1872-83

General George Crook depended on the services of scout Al Sieber (C1) during his Arizona Indian campaign. Sieber wears a civilian-pattern pullover shirt and denim jeans with copper rivets and turn-ups. His hat, bandana and boots are also of civilian origin. He is cleaning a Model 1873, caliber .45-70 Springfield "Trapdoor" rifle and carries his ammunition in a "Fair Weather Christian Belt," which was an unofficial piece of equipment modified from a regular army waist belt by troops for field use. Constructed from black bridle leather, this was fastened by a Model 1851 Sword Belt plate and hasp, and held 31 caliber .45 rifle, carbine or revolver cartridges in its leather loops. He has also attached to this belt a Civil War-period Model 1850 cap pouch in which he carries a few extra rounds. Resting on the ground at his feet is an 1871-pattern canteen with Chambers buckle on its strap.

Scout Mickey Free (C2) was particularly effective in Crook's 1883 expedition into the Sierra Madre Mountains. Of Irish-Mexican descent, he spoke Apache, Spanish and English and often worked in company with Al Sieber as an interpreter.

He wears an 1884-pattern, five-button, infantryman's blouse with three exterior pockets. The lozenge above the three chevrons on either sleeve denotes the rank of First Sergeant. His trousers are regulation sky-blue kersey and his hat and shirt are of civilian manufacture. His calfskin gauntlets were authorized for wear by enlisted men of mounted regiments in 1884 and his 1876-pattern knee length boots are turned down at the tops. He holds one of the forty Model 1868, .50 caliber Springfield rifles issued to Company B, Indian Scouts, on May 18, 1875. His accoutrements consist of a canvas 1876-pattern Prairie Belt and 1878-pattern canteen with stenciled canvas cover.

Dutchy, also known as Bakeitzogie or Yellow Coyote (C3), also served under Crook in the Sierra Madre campaign of 1883 and proved his loyalty by shooting a Mexican irregular who gunned down Captain Emmett Crawford, the officer commanding an Apache scout battalion in 1886. Dutchy wears a mixture of civilian and Apache clothing. The latter consists of a breechclout and high-topped moccasins with turned-up disk-toe tied below the knee with strips of cotton. He holds a Model 1873 Springfield carbine and has secured

around his waist two cartridge belts. The upper one is custom made while the lower one is a canvas, 1883-pattern, US Army belt with an "H" plate.

D: THE SHOWMAN SCOUTS, 1872

Several famous guides were gathered together for Ned Buntline's touring stage production, *Scouts of the Prairie*. The buckskin outfits worn by all those involved seemed to echo the clothing of earlier scouts such as Kit Carson and Jim Bridger. William F. Cody, alias "Buffalo Bill" (D1), wears a double-breasted, fur-lined and fur-edged coat with beadwork "epaulettes" and fringe attached to each shoulder. He holds a Model 1873, lever action, .44 caliber Winchester rifle and has a .22 caliber Colt Peacemaker revolver tucked in his belt.

James Butler Hickok, alias "Wild Bill" (D2), astonished audiences with his marksmanship and equestrian skills. Also dressed in buckskin, he takes aim with one of the ivory-handled Model 1851 Navy Colt revolvers presented to him for services as a hunting guide in 1868. A Bowie knife and full-stock Iowa-made percussion rifle make up the rest of his armory.

John Burwell Omohundro, Jr., alias "Texas Jack" (D3), wields a Model 1863 Sharps rifle. Nicknamed "Whirling

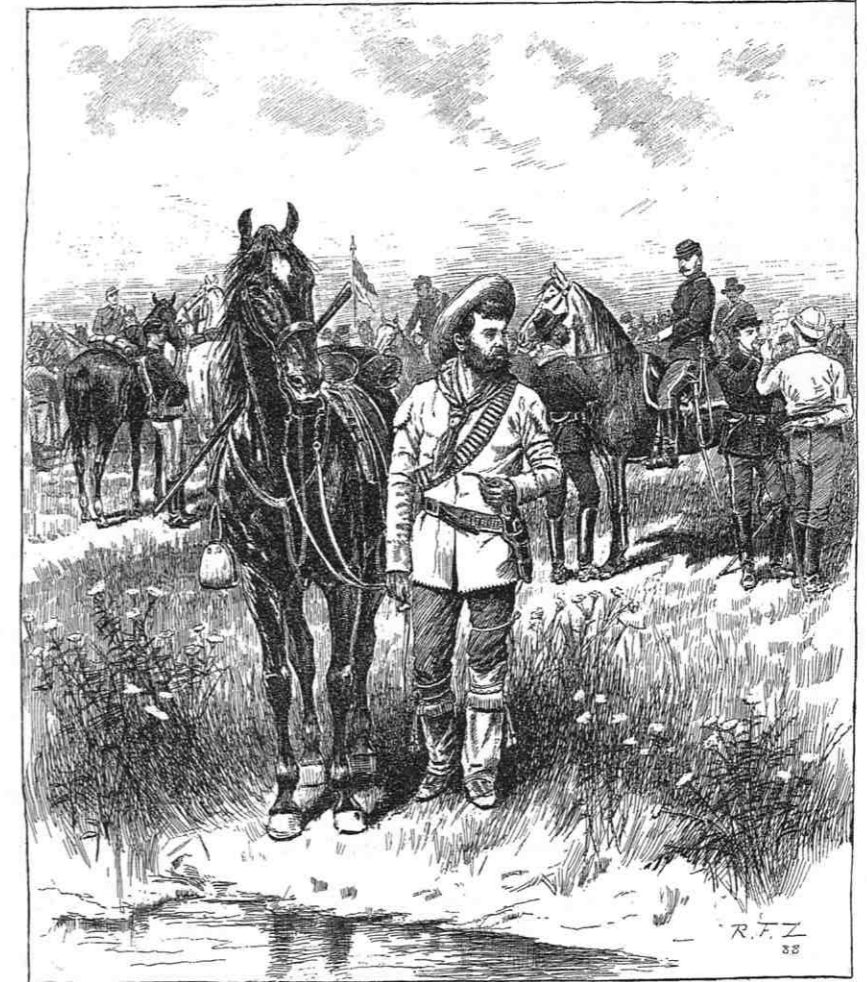
Rope" by the Pawnee because of his prowess with the lasso, he is credited with introducing roping acts to the American stage.

E: SCOUTS OF THE SOUTHWEST 1870-87

Operating on the Texas Plains, the Black-Seminole scout (E1) wears a five-button wool army blouse and 1883-pattern drab campaign hat. He holds a Model 1873 Springfield "Trapdoor" carbine and has an 1885-pattern tan woven carbine cartridge belt, with leather tongue and brass frame buckle, secured around his waist. A similar belt serves as a bandolier, while a cloth covered canteen is suspended over his shoulder via a woven sling.

The White Mountain Apache scout (E2) sports a patterned cloth headband, tied underneath which is a buckskin amulet. His heavily fringed buckskin war shirt is painted with yellow ochre and decorated with brass disks and beadwork. He wears white drawers, over which are high-topped moccasins embellished with further beadwork. He also holds a Springfield "Trapdoor" carbine. Around his waist is an 1885-pattern Mills cartridge belt with stamped brass "H" plate bearing the embossed letters "US" in a stippled oval background.

Indian scouts who gave loyal service were often promoted to the rank of noncommissioned officer. The



Entitled *The Scout*, this engraving by Rufus F. Zogbaum appeared on the front page of *Harper's Weekly* on August 11, 1888. (Anne S. K. Brown Military collection, Brown University Library)



Apache corporal (E3) wears a buckskin war cap decorated with a mixture of owl and eagle feathers. His 1874-pattern, five-button blouse has sky-blue infantry cord trim around the collar and cuffs. Around his waist is a brown leather civilian belt supporting a holstered Schofield .45 caliber revolver worn over the top of a Mills cartridge belt. He grips a Model 1868 Springfield rifle, while slung over his shoulder is an 1878-pattern "Bullseye" canteen. Both Apache scouts wear around their necks copper identity tags, introduced by General Crook to distinguish between reservation and hostile Indians.

F: PLAINS INDIAN SCOUTS, 1879-90

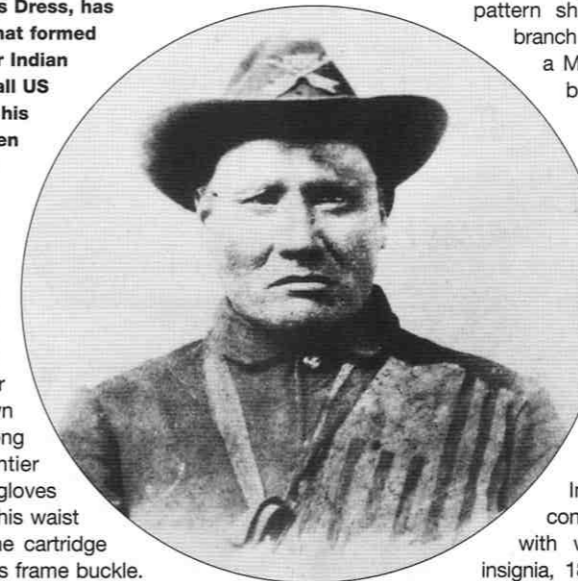
The mounted Cheyenne of "Troop A, US Indian Scouts" (F1)



Lieutenant Charles Taylor's Oglala scouts, officially designated "Troop A, US Indian Scouts," drill in the snow at Pine Ridge in 1890. The enlisted men wear pattern-1879 muskrat fur caps. (Denver Public Library, Western History Collection)

BELOW This company of Crow scouts was photographed near Fort Keogh, Montana, in the early 1880s. They are armed with Model 1873 Springfield "Trapdoor" carbines. The two nearest scouts appear to be wearing tan Mills cartridge belts fastened with "H" plates and with revolver holsters attached. Note the two uniformed scouts in the right foreground. (Denver Public Library, Western History Collection)

This Lakota scout, called Women's Dress, has fastened on his hat the insignia that formed part of the uniform regulations for Indian scouts in 1890. He also has a small US flag attached to the left breast of his blouse. This practice had long been in use with Indian scouts to avoid being mistaken for hostiles. (Wyoming State Archives)



pattern shirt piped with yellow cavalry branch service trim. Around his waist is a Mills cartridge belt with stamped brass, 1880-pattern, "H" plate. Attached to this is an 1881-pattern holster with oval "U.S." stamp just below the flap, from which he has drawn a long-barreled, Colt single-action revolver.

G: INDIAN SCOUTS, 1890-1905

The corporal (G1) standing at "Prime arms" position wears the regulation campaign dress prescribed for Indian scouts in 1890. This consists of a black felt fatigue hat with white metal "crossed-arrows" insignia, 1883-pattern shirt with 3 1/2-inch-deep collar to hold a neckerchief, kersey trousers

with 1/2-inch-wide white seam stripe, piped with scarlet, and 1889-pattern canvas leggings. His canvas cartridge belt is of Mills-pattern with C-closure and brass wire keepers. He holds a Model 1890 Springfield carbine.

The sergeant (G2) in regulation full-dress wears an 1881-pattern helmet complete with mohair cord and horsehair plume. His 1888-pattern, nine-button, dress coat has facings as prescribed for Indian scouts, although his chevrons are gold lace, not white. His kersey trousers have one-inch-wide seam stripes and are worn with 1887-pattern high boots. He holds a noncommissioned officer's sword, which he has detached from the frog on his waist belt.

The Indian scout (G3) wears the 1902-pattern khaki service uniform consisting of campaign hat with hat cord and subdued block "USS" insignia pinned at the front of its crown, cotton service coat with insignia on collar, and cotton trousers. His cartridge belt is of 1903-pattern with Model 1905 bayonet attached. He holds a Model 1903 .30 caliber, Springfield bolt-action rifle.

H: INSIGNIA AND GUIDON 1890-1902

H1: Different variations of 1890-pattern hat cords. H2: 1890-pattern campaign hat insignia. H3: Silk company guidon carried by Lieutenant Charles Taylor's Oglala scouts. H4: Detail of cord worn on dress helmet. H5: "Crossed arrows" insignia worn on collar of the fatigue blouse. H6: Dress helmet side button. H7: Plate for dress helmet with German silver "crossed arrows" overlay attached.



These two Apache scouts display examples of the uniform adopted for Indian scouts in 1890. Their NCOs' chevrons and trouser seam stripes are white trimmed with scarlet. The overcoat worn by the man at right is not that prescribed for Indian scouts, but is of the pattern adopted for enlisted infantry in the mid-1880s, with the cape removed. The First Sergeant at left, identified as Cut-Mouth, has a Medal of Honor pinned to his blouse. He is not listed as having been given this award. (USAMHI)

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