

BUFFALO SOLDIERS IN ARIZONA

Shortly after the Civil War on July 28th, 1866, Negroes were allowed to serve in the regular peacetime army. Six regiments, 2 of Cavalry and 4 of infantry were authorized. These regiments campaigned on the Great Plains along the Rio Grande, New Mexico,



Texas, Arizona, Colorado and finally in the Dakotas for twenty-six years.

The Ninth (9th) and Tenth (10th) U.S. Cavalry Regiments' duties included guarding the mail, escorting and/or guarding stage coaches, cattle drives, railroads crews and surveyors. They built roads and telegraph lines, mapped and explored and provided security for the coming westward expansion.

Those who enlisted for the minimum of 5 years received the basic troopers' pay of thirteen dollars per month, plus quarters, meals and uniforms. Most started with substandard uniforms and equipment from the

Civil War. New recruits used cotton compressors as barracks, ate boiled beef, hash, beans, corn bread and occasionally sweet potatoes, molasses and coffee, and were not much better off than what they had come from.

The Ninth and Tenth Cavalry began a journey in spring and summer of 1867 that led them to two decades of continuous service on the Great Plains and in the mountains and deserts of New Mexico and Arizona. Upon arriving at Fort Stockton and Davis in Texas, they found that the forts were in disrepair and required complete rebuilding. Work details were put together to repair the forts.

In the 1880's the majority of the Apaches were driven into reservations in Arizona at San Carlos and Fort Apache, but renegades still remained at large. General Crook returned to Arizona and restored peace after serious outbreaks in 1881-82, but 500 Chiricahua and Warm Springs outlaws, including Nana, himself, were hiding in the mountains of northern Mexico, ready to launch raids into Arizona.

In March of 1883 a small band of these Indians under Chatto raided southern New Mexico and Arizona and looted and burned many ranches. They killed 25 people, and captured 1 young boy in just 6 days. Then the Apaches disappeared across the border, leaving citizens and troops in a state of shock.

General Crook quickly reacted and gathered a powerful force along with a large body of Apache scouts to cross into Mexico and invade the Sierra Madres. In a 3 week campaign, Crook forced the surrender of the Chiricahua renegades. Out of this Chatto, Geronimo, Nachez, Loco, Benito, Mangus and their followers, as well as Nana and his Warm Springs Apaches, agreed to march to the San Carlos reservation where they were to remain under control of the army.

Lieutenant Colonel Wade, Commander of Fort Apache, and more than half the companies of the Tenth Cavalry were sent to arrest and transport more than 400 Apache men, women and children to Holbrook, Arizona, where they were entrained to Fort Marion.

One hostile chief, Mangus and his band remained at large after separating from Geronimo. On September 18th a detachment of H Company found a trail in the White Mountains, and a pursuit of more than 40 miles over rough terrain led to a small party of Apaches. After a running 15 mile fight the troopers cornered the Indians and forced their surrender. This was the last holdout-- Mangus, 2 warriors, 8 women and children. Arizona was finally at peace.