

THE ARMY AND THE APACHE

An Open Letter

4933 Jurupa Ave., Riverside, Calif.

October 14, 1931

The Editor,
The Arizona Historical Review.

Dear Madam:

In the Arizona Historical Review for April, July and October, 1931, appear articles—under the caption of "Apache Misrule"—by Mr. John P. Clum, whose purpose seems to be to glorify the Apache, and censure the army.

With considerable hesitancy, it is desired in the paragraphs following to controvert some of the substance matter of these articles. I say with considerable hesitancy, because of a dislike to enter into a difference (which this letter will in all likelihood start) where little, if anything, is to be gained at this late day, so long after the events Mr. Clum writes of. But, on the other hand, in the interest of authentic history; and since I lived in Arizona and knew many of the people Mr. Clum writes about, in his "Apache Misrule," who would not subscribe to much of what he says, I feel that something ought to be said in disapproval of his articles.

Not only do Mr. Clum's articles make statements to glorify the Apaches, and censure the army, but the Los Angeles Times, through Mr. Harry Carr and Mr. Lee Shippey, prompted by Mr. Clum, frequently publishes like articles.

My motives—in showing that the Apache was ever, until conquered by the army, a cruel, blood-thirsty savage; and that the army did its work in Arizona, as it has always performed its duty, without fear or favor—no doubt will be questioned by the gentlemen above; and perhaps some others who hold themselves as philanthropists and peace at any price disciples. They may ask what I know about Arizona, the Apache and the army?

I was born in the Territory, and lived there during much of the Apache troubles. My service in the army amounts to thirty years on the active list, and almost twelve on the retired.

It is true that at the time of the Cibicu affair (of which Mr. Clum makes much adverse comment) I was but twelve years old; but it is also true that after I entered the army much of my service was with the officers (known to me as a boy) Clum criticises; and from talking with them, and reading what some of them wrote, I have formed conclusions which do not agree with Mr. Clum's articles. It might be added that during my active service in the army considerable of it was in Arizona.

When arguing any case it is fair and proper to show every incorrect and inaccurate statement made by the party, or parties, argued against—it is my purpose to do that in this letter.

Mr. Clum says, page 58 of the April, 1931, issue of the *Arizona Historical Review*, "During the summer of 1881 Agent Tiffany committed a 'stupid and stupendous' administrative blunder." This "stupid and stupendous" blunder was not trusting the Indian police, and calling on the military to arrest the fanatical medicine-man, Nocke-da-klinsky. How will an unbiased person reconcile what Mr. Clum says with what Genl. Carter—a fine officer and scholarly man, who was at the Cibicu as a lieutenant, and there decorated for bravery—states in his "History of the Sixth Cavalry?" I will quote:

"Nockay-det-Klinny had been promising to raise the dead and drive out the whites for some time, and was growing rich on the credulity of his fellow-tribesmen. Genl. Carr was sent from Ft. Lowell to Ft. Apache to handle a most delicate situation. Nockay-det-Klinny was summoned several times to appear before Agent Tiffany at San Carlos, but ignored all orders, and retired to his camp on Cibicu creek, 40 miles from Ft. Apache. Tiffany requested Carr to arrest the medicine man.

"On the 29th of August, 1881, Genl. Carr paraded his little force of 79 soldiers and 23 Indian scouts and marched to Cibicu creek. When near the Indian camp the well-known chief Sanchez, rode out

and met the officers with whom he shook hands; then deliberately rode along the column and counted Carr's men. While Sanchez was thus engaged Apaches were noted to approach the command from behind bushes and rocks. Genl. Carr directed Capt. Hentig to warn them away, and as the latter entered on this duty, he was shot and killed by a young Apache buck which precipitated a hand-to-hand encounter in which the troops fought two to one, the scouts having joined Nockay-det-Klinny's reserves. In the melee Genl. Carr shouted, "Kill the medicine-man!" which was done by a young buglar. The Indians were driven off, but not until Capt. Hentig and six soldiers had been killed."

Certainly Genl. Carter's account above indicates no stupidity on the part of Agent Tiffany. How was he (Tiffany) to know that the Indian police had not had their minds poisoned against the whites, by the preaching of the medicine-man, as the scouts had theirs, as shown by Genl. Carter? Again, what did Mr. Clum know about what was going on at the agency in 1881, when he left the Indian Service in 1877? Mr. Clum is over zealous for the good name of the Apache, at least it would look that way to an unbiased person.

These articles of Mr. Clum's, plus those of Mr. Carr and Mr. Shippey, are somewhat on the order of the book "Massacre" by Robt. Gessner, who attempts to show that the affair at Wounded Knee, S. D., Dec. 29th, 1890, was an uncalled for and merciless slaughter of the Indians. The book is a series of misstatements, falsehoods, and utterly uncalled for attacks on the soldiers—a maliciously false representation of the conduct of our army. The truth is that the soldiers were attacked by the Indians (as they were at the Cibicu). I was in this campaign and know whereof I speak.

Gessner says: "It is my duty as an American citizen—it is every citizen's duty—to launch myself into the positive struggle of placing the living Indian on the respectable, human plane of a self-sufficing, culture-effusing American." That is correct, but not at the expense of the good name of the army. There are too many of these self-constituted defenders of the Indian, who know noth-

ing about him, or the conditions under which the army performed thankless tasks for the protection of the settler, who always asked for troops when his life and property were in danger. Why do these defenders of the Indians wait so long after what they write of has passed before they write their articles and books? That in itself should make a reader suspect an ulterior motive, rather than regard for the Indian and censure for the army.

Such books as "Massacre," and articles as "Apache Misrule" accomplish no good, even if their authors think they are called upon to defend the Indian. From living all my life in an army environment I deny most emphatically that our army ever knowingly acted unfairly with the Indians. Nor does it institute any propaganda of heroics. It is called upon to do a duty and it does it.

Mr. Clum criticises Col. Carr for having Lieut. Cruse take the arms from the scouts on August 14, fifteen days before the affair at the Cibicu, and then says that Genl. McDowell quotes his (Carr's) telegram (referring to the disarmament of the scouts) in his report, and "makes the following caustic comment:" "The temper of his Indian scouts being such as to make it his duty to disarm them, thus causing them to feel they were distrusted; the belief in their disposition to treachery being general, and that they could only be relied on till the next pay-day; it was injudicious, as events have shown, in Colonel Carr to take them, with arms in their hands, to aid him in the arrest of one of their leaders."

While the criticism of Genl. McDowell is well founded, Carr accomplished what he was sent to do; and, in the general argument as to whether or not he blundered, commendatory criticism would seem to be more appropriate than "caustic comment." The more is this so when considering Col. Carr's record: He was graduated from West Point in 1850; had a most gallant record in the Civil war, and against Indians prior to, and after that struggle. He was severely wounded by the Mescalero Apaches in 1854, and was thrice wounded at the battle of Pea Ridge, Ark-

ansas, March 6-8, 1862. He was a Brigadier General of Volunteers in the Civil war while a Captain in the regular establishment. He led the expedition to Summit Springs, Colorado, July 11, 1869, against the celebrated Cheyenne chief, Tall Bull; and after a long, difficult march, to keep the Indians from knowing that he was coming, charged their village and utterly routed them. For this, as I remember, he was thanked by the legislature of Colorado. He was in command of the Sixth Cavalry in the Sioux war of 1890-91, and all under him—including myself—at that time had every confidence in him as a leader. His "blunder" at the Cibicu did not keep President Harrison from making him a Brigadier General when he was retired for age February 15, 1893. He died in Washington, Dec. 2, 1910.

Genl. Carr was a peppery and courageous man, and, had he lived to see Mr. Clum's articles, I am quite sure would have replied in a vigorous and convincing manner to much that he (Clum) has said of the Cibicu affair. And here it can be said that it is unfortunate that most, if not all, of the officers who were at the Cibicu are now dead, or else some might reply to Mr. Clum's articles, and give an entirely different version than the one presented by him at this late day.

When one wishes to present his case as he would have it appear to others, it is easy to criticise adversely, but in so doing one must be prepared for a boomerang.

Mr. Clum says: "Thus it is plain that if Agent Tiffany had sent the dependable Agency police to arrest Nock-e-da-kinny, the opportunity would not have been created for Colonel Carr to make his very grievous blunder." The Agency police may have been dependable in 1874, '75, '76 and '77, when Mr. Clum was at San Carlos. But on what does he base his assertion that they were dependable in 1881, at the time a fanatic was stirring up their relatives and friends; and when he (Clum) was not at San Carlos, and could have known nothing, at first hand, of the conditions there then?

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He criticises Genl. O. B. Willcox for having additional troops sent into Arizona; that the "military arm" had been "set in motion." Reply to that is that there never were troops enough in Arizona to efficiently cope with the Apache; not because of the expertness of the Indian as a soldier, but because of the vastness of the country to be scouted over, and the favorable terrain for the Indians. Proof of this is shown in fifty-one engagements or skirmishes officially recorded (the names and dates of these fights, with the troops engaged, can be given if called for) between Indians and troops in Arizona from Jan. 4, 1874, to Aug. 15, 1882. In addition there were a great number of skirmishes in the neighboring Territory of New Mexico. I fear Mr. Clum has not fully represented the conditions as they were in Arizona in his time there. Forty-three of the above fifty-one engagements took place between Jan. 4, 1874, and Aug. 29, 1877, the years Mr. Clum was with the Indian Service, yet from reading his articles one would think the army was not needed in Arizona in his time, and that his Indian police were sufficient to hold hostile Apaches in check.

Not satisfied with lambasting Col. Carr and Genl. Willcox, Mr. Clum goes after Genl. Sherman, the commander of the army. Such wholesale censure of prominent officers, favorably known to many old time Arizonans, holds water only with modern blind philanthropists, and those who think they could have done better with the Indians than the army did in Arizona. And here it might be said that army officers were often appointed as Indian Agents. They were noted for their knowledge of the Indians, the country they live in, and conditions generally pertaining to their wards on reservations. There were no better or more efficient agents than Capt. Frank D. Baldwin, at Anadarko, I. T., Capt. Jesse M. Lee at Pine Ridge, S. D., and Capt. Constant Williams at Ft. Defiance, in the Navajo reservation. All these gentlemen I knew and served under, and in the Indian country, at one time or another, all rose to be general officers. These are

only a few of the army men appointed as agents, so the reader may judge for himself as to whether or not Mr. Clum's articles against the army in Indian matters are warranted. In fact, it has often been stated by the Indians themselves that they preferred an army officer agent to a civilian. The army man had no axe to grind—simply did his duty.

Clum's views have brought him disciples, among others, Mr. Harry Carr and Mr. Lee Shippey of the Los Angeles Times. With respect to the latter the following may be said:

Mr. Carr's attempts, in his Lancer column of the Times, to cast discredit on the army and praise the Apache, are like his attempts at quoting Southwestern history and use of the Spanish language—often erroneous.

Carr says, in effect, that the Apaches out-marched, out-maneuvred, and out-fought the troops. On this Mr. Carr follows in spirit the lead of his preceptor, Mr. Clum, though the latter in his articles makes no such assertions, nor is there any intimation that such is the truth. On the contrary, Mr. Clum blames the army for killing Indians, by innuendo, if not by actual statements, which is one way of saying that the Apaches were whipped—which means out-marched, out-maneuvred and out-fought. The last result—the pacification of the Apaches by the army—shows the white man to be the better soldier. It is to be granted that the Apache was a hard nut to crack, but never, as Mr. Carr has stated, that he was the best soldier in the world—or words to that effect.

This statement of Mr. Carr's is like the one he once made in his Lancer column—that Sandino, in Nicaragua, had more brains than the 2000 U. S. marines in Nicaragua. I happen to be familiar with Sandino's "Operations," since in 1928 I was a member of the American Electoral Mission to Nicaragua, and there learned that he was looked upon, by both the Conservative and Liberal parties, as a renegade, with no standing whatever; and that he was always along the Honduran border and could step over

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into Honduras when, on occasions, with much superior numbers he attacked small detachments of marines, who usually put him to route.

About Oct. 7 or 8, Mr. Shippey came out in the Los Angeles Times with a garbled story, which was an interview with Mr. Clum. Mr. Shippey said, among other things, that the Indian police of San Carlos were mustered into Arizona's militia, and protected the citizens of Arizona from hostile Apaches.

The letters below will answer Mr. Shippey's claim that any Apache police from San Carlos were ever in the Arizona militia:

"4933 Jurupa Ave., Riverside, Calif., Oct. 17, 1931.

"Mr. Lee Shippey,
"Los Angeles Times,
"Los Angeles, Calif.

"Dear Sir:

"Referring to your recent Lee Side O' L. A. article (an interview with Mr. John P. Clum), in which you stated his (Mr. Clum's) Apache police were mustered into the militia of Arizona, etc. I am sending you two letters which are self-explanatory.

"Very respectfully,

"C. C. SMITH,
"Col. U. S. Army, Retired."

"4933 Jurupa Avenue, Riverside, Calif., Oct. 12, 1931.

"The Adjutant General, State of Arizona,
"Phoenix, Arizona.

"General:

"Will you kindly let me know if a company of Apache police, from San Carlos, was ever mustered into Arizona militia, and, if so, did they ever operate as troops, under orders from your office, in the protection of citizens from attack by hostile Apaches? Thanking you, I am,

"Very respectfully,

"C. C. SMITH,
"Col. U. S. A. Retired."

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"STATE OF ARIZONA
"Military Department
"Office of the Adjutant General
Phoenix, Arizona 15, 1931.

"SUBJECT:

"Apache Indians in State Service.

"To: Colonel C. C. Smith,

"U. S. Army, Retired.

"My dear Colonel:

"Replying to your inquiry of 12th. inst., as to whether or not there were ever any Apache Indians from San Carlos mustered into Arizona Militia, would say that there is no record in this office to that effect and I do not believe there were any from San Carlos ever in State Service.

"We do have retained Muster Rolls in this office for the Pima Indians who were mustered into the old 1st. Arizona Infantry during the Civil War and are now drawing pensions from the Federal Government.

"I just called Colonel McClintock and he says that he is sure there were never any Apache Indians in the National Guard.

"Yours sincerely,

"OSCAR F. TEMPLE,

"Adjutant General of Arizona."

My vehement defense of the army; and condemnation of the old day Apache, in this letter, is because of such long standing and contrary vehement statements by those who take the opposite, and to my notion, unjust view.

As for the Apaches of today, I would be inconsiderate and unjust if I did not give them due credit for their present good behavior, but this has nothing to do with the savage and cruel Apache of my boyhood days in Arizona.

You have published Mr. Clum's articles (which have inspired Mr. Carr and Mr. Shippey to write in the same vein). Now, in justice to the other side of the question, I beg you to publish this letter; and just as it is written, even though it may be lacking in literary niceties.

Thanking you in advance, I am,

Very respectfully,

C. C. SMITH,

Col. U. S. Army, Retired.