

## “APACHE BILL”

By David L. Huges

I met Apache Bill at the soldiers home in California. After telling me of different episodes of his early life in Arizona, New Mexico, California and Mexico, I asked him to tell me his early life story. This is what Apache Bill told me:

My name is William H. Young, better known throughout Arizona, New Mexico, and Mexico in the early days as Apache Bill. I was born in Philadelphia on January 17th, 1844, to John Young and Bridges Burton.

In 1852 I started west with a family by the name of Howard. I was on my way to visit my uncle Silas Young, who at that time lived in Forth Worth, Texas. After a short stay in Forth Worth, I joined a party of immigrants on their way to California. We traveled the old Santa Fe trail through Cow Springs, New Mexico then into Arizona. It was while we were camped at the Vinaterilla Ranch near Tres Alamos on the San Pedro River about 9 miles north of where Benson, Arizona is today that I was captured by Apache Indians.

It was just before sundown when a pack of Apache Indians started to raid our camp. I was playing about two or three hundred feet away from the wagons when I saw the Indians driving off our stock; scared, I started to run as fast as I could to the wagons where the men had opened fire on the Indians. As I ran I could hear horse hoofs beating the ground close behind me, then as I saw a horse almost over me, at that same instant someone grabbed me by the back of the shirt and swung me around and up and sat me astride of his horse right in front of him. A big buck Apache Indian, his horse going a full speed he headed for the brush and foot hills. After several days of traveling with them, we came to what appeared to be a permanent Indian camp in the Chiracahue Mountains. There they turned me over to the squaws who made me help them pack wood, carry water and help them with their tanning of hides. I fell into their customs and the squaws named me “Nalapi Enchos”, (meaning good friend in Apache).

After I had been under the care of the squaws for about a year and a half, at the age of 10, I could now speak Apache. The bucks began to teach me the use of the bow and arrow and how to ride horses. Shortly afterwards they began to take me on their marauding trips. I would hold their horses while they would plunder the immigrant wagon trains. On several of these expeditions they would kill all the immigrants. What ever provisions they could not carry off, they would destroy. I made a numbers of these trips in southern Arizona, New Mexico and northern Mexico. They had very few firearms, mostly of the flint lock variety, that they had taken from the immigrant raids.

I dressed in a G string and a pair of buckskin moccasins that reached to my knees. For those who have not seen one, I will explain how to put on a G string. You first put a buckskin belt or cord around the naked waist. Then you take a piece of cloth 8 to 12 inches wide, and 6 to 7 feet long, (according to your height). Place end No. #1 of cloth under your belt or cord in front, pulling it down till the other end, No.#2 comes to your knee. You bring end of No. #1 between your crotch, up your back, under the belt or cord in the middle of your back and you pull up the cloth snug. To complete the picture, put on a pair of buckskin moccasins that extend to your knees or hips. Trim your hair just below your ears down to your shoulder all the way around, then wrap a cloth around the head parting the hair in the center, place the hair to the right and left of your eyes, the cloth holding the hair in place. You now have the field dress of an Apache Indian.

For saddles, we used two pads made from grass fibers and strapped on our horses with rawhide latigo from cow hide. We applied tallow that made it soft and pliable. We hardly ever used wooden stirrups, generally using a sling we threw over the grass pads, inserting our moccasined feet at either looped ends.

These Indians made their headquarters in the Chiricahua Mountains at what is called the Horse Shoe Bend. Raton, and Miguel Tuerto, (blind in one eye), were the leaders of these outlaws who were called Coyoteros. Most of the depredations done were by renegade and outlaw Apaches; breaking away from their main tribe, they would go on these marauding expeditions killing here and there wherever they found their prey unguarded and taking what plunders they could carry off.

While in the field, we lived on raw beef, venison, jerky and penoli, (parched wheat or corn ground to a flour on rocks called a metate). You take two tablespoons full of penoli and place it in a glass of water or milk, sweeten with panocha or sugar, and you have a drink that is not hard to take. We used a dipper made from a gourd to mix our pinole in.

When we returned from our raiding trips, the squaws would prepare different kinds of dishes. They would take the young tender shoots from the cactus of the tuna variety and fry or boil them in earthen dishes, which makes a palatable dish. I am surprised that they are not used here more. I'm assured that if one of our modern chef's were given some of these sprouts, he could make a dish that would surpass many of the present vegetable, they are a delicacy. They also make a gruel out of mesquite beans they call Atoli that is also palatable. They make a preserve they call sopichi from the giant cactus, the sahuarro, that resembles and taste like a fig.

Time went on and in the fall of 1858 we were in a marauding expedition in northern Sonora, Mexico. We stole some stock and were driving them north to the Chiricahua Mountains. We made camp about ten or twelve miles east of Fronteras near Pesquerias Ranch. We knew the Mexican were on our trail but thought we had thrown them off our trail. That night they quietly surrounded us while we were asleep and they waited for day break. When the first Indian got up, the shooting started, we were taken completely by surprise. I hid in a clump of cat claws until the shooting was over. A number of Indians escaped through the dense undergrowth. As some Mexicans came close to me, I came out from hiding and walked towards them. They were about to fire on me when they noticed that I was white with light hair, they lowered their rifles, spoke to one another, then walked up to me and spoke Spanish to me which I could not understand. I was close to 15 years and quite husky as I could scuffle with any of the young bucks and ride as well. They saw I was not Indian and they took me to Fronteras where they turned me over to Mexican by the name of Elias. He showed me the greatest of consideration and did everything in his power to make it pleasant for me.

I was thoroughly cleaned, and I certainly needed to be. My hair trimmed and my "G" string was removed and replaced with a pair of pants. In the meantime, seeing that I was white and from Anglo Saxon race, they found a man that spoke English. He spoke to me in English but I could not understand him, I had forgotten how to speak English. They later got an Apache interpreter and I told my story from the day I was taken by the Apache's at the Vinaterilla Ranch on the San Pedro River in Arizona a little over six years ago.

After about three weeks with Don Elias, Manuel Gallegos and four other Mexican took me to Fort Buchanan, Arizona which took four days travel. I was turned over to the Commander of the post, Major Ewell. After a days rest, the Mexicans returned to Fronteras, I loathed to see them

go. Through an Apache interpreter, I told my story again Major Ewell. I had forgotten my first name but still had a faint recollection of my last name Young and pronounce it Yung. Major Ewell instantly knew that I was the missing son of John Young who had served under General Scott in Mexico and who had sent notice to all detachments commanders in New Mexico and Arizona to be on the lookout for me as no trace had been found of my death. He wrote my father who was in Philadelphia and told him I was captured by the Mexicans and turned over to him. In the meantime, the soldiers took an interest in me and started teaching me to speak English, and it all came back to me like a dream.

During the next five to six months, the troops were called out to do scout duty and I was permitted to go along. I felt so different with new cloths, boots, coat, pants, shirt and hat, the first in nearly seven years. They felt clumsy at first, but I was very much taken by my new uniform. The food was also very different, eating bread, beans, bacon, cooked beef, coffee, sugar and vegetables. While I was with the Apache's, it was straight jerky or raw beef and once in a while penoli. I remember one expedition, we left old Fort Buchanan went through Davidson Springs, then over to Tucson, north through Canada Del Ore, over to the San Pedro River, up to Arivaipa Canyon, (a very picturesque canyon). From there over to the Pinal Mountains, across to the White Mountains, then made a circle south back to Fort Buchanan. The troops rounded up 45 squaws and brought them back to the post.

In the spring of 1859, I was put in the care of Lieutenant Longstreet, who was the paymaster of the district at that time. He brought me as far as Yuma, Arizona and turned me over to troops that were headed to San Francisco, California. Our trip to San Francisco was uneventful. After several days wait for a vessel, I was put on the vessel Tuscorora bound for New York. We sailed around the horn and all that I can recollect of the trip was that we had some very rough weather. After several months sailing, I can not say how long exactly, we reached New York. My father had been notified about the boat I had taken and was waiting for me and drove me to Philadelphia by buggy. My mother was overcome with joy when she saw me. After several days at home, I was put in school until the year of 1862 when I enlisted in the 95th Pennsylvania Volunteers. Not being of age, my mother secured my discharge. On February 23, 1863, I again enlisted, this time in Company "K", 3rd Pennsylvania heavy artillery under the name W.H. Burton, using my mother's maiden name. In March, 1864, I was transferred to the 188th Pennsylvania and served in this regiment until the end of the war when I was mustered out by general orders.

Understanding the Apache language, I was sent to Carlisle, Pennsylvania and enlisted as an Apache Scout and interpreter and was attached to Troop "C", 1st U.S. Cavalry. I entered into the campaign against the Apache Indians who were committing many depredations to immigrants crossing the plains and mountains and the homesteaders in New Mexico and Arizona. We embarked on a steamer which took us to Panama, there we cross the Isthmus by rail. On the Pacific side, we embarked on the Golden Gate which took us to San Francisco. After several days there, we were shipped to Drum's Barrack, Wilmington, California, which at that time was the Government headquarters for distributing material and commissaries to troops doing duty in the Southwest, southern New Mexico, Arizona and southern California.

Lieutenant Chas H. Vail was first in command of our troops and second in command was Lieutenant Winters. We moved southwest through Fort Yuma and on into Tucson, (22 days), where we re-established the military post on the edge of Tucson, Pueblo, where the Santa Rita Hotels now stands, and extended south to where the Carnegie Library is at present.

We were ordered up the Tonto basin Country, the Tonto Apache's had just been on one of their marauding expeditions and had killed a number of settlers. After trailing them for about three weeks, we had a brush with them, killing several of them. That quieted things in these parts for the time being, so we moved south to old Fort Breckenridge on the San Pedro River, which had been renamed Fort Grant. It was when we were here at this time, I believe in the latter part of 66 or early 67, that we got word that Tully and Oshoas teams were being attacked by the Apaches near Canada Del Oro, we made a force march. It was about 25 to 30 miles and we made it in a little over five hours and we didn't arrive too soon. Euligo Lopez and Antonio Grijalva, both from Tucson, were acting as guide for the troops. They, with Sergeant Bill Morgan and myself were in advance of the troops. We first heard some shots very faintly at a distance, that gave us the direction. We advanced as fast as we could, at the same time caution. When we reached a little ridge near where the fighting was going on, looked over the ridge and at about five hundred yards away were seven or eight wagons. The horses had been stampeded during the night and the team was entrenched the best they could near their wagons, firing at the Indians when they would come within range. The Indians, some on foot and others mounted, kept circling around at a distance drawing their fire waiting for the ammunition to become exhausted. The Sergeant took in the situation at a glance, he ordered me to stay there with two other men and he returned to the troop which was now about a half mile in the rear, to report. They came up at a full trot, Lieutenant Chas H. Vail made a hurried survey of the situation, then ordered the troops to dismount to adjust their saddles and tighten up the cinches. We mounted and moved to the right in a Column of fours, then were given the command of four left, and we were at a troop front, immediately the command of deploy the right and left, guide center, draw sabers, charge, double time, and the fight was on. The foot of the Catalina Mountains was just about a mile from the wagons and the Indians made a run for them, we overtook several and they were quickly dispatched. The majority of the Indians made for the rough and boulder covered mountain, discarding their horses and going a foot, being able to travel a great deal faster among these boulders afoot, then on horse. A small detachment was sent back to look over the teamsters needs, their horses were rounded up by the next day and the wounded teamsters were given first aid treatment while the major part of the troops trailed the Indians over the north end of the Santa Catalina Mountains. The citizen of Tucson and nearby ranchers formed a posse to come to the aid of the teams. It was here in these trying times where the mettle of these pioneers were put to the supreme test.

The plowman would unhitch his horse and put a saddle on him, the merchant would close his door and saddle his horse, the ranchman would come in with their extra mounts, and in this way the minutemen were organized and would go to the aid of their fellowmen in distress. A messenger had been sent to notify the posse in Tucson that the U.S. Troops had arrived and not any too soon. Another hour and all we would have had to do would have been to dig graves and bury them. Shortly after, some of the citizen of Tucson with a number of Papage Indians surrounded a village of Apache Indians that was located about three miles from Fort Grant on the San Pedro and annihilated the entire village.

The following month we returned to Tucson and learned that Euligo Lopez and Antonio Grijalva both had the same experience as myself with the Apache, they both had been captives when they were mere boys. I met Col. Posten and Pie Allen. These are the men that come most clearly to my recollection that were taking the leading spirit in building up sections of Arizona. I often think of my compadres and the hospitality extended me by them. Once you become their friend, anything in their possession was at your service.

In 1867 we went to Tubac, the Custom House was there. We then moved to Calabasa, the only two white men there were Pete Kitchen and Johnny Ward outside of the troopers. We then

moved to Fort Buchanan, the same place where nine years before I had been turned over to Major Ewell by Manuel Gallego and escorted, what a change had come to pass.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, Major Ewell took sides with his people who lived in the south and was commissioned a Major General in the Confederacy by Robert E. Lee. He was known throughout Arizona and New Mexico as Buckskin Ewell.

We re-established Fort Buchanan and named it Fort Crittendon after Col. Crittendon on the 32nd inf., Major Norris commanding. It was near here where Tom Hughes, Lieut. Col, of the 1st Kansas Vol. during the Civil War, established his ranch, La Casa Blanca and after words known as the Pennsylvania Ranch. Many a raid was made on this ranch by the Apaches and more than a score of workmen killed.

Most of the next 2.5 years we put in scouting the country and running down these outlaw Indians that would break from their tribes.

In February 1869, I was ordered to Fort Whipple near Prescott, Arizona. On my way I stopped over in Tucson, and they were preparing for a dance at the plaza. The dances were somewhat different in those days. The dance floor consisted of good old mother earth, about 40 feet wide and 60 feet long. The ground was first leveled then wet down, the water being carried from the near by well in an olla, then sprinkled over the ground with a jiccara made from gourd. After this the ground was thoroughly tamped down with a wooden tamper and then swept with a brush broom. On the outer edge, large pine logs were placed for seats. The gentlemen who had to bring their señoritas from any distance up or down the valley, brought her sitting behind his horse side fashion on a nicely arranged serrape, the mother or chaperon closely following on another horse. Among the Beau Brummela, Frenchy Lazard was the most envied, as he was the only one who possessed the frock cutaway coat. Just as soon as they could ascertain that Frenchy was not going to attend a dance, the highest bidder would wear the coat. The gentlemen would bring along with them a nicely tanned sheepskin or a goat hide under his arm to put on the logs used as seats so the señorita's dress would not be soiled. The orchestra consisted of two or three violins, guitars, and a drum. At midnight intermission was called and all the dancers adjourned to the nearby Tamaleras and partook in tamales, enchiladas and coffee. In the meantime, the floor manager was busy with his jiccara spraying the now dusty floor with water, and re-tamping it, as all the gentlemen wore high heel boots, it was rather hard on the dirt floor. After intermission, the dance with renewed vigor would dance till early morn. The following day we continued to Fort Whipple, there I was attached to the 8th Cavalry. It was quite cold at Whipple, snow being on the ground most of the time.

In April, I was ordered to Fort Wingate, New Mexico and after a short stay was ordered to Fort Stanton to interpret the peace parley between the Jicarilla Mountain Apache Indians and the Government troops. After this parley and peace had been restored, I left the service in the spring of 1870 and went to Tula Rosa, New Mexico. The next four or five years, I put in around Silver City and along the Rio Grande.

In 1875, a bunch of horses were stolen from the Shedd Ranch on the Rio Grande close to the Organ Mountains. This stock belonged to Wood and Reed Cowmen. I joined the posse and we took the trail and it lead us across New Mexico into Arizona right up into the Chiricahua Mountains. We went to Apache Pass where we met Captain Tom Jefforde who was the Indian agent there and explained to him that all the signs pointed that some Indians had driven this stock over here. He called the chief's, of which Geronimo was one, and in several days they had gathered and returned our stock. It was then that captain Jeffords told me that Cochise, the

Apache Chief, had died from a bullet wound received by Mexican troops in Mexico. Cochise did not show any signs of Indian blood in him, he looked to me like a Castillian but very dark tanned and being with Apaches all his life spoke only Apache.

In the fall of 1876, I went into service of the Mexican Government and went to Ascension Custom House. A great number Mormons were coming into Mexico and during this time Colonel O'Campos was the Government land agent who was settling the Mormon's along the Bavispi and Santa Maria River in Chihuahua. I was acting as interpreter. Among the Apostles, I met Brigham Young, Jr., Brother Snow, Teasdale, and Bishops W.D. Johnson and Mc Donald. They were settling near Casas Grande, Ascension, Colonia and Morales.

I put several years in this locality, when in the late seventies, Victorio, Apache Chief of Palomas Hot Springs on the Rio Grande in New Mexico near Sierra De Los Ladrones, who had been taken with all his band consisting of a little over 200 bucks and 300 squaws and papoose to the San Carlos Indian reservation. I believe this was in the year 1876 or 77 that he returned to Palomas Hot Springs. The troops immediately got after him and told him to return to San Carlos, this he refused to do and with the entire band broke out on the war-path and struck out south. For the next two to three years he raided and plundered the entire length of the state of Chihuahua. The Mexican ranchers finally got together and with the aid of Mauricio Corredor, Chief of the Taramari Indians of southwestern corner of Chihuahua and one hundred and fifty Indians.

It was in 1880 or 1881, Mateo Duran, Tiburcio Chacon, and myself were carrying messages between the U.S. Troops along the border of New Mexico, and the Mexican Federal troops in command of Colonel Joaquin Terrazas, Victorio and his band were making for the Sierra Madre Mountains when they ran right into the ranchers, about two hundred and fifty in numbers, who were on there way south to attack Victorio. They met at the foot of the Los Tres Castillos Mountains three peaks about 1000 feet higher then the surrounding land. Victorio lead his his men to the summit of these peaks. By coincidence, Mauricio Corredor with his one hundred and fifty Indians were on the other side of the peaks traveling north, also anticipating cutting off Victorio from reaching the Sierra Madre Mountains. Both parties working in conjunction surrounded these peaks. It was too late in the afternoon to close in on them, so we waited until morning. A few scattering shots were fired through out the night as they tried to break through the lines. Fourteen bucks who were out foraging tried to get in with the rest but were turned away by the Taramaria. At daylight, orders were given to close in slowly and inside of two hours we were exchanging shots quite rapidly. The squaws and papoose, about forty in number unarmed, were huddled together in a cave in the canyon, we soon took them prisoners and kept closing in on the bucks. Word was sent them to surrender but they answered "No". By noon we had killed of half of the bucks and still the remainder would not surrender. A charge was ordered from all directions and we closed in on them. When Victorio, wounded, and with only seven of his warriors fighting with him was ordered to surrender and he refused, they were finally caught in a shallow cave and all were shot. The only surviving were the fourteen that tried to break through the line the night before. They went back to San Carlos, Arizona. The papoose were distributed among the Mexican ranchers to raise, while the squaws were all taken to the city of Chihuahua and placed in prison to work around the prison. Colonel Joaquin Terrazza was in full view of the engagement but did not take part.

In 1881, in the fall I believe, it was when Naneaia, one of the Apache Chief from San Carlos, Arizona, started with 60 odd bucks to avenge the death of Victorio, Apache Chief. He started south along the Gila down by Solomville, passed the San Simon and on down to Mexico. General Garcia was in command of the Mexican troops in this section. He received word from

runners that this Apache and his band were headed for the Bavispi River. Having only a small detachment of soldiers for his immediate use, and expecting a large band of Indians, General Garcia enlisted the aid on the ranchers and farmers in the area. About this time the outpost had come in and reported the Indians were headed straight for the Arroyo De Los Alicsos. Knowing that they had come forty to fifty miles without water for their stock, General Garcia threw out an ambushade at this watering place, it was one of the best plan I had ever witnessed. After all the Indians had dismounted, we allowed their horses to drink their fill knowing that they could not run fast or any distance in that condition. When the signal was given, we opened fire on both sides, some rushed across the arroyo only to meet another fusilade from that direction. A few mounted their horse but were overtaken. None of the Indians made it back to San carlos to tell their story.

Shortly after this, I came up to Silver City, New Mexico, and I was appointed Deputy Sheriff under Sheriff Harvey Whitehill. I also served under Sheriff Andy Liard and Col. Lockhart. I had passports from Mexico and acted as an international ranger along the border of New Mexico and Mexico for a number of years running down outlaws on both sides of the border.

Most of the Apache trouble commenced when the white man began to encroach on his heritage left him by his forefathers. They would then raid and pillage the immigrant as he was coming into the country he thought his. The troops were then called upon to suppress these depredations. They rounded up the different bands living in New mexico and Arizona and placed them on reservations at San Carlos, Arizona. There, at times, they would become dissatisfied and disagree among themselves, would fight and break out of the reserve. These are the outlaws and they were the ones causing most of the trouble. When I was in Sheriff office in Silver City, I would often meet some Apache Indians scouts whom I knew and were always friendly to the white man. The Indian agent would give them passports to hunt or trade off the reservation.

The last few years, I have put in here at the soldiers home, making one or two trips to New Mexico every year. The changes throughout the country have been marvelous. It was just the other day I was looking out over where once had stood an old Hacienda near Los Angeles, now built up solid with modern building. I as stood there dreaming of how the Don used to cultivate his land with a yoke of oxen and a wooden plow, I could see him coming to the plaza to market, his verdur in a two-wheel careta. I could almost hear his wooden axles dull grind and squeak for the lack of tallow. Just then I was awaked by a soft purring noise above me. I looked up and saw a plane traveling between eighty and ninety miles per hour, just then my grandson ran out and said, "Grandad, I just tuned in with him on my radio and he says he is on the way to Santa Barbara. How we travel, God doeth things well.

Signed;

Wm.H.Young

Apache Bill

Soldier Home

California