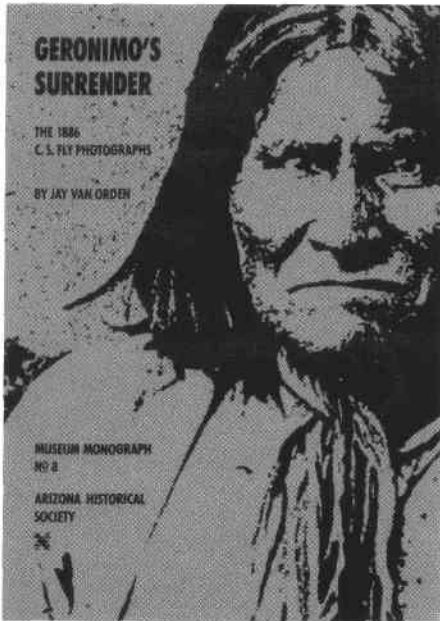


Guest Speaker Jay Van Orden

Jay Van Orden, Director of the Field Services Division of the Arizona Historical Society was a speaker at our Friday afternoon session. Jay was open to many questions during his hours in our display room where he displayed Geronimo's rifle. Jay authorized us to reproduce the Society's museum monograph #8 publication entitled "Geronimo's Surrender," which follows.



Front Cover
GERONIMO'S SURRENDER



Geronimo's Rifle

ON THE COVER: Geronimo. From a photograph
by A. Frank Randall, 1884. *Courtesy Arizona Historical
Society, Tucson.*

Second Printing, 1994

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GERONIMO'S SURRENDER

ON MARCH 25 AND 26, 1886, Camillus Sidney Fly of Tombstone, Arizona, recorded a first—and a last: the only known photographs of American Indians as enemy in the field. Taken at Cañon de los Embudos (Canyon of the Funnels), Mexico, his photographs of Geronimo, Naiche, and their Chiricahua Apache followers in camp and negotiating with General George Crook are unique. Remarkably, Fly's singular achievement has never been fully appreciated or understood by students of either southwestern history or the history of photography. The entire original series of photographs has never before been published, many of the views have been misidentified, and no known single collection contains the complete set.¹

The U.S. army had been at war with this group of Chiricahuas, who numbered around 110 at the time of the talks, for nearly a year. On May 17, 1885, the war leader, Geronimo; Naiche, a chief; and their supporting bands had left Turkey Creek on the White Mountain Reservation. Ever since, the army had been on the trail of these, the last American Indians at war with the United States, on both sides of the Mexican border. To

the white settlers in Arizona, the supremely resilient and determined Geronimo personified the Apache problem. Civilian authorities called for the death of the fifty-eight-year-old Indian in order to remove the remaining block to the march of civilization in the Southwest. The military hoped to achieve the same objective through the surrender and temporary imprisonment of all the Chiricahuas.

On January 11, 1886, the major thrust of the army's campaign came to a humiliating end in the Sierra Madre of Sonora. Mexican irregular militia, called "S. P.s" for *Seguridad Publicos*, who were also in pursuit of Geronimo's people, had come upon Captain Emmet Crawford's forces, which at this time consisted of both Western and Chiricahua Apache scouts. Crawford died when he attempted to stop a gun battle with the militia.²

Lieutenant Marion Maus assumed command and, after dealing with the Mexicans, handled negotiations with Geronimo. Before and after the unexpected battle, Geronimo had sent two women to the Americans bearing messages about the possibility of negotiations and an offer to join forces against the Mexican irregulars. Maus declined the assistance, but he did accept Geronimo's surprise offer to meet with General Crook. Geronimo called the shots: the place, Cañon de los Embudos, in Mexico near the Arizona border; the time, two moons hence and upon the sending of Apache smoke signals; no regular soldiers could be present; and the army must camp on a mesa below his rancheria, where the Chiricahuas could keep a wary eye on them. A ravine—which the military must not cross—would separate the two opposing forces.³

Geronimo and the others certainly intended to surrender once they had negotiated for the best terms. Otherwise, they would not have brought their women and children to the encampment. Geronimo sent back with Lieutenant Maus the great old warrior Nana, his own wife and child, and nine others as evidence of the Chiricahuas' good faith. The surrender would be Geronimo's third; for Apache agent John P. Clum, who had captured Geronimo in 1877, it would be the second. It promised the waiting nation an end to 350 years of Indians fighting for their independence.⁴

C. S. Fly understood the importance of the upcoming negotiations. He had come to Arizona in December 1879 and set up shop in Tombstone. He often traveled, on or about payday, to military posts, temporary field camps, and water holes guarded by soldiers to take their portraits at the rate of 35 cents each. This itinerant business gave him a source of income, and he came to know many of the army officers and enlisted men, who liked and respected the photographer. Fly probably found out about the upcoming meeting with Geronimo from Viola Slaughter, wife of prominent area rancher John Slaughter. She was in Tombstone when her husband wrote her from their San Bernardino ranch of the impending conference. Crook denied Mrs. Slaughter and her friend Emma Ferrington permission to witness the event, but Viola's younger brother, fourteen-year-old Jimmy Howell, tagged along well behind the general's party. On March 20, 1886, Fly and his assistant, Mr. Chase, loaded their gear onto pack animals and set out to catch up with the soldiers at their camp on Silver Creek. General Crook, for unknown reasons, granted Fly permission to "follow along in the wake of the column."⁵

En route to Embudos on the morning of March 25, Kayetenna (Chiricahua) and Alchesay (Western Apache), whom Crook had brought along to act as peace emissaries, chased after a herd of peccaries and shot some for sport. General Crook, who had just felled an antelope nearby, heard the shots and with his aide, Captain Cyrus V. Roberts, rode to the sound of gunfire. To their surprise, they "ran right into Geronimo and Natches and a few bucks." The hostiles guided the Americans to the area of Lieutenant Maus's camp at around 11 A.M.⁶

Upon Crook's arrival in the packers' kitchen, on the right bank of the Rio Embudos, Tommy Blair, who had planned a special dinner of wild turkey, discovered that the carcass had spoiled. He quickly changed the menu. When Geronimo, Natche, and twenty-four hostiles unexpectedly joined Crook after lunch, he decided to commence negotiations then and there. "Soon our camp was alive with hostiles and scouts, all anxious to hear what Geronimo would have to say," wrote Henry W. Daly, one of three chief packers present.⁷

But not everyone was interested in bringing about the Chiricahuas' surrender. Charles Frederick Tribolet, an army beef contractor and "scoundrel," had arrived long before Crook's party and set up his "whiskey mill." He sold liquor to the officers and Indians alike until the talks commenced, when Maus banished him from the meeting. Over the next three days of negotiations, however, Tribolet continued to sneak in mescal and whiskey and peddle the alcohol to the hostiles.⁸

The talks concluded on March 27. Crook, acting within his authority, agreed with Geronimo, Naiche, Chihuahua, and the other Chiricahua principals on three provisions for the Apaches' surrender: the Chiricahuas were to be prisoners of war; they would be sent east for two years; and they would be allowed to return to Arizona after their term of exile. Unfortunately, President Grover Cleveland disapproved and ordered Philip Sheridan, the commanding general of the army, to send the following message to Crook on March 30:

The President cannot assent to the surrender of the hostiles on the terms of their imprisonment East for two years, with the understanding of their return to the reservation. He instructs you to enter again into negotiations on the terms of their unconditional surrender, only sparing their lives. In the meantime, and on the receipt of this order, you are directed to take every precaution against the escape of the hostiles, which must not be allowed under any circumstances. You must make at once such disposition of your troops as will insure against further hostilities, by completing the destruction of the hostiles, unless these terms are acceded to.⁹

Within hours of the President's reversal, Geronimo, Naiche, and thirty-two others had a change of heart as well, and they returned to a life of freedom in the mountains of Mexico. The remaining seventy-six Chiricahuas, still armed, marched north under the supervision of Lieutenant Samson Faison. As far as they knew, the original terms of their surrender remained in effect. They arrived at Fort Bowie at noon on April 2. Over their five-day stay, they roamed freely around the post, purchasing all manner of clothing and gear in preparation for their trip to Florida. They retained their weapons all the way to Bowie railroad station, eleven miles north of the fort. There, on

April 7, 1886, they boarded a train and were carried off into twenty-eight years of imprisonment.¹⁰

On April 11, Crook also boarded a train. Knowing that he no longer had the confidence of his superiors, he resigned as military commander in Arizona and was reassigned to the Department of the Platte.

Fly had developed his series of Embudos peace conference photographs by the end of the first two days of negotiations. They consist of nineteen views of seventeen different scenes, which he numbered 170 to 188. Numbers 187 and 188 are enlarged details of other photographs in the set, and there are two variations (not shown here) of numbers 171 and 176, each with minor composition differences.

The consecutively numbered set does not represent the order in which Fly photographed his subjects. He took the images of the first conference, and the army camp, on March 25, then photographed the hostiles and their camp the next day. He took no photographs of the second and third day's conferences. The series offered for sale contained only one candid view, number 186. It was Fly's first shot, taken within an hour or two of General Crook's arrival. Indeed, he entitled it "An Instantaneous View of the Council between General Crook and Geronimo." Immediately after the conclusion of the first meeting, he asked for and received the cooperation of his subjects in order to attempt a better "artistic effect."¹¹

Thereafter, Fly acted like a wedding photographer, ordering his subjects to line up or move this way or that to obtain a preconceived composition. Captain John G. Bourke, one of General Crook's aides, described how Fly, with such "nerve" that would have reflected undying glory on a Chicago drummer, coolly asked 'Geronimo' and the warriors with him to change positions, and turn their heads or faces, to improve the negative." Bourke also said Fly "was a d——d fool for going into the camp and that he'd never come out."¹²

Fly took at least one image that he never offered for sale, and he may have "let the slide drop" on others that he later found superfluous. However, it is unlikely that there are other unused images. If they exist, they were not a part of his sales series and would be nearly identical to a member of the series

or have a minor detracting element, perhaps the head of a horse in an awkward position. (These hypothetical images are called safety shots today and are discarded or unused.) This is the case with one photograph: a "B" version of number 171 resides in the collection of the Arizona Historical Society in Tucson.

Unfortunately, one view of the series prepared for sale is still missing. No one has properly identified or located number 185. Doubtless, it existed. Perhaps because of its similarity to another view and its comparative lack of drama, it generated few sales, or possibly the glass-plate negative broke shortly after sales started—in either case, no known copies have survived to the present.¹³

Fly hoped to record the final surrender of Geronimo and the remainder of the Bronco Apaches. He intended these views to be the coup that would bring him national recognition and considerable wealth. His hopes were well founded, for President Cleveland was holding the telegraph line open to Fort Bowie for General Crook's reports. George W. Parsons, a Tombstone ne'er-do-well and friend of Fly's, said, "He'll make money." Unfortunately, Fly missed this golden opportunity.¹⁴

Geronimo and Naiche's group remained at war with the United States for five more months, until they finally met with Lieutenant Charles Gatewood in late August. On September 4, 1886, the Chiricahuas chose family over freedom and agreed to surrender (for Geronimo, the fourth and final time) at Skeleton Canyon, just north of the American border. Placed in captivity, they boarded immigrant sleeper cars at the town of Bowie on September 8 and were deported to Florida.¹⁶

Although Fly did benefit greatly from his photographs of the March talks, Geronimo's ensuing turnabout and his return to a state of war robbed Fly of the dramatic claim to have photographed the final scenes of America's Indians at war. Nonetheless, *Harper's Weekly* did run an illustrated front-page feature on April 24, 1886. Inside, it published six of Fly's Embudos series: "The photographs of the Apache War, reproduced in this issue of Harper's Weekly, are from negatives taken by C. S. Fly, and are the only photographs ever taken of a hostile camp before surrender."¹⁵

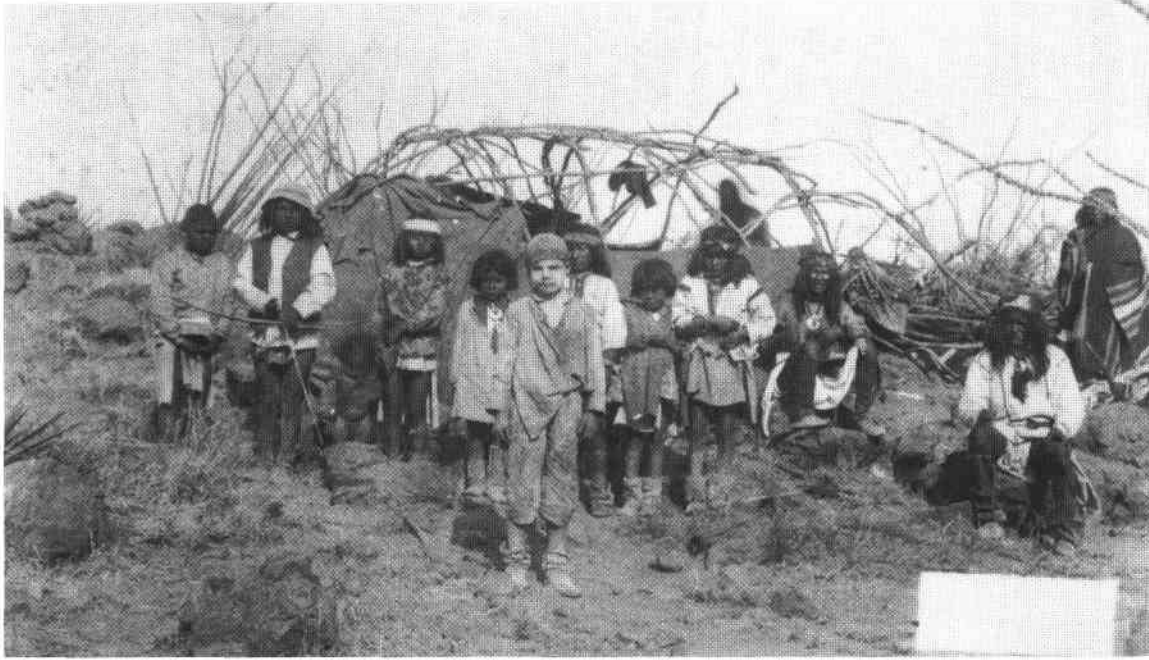
Harper's Weekly failed to grasp the scope of Fly's work when it published just six of his Embudos photographs and mentioned only twelve of the series of nineteen. Mary ("Mollie") Goodrich Fly, his wife and long-time assistant, also misunderstood the significance of her husband's work. After Fly's death in 1901, she published a book entitled *Geronimo—The Apache Chief*, which contained photos that had nothing to do with the Apaches, omitted many that Fly did take of Geronimo and his band at Cañon de los Embudos, and did not allude to their uniqueness.¹⁷

In his more than twenty years in the photography business, C. S. Fly stayed behind, not in front, of the camera, for there are no known portraits of him. He left no vital comments on the subject at hand. Although he preserved the scenes at Cañon de los Embudos, he recorded the events only on glass, not on paper.

The value of Fly's photographic series is twofold. Individually, the photos are an unadulterated illustration of the clothing, weapons, and gear that the warriors and their families used while following their traditional lives as a nomadic people at war. Collectively, they show the last American Indians to live as free people, their basic culture and spirit as yet unconquered by an alien power. Six months after the talks at Cañon de los Embudos, Fly's photos were the only pictorial record that remained of that powerful spirit.

THE PHOTOGRAPHS

Identification of the people in the photographs has been a collective, comparative effort drawn from published reports, unpublished sources, interviews by the author with descendants of the Chiricahuas, the backs of card prints, and primarily, from Allan Radbourne of Somerset, England, who describes himself as an “enthusiastic student of these matters,” to say the least. The captions in quotation marks are C. S. Fly’s titles for the photographs.



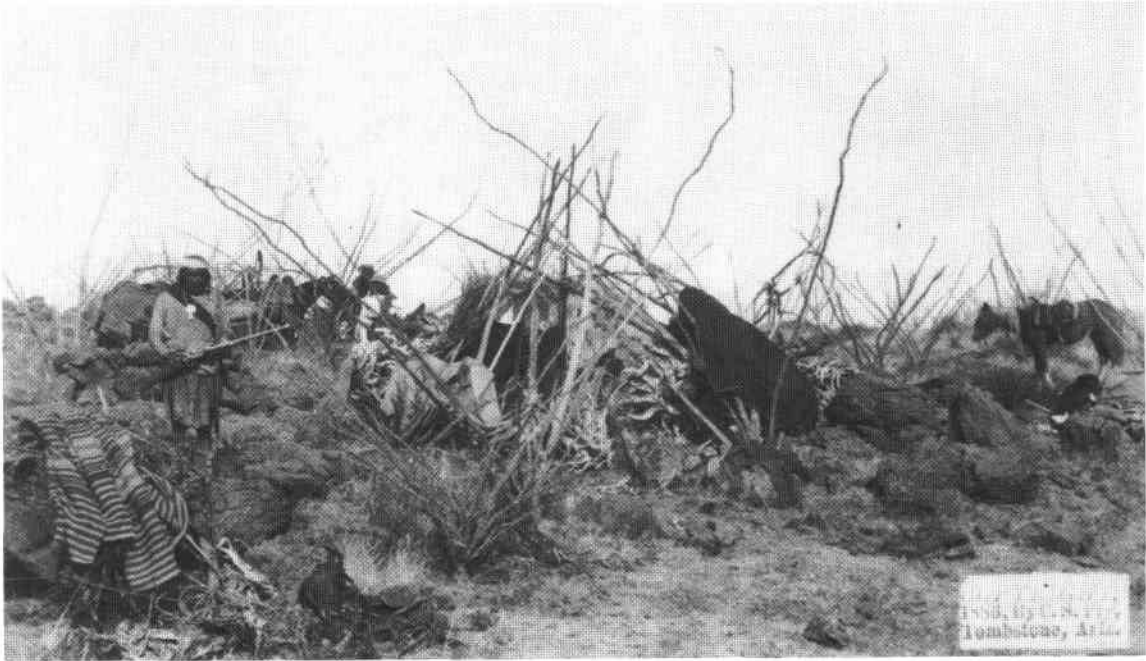
*“No. 170—The Captive White Boy, Santiago McKinn.” Santiago stands front and center. The second boy from the left is Garditha, or Kact-hah. The Chiricahuas captured McKinn from his home near Mimbres, New Mexico Territory, in September of 1885. Well after the conference at Embudos, several purchasers of this view, apparently feeling that Fly’s caption was inadequate, wrote on the back of their prints that the Apaches had frightened and teased the boy and poked him “with the spiny limbs of the ocotilla [sic].” However, John G. Bourke had observed the captive and Apache boys “romping freely and carelessly. . . . [Santiago] seemed to be kindly treated by his young companions . . . he was disinclined to say much.” “He has learned the Apache language and talks it exclusively,” reported war correspondent Charles Lummis, who met Santiago (James) at Fort Bowie on April 3. “He has become so absolutely Indianized. . . . When told that he was to be taken back to his father and mother, Santiago began boo-hooing with great vigor. He said in Apache . . . he didn’t want to go back—he wanted always to stay with the Indians.” [Bourke, *On the Border*, p. 477; Lummis, *Dateline Fort Bowie*, p. 57.]*



"No. 171—Geronimo and Natches mounted, Natches with hat on; son of Geronimo standing by his side. This group photograph was taken by special request of Geronimo." It was the last image in this series. From left to right are Perico, Geronimo, Naiche, and Tsisnah. Crook wrote that the hostiles, "though tired of the constant hounding of the campaign, in superb physical condition, armed to the teeth, and with an abundance of ammunition," were suspicious and at the same time confident and self-reliant and as "fierce as so many tigers." The tailored clothes and the saddles are American style, as are the weapons, with an abundance of .45 caliber cartridges for U.S. rifles, carbines, and revolvers. When he and Fly toured the Indian camp on the twenty-sixth, Bourke watched an Apache "hammering a Mexican dollar between two stones, and when he had reduced it to the proper fineness he began to stamp and incise ornamentation upon it with a sharp-pointed knife and a stone for a hammer." Perico, the warrior on the left, pulled his whiskers in the typical fashion with the tweezers attached to his beaded necklace. [Crook quoted in Thrapp, Conquest of Apacheia, p. 343; Bourke, On the Border, p. 477.]



"No. 172—Group in Hostile Camp under Natches." Chief packer Henry W. Daly wrote, "On the night of their arrival, pandemonium reigned in their camp as a result of their indulgence in this vile liquor obtained from Tribolett [sic]." At the end of the council, Chihuahua urged Crook to prevent his people from getting alcohol in the future. George W. Parsons wrote in his diary, "C. Tribolett should meet his God quickly . . . and should be killed . . . I didn't think he was quite so bad." What was pandemonium to Daly was, to a large extent, ceremony to the Chiricahuas. Dances lasted up to four days and sometimes included shooting. The boys seen here holding rifles could and did fight, but became warriors only after they had undergone certain tests and ceremonies. The blankets covering the wickiup are standard Army-issue wool. In a full eight-by-ten-inch view, the short dark line at center left is clearly a government carbine barrel held by another warrior sitting on a rock. Tissnolthos and Jozhe stand together at the left; Chappo is in the back row on the right, his face partly obscured; Garditha is at the left in the line of three boys. [Daly, "The Geronimo Campaign," p. 94; Chafin, "The West of George Whitwell Parsons," p. 31; Berle Kanseah interview with author, Cañon de los Embudos, October, 1988. Berle and his brother, Arylis, are grandsons of Jasper Kanseah, seen in several of these views.]



*"No. 173—Geronimo's Camp with Sentinel." Garditha is holding the horse. Bourke, Tucson Mayor Charles Strauss, a packer named Carlisle, interpreter Jose Maria, Fly, and Chase "walked over to the rancheria of the Chiricahuas. 'Geronimo' was already up and engaged in an earnest conversation with 'Ka-e-ten-na' and nearly all his warriors. We moved from one 'jacal' to another, all being constructed alike of the stalks of the Spanish bayonet and mescal and amole, covered with the shreds of blankets, canvas, and other textiles." [Bourke, *On the Border*, p. 476.]*



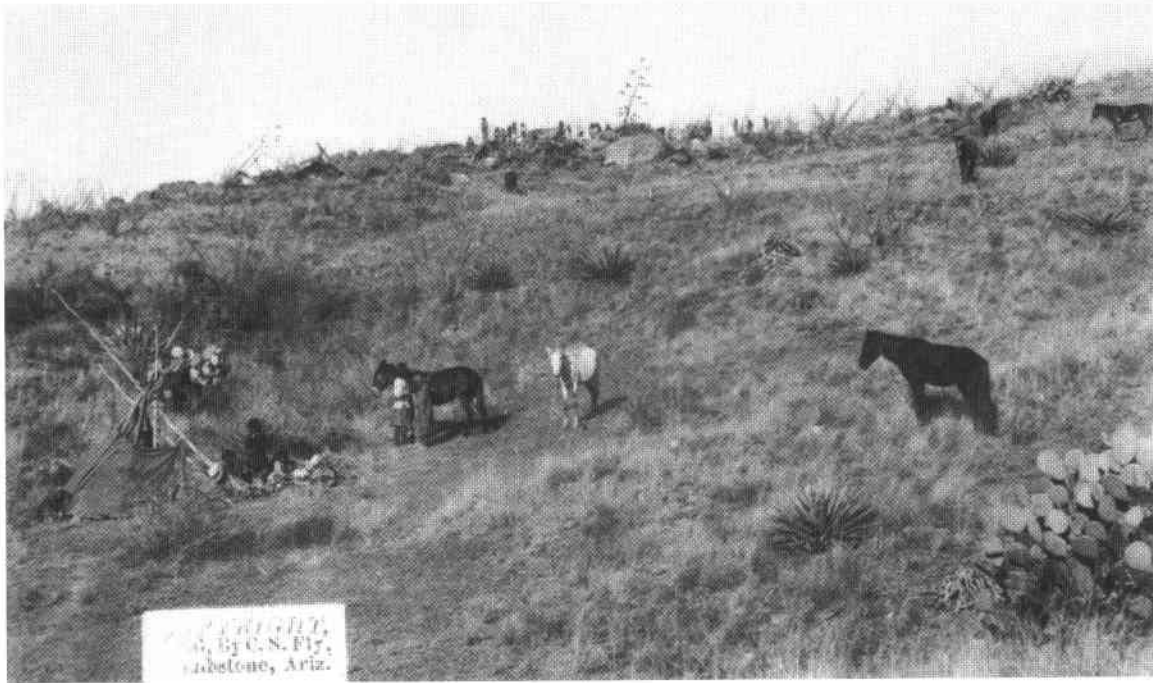
"No. 174—Geronimo, Son and two picked Braves. Man with long rifle Geronimo." Daly echoed other contemporary descriptions with his: "Cossacks of the Sierra Madres." Geronimo is holding a Model 1873 Springfield Infantry Rifle with a ramrod and cleaning stick. The other warriors pictured are, from left to right, Yanozha, whose business tie has a Windsor knot; Chappo, one of Geronimo's sons; and Yanozha's half-brother, Fun, who has a small beaded buckskin pouch on a thong around his neck. "Nearly every one wore 'medicine' of some kind," noted Bourke. Bags like Fun's contained such items as "the feathers of the red-bird or of the woodpecker, the head of a quail, the claws of a prairie dog, or silver crescents." The medicine, which was a source of power, might also be strung together or attached to the buckskin pouches. [Daly, "The Geronimo Campaign," p. 99; Bourke, On the Border, p. 477.]



"No. 175—General Crook, Staff, Interpreters and Packers." At least one of the men in the group was a member of the Society of Arizona Pioneers (today's Arizona Historical Society): Tucson Mayor Strauss, who ran a sutler's store at the Silver Creek Camp. "Immediately back of our camp, a small rise gave a commanding view of the country in the direction of San Bernardino and Contrabandista Springs. . . . Geronimo had especially selected this place for his talk with the General, with a view of guarding against surprises, as he could watch the approach of troops from any direction." Standing in the back row are, seventh from left, Strauss; ninth from left, Dr. Thomas B. Davis, Lieutenants Shipp and Faison, Captain Bourke, Jose Maria "Ramon" Montoya, and Al Sieber; fifth from right, Daly; third from right, Thomas Moore; at far right, Tommy Blair. In the front row, starting with the man fifth from the left, are Tom Horn, Maus, Captain Roberts and his son Charley, Crook, Antonio Besias, Jose Maria Vasquez, Diaz, and Concepcion Aguirre. Chief packer Moore served Crook's party at Embudos and had these three tents pitched for Crook, Bourke, and the Robertses. [Daly, "The Geronimo Campaign," p. 93.]



*"No. 176—Council between General Crook and Geronimo." This photo, or a nearly identical "B" version, was the second image Fly took. The improvement of the artistic effect over the first shot, No. 186, is apparent. "Mr. Fly . . . saw his opportunity, and improved it fully," wrote Bourke. "None of them seemed to mind him in the least except 'Chihuahua,' who kept dodging behind a tree, but at last was caught by the dropping of the slide." Fly took photographs of neither the brief private meeting between Crook and the principal hostiles on March 26 (after which Crook wired Sheridan and Cleveland, "things looking better today") nor the third meeting on March 27, an open affair that took place fifty yards above the first meeting site. Seated, from left to right: Shipp; Faison; Captain Roberts; an unknown Apache behind this trio; Geronimo; Cayetano and an unidentified Chiricahua behind Geronimo; Aguirre; Nana; Chiricahua scout Sgt. Major Noche; Maus; interpreters Vasquez and Besias; Montoya; Bourke; Crook; and Charley Roberts. Behind the interpreters are Daly and Chihuahua, a Chiricahua warrior. Seated behind Crook are an unidentified Chiricahua, Yanozha, and Strauss. [Bourke, *On the Border*, p. 476.] Standing are two unidentified Chiricahuas; Tommy Blair with "Apache," Crook's mule; Fun; Ulzana, Chihuahua's brother; Laziyah; and two other Chiricahuas.*



"No. 177—Birds-Eye view of Hostile Camp." "I found the hostiles encamped on a rocky hill," Crook reported, "surrounded by ravines and cañons through which they could escape to the higher peaks behind, in the event of an attack." The Indians surrendered on March 27. "That night," remembered Daly, "pandemonium again reigned in the camp of the Chiricahuas, and the Apache yell could be frequently heard and an occasional shot was fired. Later, these shots became more frequent, and were directed over the officers' tents." The furor was probably the ceremonial war dance. Barely visible in the distance, wearing a broad-brimmed hat, is Vasquez. [Crook's report quoted in Lummi's, Dateline Fort Bowie, p. 196; Daly, "The Geronimo Campaign," p. 101.]



*"No. 178—Geronimo and his Warriors." Thirteen-year-old Jasper Kanseah, tenth from left and holding an 1873 Springfield rifle, fled south with his uncle, Geronimo, and thirty-five others after the negotiations. The soldiers noted the physical condition of the warriors. Bourke wrote that "every muscle was perfect in development and hard as adamant, and one of the young men . . . was as finely muscled as a Greek statue." Lieutenant Wesley Shipp added: "No wonder our soldiers could not catch people like these. If our little army of 25,000 were composed of such men, and animated by the proper spirit, it would be unconquerable by the best army now existing in Europe." Second from left is Biyaneta; third is Cattle; fifth, Yanozha; sixth, Fun; eighth, Laziyah; twelfth, Perico; on horse, Naiche; in front of horse, Geronimo; fourth to Geronimo's left, Tsisinah. [Bourke, *On the Border*, p. 477; Shipp, "Captain Crawford's Last Expedition," p. 348.]*



"No. 179—Geronimo and his Warriors." Standing are Laziyah, unknown, Tsisnah, Geronimo, and Naiche. President Cleveland and General Sheridan failed to realize that Crook lacked military superiority. Though the opposing forces possessed virtually equal amounts of arms, ammunition, transportation, and ability, the Indians held the higher ground. Crook had about ninety Apache scouts in his camp to the hostiles' 110 men, women, and children. He considered the latter two groups combatants should he try to capture them, as his superiors so instructed him to do on March 30 should the Chiricahuas fail to surrender unconditionally. "The friendly Indians said that the slightest circumstance which might look suspicious would be a signal for firing to begin, that the hostiles would kill all they could, and scatter in the mountains," wrote Crook. "Even after they surrendered to me, they did not relax their vigilance. They kept mounted and constantly on the watch . . . and, had I desired it, it would have been an absolute impossibility to seize more than half a dozen of them. . . . and our breach of faith would have prevented forever any possibility of any settlement with them." The Perilla (Little Pear) Mountains, the southern tip of the Chiricahua Mountains, can be seen in the background. [Crook's report quoted in Lummis, Dateline Fort Bowie, p. 197.]



*"No. 180—Geronimo and his Warriors." Geronimo is holding the all-important ceremonial dance drum in one hand, its looped drumstick in the other. The drum was a kettle with cloth stretched tightly over it. Laziyah, far left in the front row, is wearing a special cap, described by a Western Apache as "a medicine cap for horses . . . made of horsehide tanned soft. It had two kinds of peaks that stood up on each side." Other Apaches called it a ceremonial hat for protection in war, or a hat "worn by only one man on the warpath, the head chief." Naiche, at far right, resembles a commanding officer and has a telescope around his shoulder. Fun is third from left; Perico is eighth; tenth is Tsisnah. [MS 17, Folders 40 and 41, Grenville Goodwin Collection, Arizona State Museum, Tucson; Morris E. Opler, *An Apache Lifeway: The Economic, Social, and Religious Institutions of the Chiricahua Indians* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1941), p. 311.]*