RETRACING THE BATTLE OF CIBECUE: WESTERN APACHE, DOCUMENTARY, AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATIONS

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ABSTRACT

On August 30, 1881, United States military commanders ordered the arrest of Nochaydelklinne, a spiritual leader thought to be exciting unrest among Apaches residing around Cibecue. A battle ensued, resulting in the deaths of Apaches and soldiers, in the only attack on Fort Apache, and in enduring misgivings between Apaches and non-Indians. A recent ethnohistory project conducted in collaboration with keepers of Western Apache oral traditions has re-examined the events on the basis of Apache recollections and new archaeological and documentary research.

RESUMEN

El 30 de agosto de 1881, comandantes militares de los Estados Unidos dieron la orden de arresto de Nochaydelklinne, el líder espiritual sospechado de provocar la agitación entre los Apaches de la zona de Cibecue. Se desató una batalla que trajo como consecuencia la muerte de Apaches y de soldados, en el único ataque al conocido Fort Apache, como así también la perdurable desconfianza entre los Apaches y los no indios. Un proyecto etnohistórico reciente, realizado con la colaboración de los jefes Apaches de la tradición oral, reexamina la batalla a partir de la memoria de los Apaches y de estudios de investigación arqueológicos y documentales recientes.

The quiet established by General George Crook's renowned 1871–1875 tour as the U.S. Army's commander of the Department of Arizona did not last long (Bourke 1971). In 1877, bending to political pressure from Arizona's Territorial Legislature and settlers, merchants, contractors, and other self-promoters, the army relocated most Tonto, White Mountain, Cibecue, and Chiricahua Apaches to San Carlos. Many Apaches died along the way or fled.

The concentration of diverse bands of mutually uncongenial Apaches onto the San Carlos Reservation's malarial lowlands along the Gila River created a highly unstable atmosphere. In the same year, another Executive Order removed

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7,579 acres from the rapidly shrinking Reservation to support the Fort Apache military facility (Figure 1).

As a result of these and other questionable decisions, as well as generally poor and profit-driven treatment of the Apache by civilian authorities, much of what Crook had accomplished was undone. Disgruntled, hungry, and increasingly desperate, some Apaches returned to raiding while others sought deliverance through radical spirituality. In the summer of 1881, an Apache spiritual leader or singer gathered a substantial following for his efforts to resurrect and unite great Apache warrior chiefs (Goodwin and Kaut 1954; Kessel 1976).[1] This religious movement, the growing mistrust between Apache scouts and Apache resistors, and the general Federal mismanagement of Apache affairs led to the deadly clash on Cibecue Creek between the singer's supporters and troops commanded by Colonel Eugene A. Carr, one of the Army's most experienced Indian fighters.

On August 30, 1881, the incident sometimes referred to as the "Cibecue Massacre" progressed from the detention of the medicine man, Nockaydelklinne, by

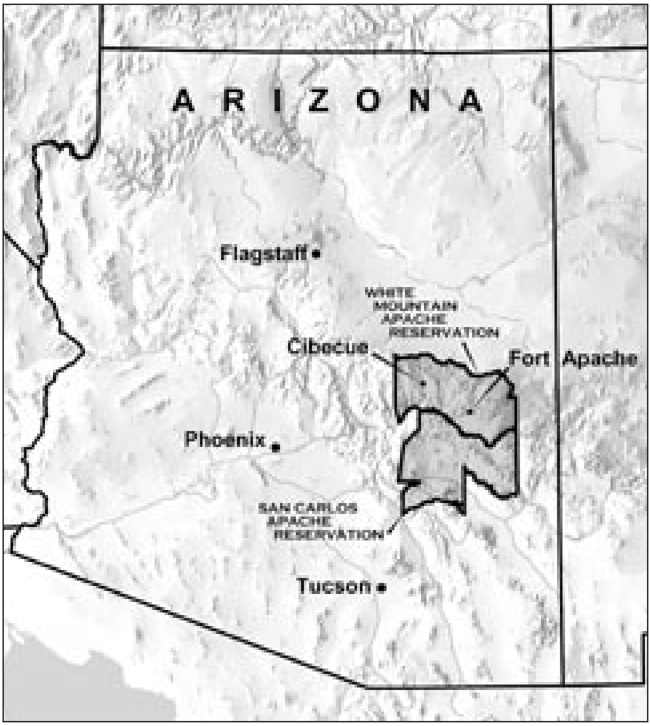
ARIZONA
Flagstaff
WHITE MOUNTAIN APACHE RESERVATION
Cibecue
Fort Apache
Phoenix
SAN CARLOS APACHE RESERVATION
Tucson

FIGURE 1. Arizona. (Map by Catherine Gilman, Courtesy of Center for Desert Archaeology.)

the U.S. Army. The arrest added insult to the "injury" of social and spiritual unrest, and led to a firefight that claimed seven cavalrymen and perhaps a dozen Apaches, including the medicine man. In the skirmish, which is remembered by historians as the only recorded Indian scout mutiny and by some Apache as the scouts' indignant reaction to Nockaydelklinne's malicious arrest and murder by soldiers, Apache scouts accompanying the cavalry joined the battle against the troops.

The battle has had enduring effects for non-Indian perceptions of Apache people in general and of Cibecue and American Indian military personnel in particular (Dunlay 1982:172). In the unrest that followed the battle, Fort Apache was briefly under siege—the only recognized Apache attack on a U.S. military post. The aftermath included the exodus of Chiricahua Apaches from the White Mountain Reservation, where they had been living in relative peace, and the apprehension of three scouts, who were tried and subsequently executed for their roles in the affair. It would require five years of field operations in southern Arizona and in Mexico, thousands of troops, and duplicitous treatment of the Chiricahuas for the United States government to quell the overt hostilities sparked at Cibecue. On the Fort Apache Reservation, the battle marked the last gasp of major resistance to Federal control. After 1881, military operations in the greater White Mountain region began to wind down, and the U.S. government seems to have taken a hint and left Cibecue largely alone for many decades (Watt 2004).

For the hundreds of Cibecue Apaches who have learned history from their elders, the Battle of Cibecue and its legacy remain integral elements in community memory and identity. It seems that only recently have community leaders recognized the battle as a part of a bygone era that can be openly and broadly discussed, instead of seeing the event as a particularly violent and unfortunate episode in a continuous series of conflicts with the U.S. government. The idea for a community history and preservation project for the battle arose following the 1998 restoration of the oldest non-Indian building in Cibecue, the original Lutheran Mission (Welch 2000). Ronnie Lupe, a community leader and former chairman of the White Mountain Apache Tribal Council approached the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer with the suggestion to preserve and commemorate a place of importance to *all* Cibecue Apaches. After a discussion of options, Mr. Lupe suggested that the battle was the most important single event in the region's history and that the time had come for the elders to balance the existing military narrative with the Apache version of what happened and the Apache interpretation of the battle's significance.

With the support of the White Mountain Apache Tribe Historic Preservation Office and funding from the National Park Service's American Battlefield Protection Program, we pursued five key objectives in this project: (1) to identify the archaeological boundaries of the battle site, (2) to develop a database of Apache oral histories and traditions relating to the battle and synthesize these data with extant records, (3) to document any associated *rancherias* or refugee

TABLE 1. Apache narratives employed to supplement the "official history" of the battle and to lend human voice to archaeological interpretations.

Interviewee	Recorded	Recorded By	Narrative Type
Anna Price	1932	Grenville Goodwin	Oral History
Palmer Valor	1932	Grenville Goodwin	Oral History
Harvey Nashkin	1932	Grenville Goodwin	Oral History
Tom Friday	1938	E. Edgar Guenther (Kessel 1974)	Oral Tradition
Nick Thompson	1975	"Canyon" Quintero (trans. Beverly Malone)	Oral Tradition
Rose Thompson	1993	Gayle Potter Basso	Oral Tradition
Eva Watt	2002	Keith H. Basso and Welch	Oral Tradition
Glenn Cromwell	2004	Welch and Colwell-Chanthaphonh	Oral Tradition
Jennie (Cabbot) Henry	2004	Welch and Colwell-Chanthaphonh	Oral Tradition
Ronnie Lupe	2004, 2005	Welch and Altaha	Oral Tradition
Nathaniel Narcisco, Sr.	2004	Welch and Colwell-Chanthaphonh	Oral Tradition
Elaine Narcisco	2004	Welch and Colwell-Chanthaphonh	Oral Tradition
Abner Tessay	2005	Welch	Oral Tradition

Note: Following Vansina (1985:12-13), oral histories are "eyewitness accounts . . . which occurred during the lifetime of the informants" and oral traditions are "passed from mouth to mouth, for a period beyond the lifetime of the informants."

sites occupied by Apaches in the battle's aftermath, (4) to explore with community members their interests in preserving the battlefield for public interpretation, local education, or tourism initiatives, and (5) to create public documents and lay foundations for a possible nomination for the site to the National Register of Historic Places. This article presents the initial results of this work.

Although numerous scholars and writers have examined the Battle of Cibecue, nearly every author has simply reiterated and reinterpreted the events from the perspectives of the soldiers and local citizens (e.g., Clum 1930; Monnett 1969, 1971; Smith 1956; Thrapp 1964). Kessel's (1974) critical publication of a 1938 narrative by an Apache named Tom Friday stands out in this regard, as does Lori Davisson's (1979) careful study of the identities of the Apache participants; however, scholars have yet to integrate all the data available. The most recent synthesis, Charles Collins' (1999) *Apache Nightmare* disregards the insights offered from and questions raised by previously published Apache narratives. This situation has regrettably led to an "official history" of the events devoid of Apache viewpoints. Offering a more generalized comment on the discrepancies between Apache recollections and the vast majority of Apache history publications, Eva Watt said, "Lots is missing in those books 'cause there's hardly no Indians in there."(Watt 2004:xvi). In our own work, then, we felt little need to revisit the original Euro-American documents in detail. These sources have been mined by scholars for years. Instead, we aim to present an analysis of the Cibecue battle that emphasizes

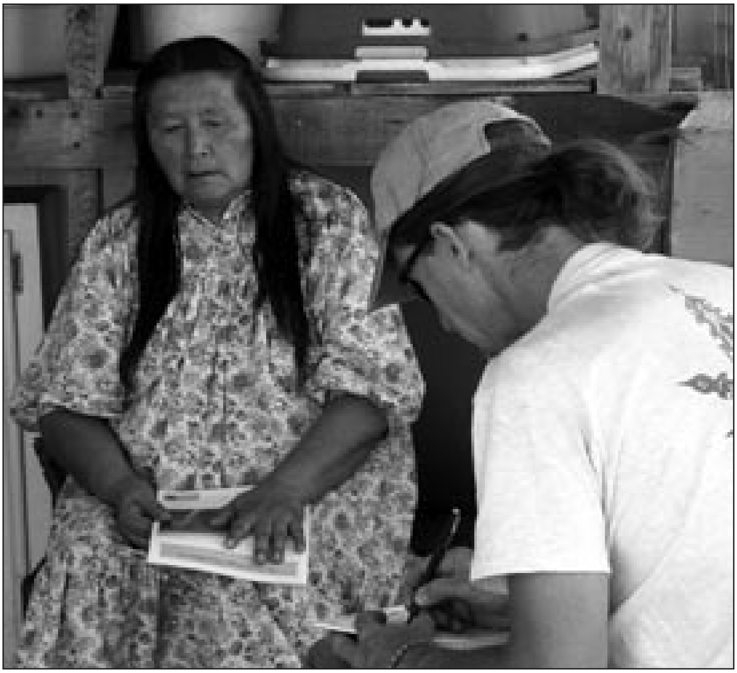

FIGURE 2. Welch interviewing Elaine Narcisco in 2004. (Photo by Chip Colwell-Chanthaphonh.)

Apache participants and perspectives instead of placing them as background actors, merely responding to the decisions of Army authorities. To better understand native perspectives of the battle, its causes and consequences, we personally recorded Apache narrative recollections and collated these with the results of previous interviews with knowledgeable tribal elders (Table 1). The goal here is not reinterpretation, but the addition of new "pages" of history from the memories of Apache leaders and elders. Three unpublished oral histories, fragments of information recorded in 1932, were located in the notes of Grenville Goodwin in the Arizona State Museum. We also included in the analysis two unpublished interviews completed in 1975 and 1993, and seven interviews conducted between 2002 and 2005 as part of this project (Figure 2).[2] Integrating these stories with each other and the documentary record entails focusing on narrative "convergences" and "divergences"—that is, the ways in which an array of information coheres (Colwell-Chanthaphonh 2003:658). Methodologically, this means concentrating on the internal and external consistency of narratives, the reliability of the sources, and the validity of specific fragments of information (Whiteley 2002:412). Instead of attempting to establish the "truth," our objective here is to share new information relating to the battle, amplify Apache voices, and raise additional questions about Army records.

Previous research has also been limited because of the lack of a systematic, publicly documented effort to use archaeology to re-locate the battle site and to re-think the battle from the archaeological evidence, as has been done at other sites, including the Little Big Horn Battlefield and the Army-Chiricahua Apache battleground at K-H Butte (Fox 1995; Ludwig and Stute 1993). Since at least the 1960s, various parties have visited Cibecue to investigate areas purported to be the battlefield. Despite participation by prominent historians and at least two tribal representatives in an extensive metal detector survey, however, the findings have not been published. No detailed maps or notes have been found. Using a photograph from a 1971 newspaper announcement that the site had been "discovered," we were able to re-locate at least some of the areas that were previously collected.[3]

The prior work left us to pursue locally based memories in conjunction with a kind of "salvage archaeology," using the disordered bits of archaeological data we could locate and comprehend. We found a few additional artifacts with metal detectors, potentially confirming at least some parts of the battlefield. Although most of the indignation in the Southwest is rightly focused on the looting of ancient cemeteries and villages, one of the lessons painfully learned from our salvage work is the irrevocable damage to historical period sites wrought by uncontrolled, unreported excavations. As we continue the detailed analysis of the materials that have been recovered, we can only speculate about how much richer the project results would have been if a more intact archaeological record of the battle had been available for analysis in conjunction with the Apache narratives.

Earlier documentary efforts have been incomplete because those interested in the battle did not establish a meaningful dialogue with local community members—to understand their values of history, their collective memories. This situation has created an official history divorced from the very people whose lives have been most impacted by these events. Whereas our impression is that the majority of non-Indian Arizona citizens are not familiar with the Cibecue battle in particular, or more generally with the Apache-American conflict that dominated Arizona politics for half a century, many Cibecue residents have an acute knowledge of this history and its key events. Today, given the high unemployment rate on the White Mountain Apache Reservation as well as the challenges of educating younger tribal members about their history and culture, some people in Cibecue discuss the prospective uses of the battlefield as a tourist attraction and educational tool. Other community members, in contrast, suggest that this misfortune is too sensitive to draw specific attention to or promote as a public attraction. Ultimately, because it is Apache land and their history, and because their community would be most impacted by the development or use of the site, the future of the battlefield must be left to Cibecue community members. Nevertheless, the site's fate is relevant to all of us because it is a place that speaks not only to Apache history, but also to the history and destiny of Arizona and our nation and to the *relationships* between Apaches and Euro-Americans which contributed to our prevailing attitudes and ways of life. In this way the battlefield is not only about what transpired in 1881, but also very much about our world today, how it came to be, and how initially simple misunderstandings can escalate, giving way to horrible results and enduring antipathy.

THE BATTLE OF CIBECUE

The place now known as Cibecue, a small town in East-Central Arizona on the White Mountain Apache Reservation, has been occupied by Apache groups for generations. Shortly after the Spanish first arrived in the southern Southwest, the Europeans first reported that the area north of the Gila River and south of the Hopi villages was a "despoblado," or wilderness, and they regarded it for three centuries as a vast, impenetrable lacuna ruled by fierce Apaches (Forbes 1959). Completing fieldwork in the 1930s, anthropologist Grenville Goodwin (1942:5) noted that three bands were predominately associated with the Cibecue region since the 1850s, the Carrizo Band, Cibecue Band, and Canyon Creek Band. Goodwin (1942:21) wrote that the Cibecue Band was called *"dzìłtàdn"* or "at the foot of the mountains people" because of their proximity to the Mogollon Rim; the Cibecue Valley itself "is called *dèstcìbìkò* ('horizontally red canyon'), alluding to the red sandstone bluffs along its sides, and, when designating all the people living there, local Apache say *dèstcìbìkò'ndè* ('horizontally red canyon people')".[4] The people of the Cibecue Band farmed along Cibecue Creek and its tributaries, but like all Western Apache bands, also ranged throughout neighboring regions in eastern and southern Arizona for hunting and foraging.

By the time American citizens and soldiers began streaming into southern Arizona in the late 1850s, Apache groups had successfully resisted Spanish and Mexican colonization for more than 250 years (Worcester 1979:3–49). The Cibecue and Canyon Creek bands were thus wary when, around 1857, American forces in Tucson invited them (along with members from the Pinal and Arivaipa Apache bands and Southeastern Yavapai) to make peace and receive presents of red calico, copper wire, and corn (Goodwin 1942:22). The Cibecue and Canyon Creek bands later received rations at Camp Grant along the San Pedro River in the 1860s, until Camp (later Fort) Apache was established and the bands fell under its jurisdiction in 1870 (Goodwin 1942:22).

By the early 1880s the interplay of shifting federal policies, conflicting civilian and military goals, and mounting discord among Apache groups had created a social and political setting in Apache country that was complex and volatile to say the least. The peace first offered by American soldiers in 1857 did not last long, as settlers and Army soldiers sought to capture and kill Apaches, often laying waste to entire encampments. As John G. Bourke wrote in December 1872 after his company demolished an Apache settlement during a search-and-destroy reconnaissance, "Altogether the movement has been very successful because, at the present season, these incorrigible devils must feel keenly every deprivation, and [the] more that they are without an article of clothing, a particle of food, or any necessaries, the better winter winds will cause them to parish upon the tops of mountains" (Robinson 2003:39). In turn, Apaches engaged in both raiding as a subsistence strategy and warfare to exact revenge for unjust killings (Basso 1993). Unlike their Spanish and Mexican predecessors, American colonialists were able to generate substantial momentum, recruiting masses of settlers to head westward and obtaining substantial martial resources, particularly in the military vacuum following the Civil War.

While numerous Apache groups continued to resist American authorities, most notably members of Chiricahua bands, by 1881 many Apaches did more than accommodate Americans and actively supported U.S. Army operations against their Apache kin. Beginning in 1866, Congress allowed Army commanders to enlist American Indians as scouts; by the late 1870s, some 600 Indian scouts were serving in the U.S. Army (Wharfield 1964). General George Crook most famously employed Apache scouts to his advantage, once writing, "I cannot too strongly assert that there has never been any success in operations against these [Apache] Indians, unless [Apache] Indian scouts were used" (Thrapp 1975). Given the severe tensions within communities fostered by this method, the surprising thing perhaps is not so much that Apache scouts turned against the Army at Cibecue in 1881, but rather that this is the only recorded instance of such mutiny. Despite the scout enlistments by hundreds of Cibecue and White Mountain Apaches and the more general lack of open resistance, these bands did not escape the impacts of decisions made in Washington. Families from Cibecue were forcibly moved to San Carlos around 1877 as part of the government's "concentration policy," living in crowded, unhealthy conditions for several years before returning to the Cibecue Valley. Thus Apaches had reestablished themselves there, living along Cibecue Creek when the trouble started in the spring of 1881.

In trying to understand the spiritual movement that entranced Cibecue residents in 1881 and sparked the battle, anthropologist Forrest Meader (1967) has noted that such "nativisitic movements" typically arise during periods of extreme stress in a colonial encounter. Meader rightly points out that the Apaches around Cibecue in the early 1880s felt pressed upon from every side. They were forced to live on a dwindling reservation, with major losses in their aboriginal lands in 1874, 1876, and 1877. Non-Indian squatters and poachers were incessant problems. Largely to facilitate policing and to discourage Apache travel beyond reservation boundaries—including customary hunting and gathering excursions—the government periodically supplied the Apaches with rations, which were often of poor quality and distributed unfairly. Meader (1967:20) observes that some have blamed the Cibecue affair on Indian Agent Joseph C. Tiffany and the San Carlos Agency for angering Apaches by not issuing rations; Ogle (1949:201) similarly remarked that “Tiffany had signed bills of lading for goods not received, and rations had been issued short to make up for wastage and shrinkage. Short issues in other instances had been manipulated to the profit of the agent.” In a related accusation, the *Chicago Times* in a September 1881 article accused Tiffany of tricking Apaches to sell land with coal deposits to him cheaply.[5] Apache consultant Glenn Cromwell similarly intimates such abuses. He had heard that the scouts involved in the battle “had taken a lot of verbal abuse and were badly treated, [had] poor rations and equipment and supplies. They were doing a lot of work and they got tired of it. But the main cause was the verbal abuse and the put downs from the soldiers.” Furthermore, Apaches accommodating authorities were constantly encouraged by Navajos and rebellious Apaches to resist American forces. The Apache way of life, in short, was being dismantled—families and communities likely felt themselves spiraling into the unknown. As Meader (1967:20) writes, “If we take into account the mishandling of rations, encroachment on the reservation, Navajo emissaries, and a general concern over the passing of the old way of life, we can appreciate some of the stresses Apaches were doubtless suffering at this time.”

When an old singer, one familiar with both Apache and U.S. customs and institutions, thus came forward, talking about the rise of the great men of the past, many Apaches were ready to listen. The man is known in historical documents by various names, but typically some variation of Nockaydelklinne. Apache oral traditions do not consistently recall his name. Most Apaches interviewed said they simply do not know it while others suggested Nada skíí, Na′e′nzghonee, Beena′ditiné (“Path Across Bridges”) and Nokaidelkliée (“Burning Mexican”). Elder Eva Watt was told that he belonged to her clan, the T′iis kaadń (“Cottonwood Standing People”), named for a farming area where a trail crosses a Cibecue Creek tributary by a lone cottonwood tree (Goodwin 1942:618). Nockaydelklinne served as a scout for the U.S. Army, apparently being among the first to enlist in 1872 (Bourke 1971:178). His familiarity with the U.S. and its government further increased on a visit to President Ulysses S. Grant—perhaps in 1871 (Meader 1967:20) or 1875 (Wharfield 1971:16)—and through a period spent boarding at the Santa Fe Indian School. When Nockaydelklinne returned to the Cibecue region, he expanded his singing and spiritual practices, apparently enhancing his powers and attracting devotees by integrating Apache healing customs with some of the Christian religious expressions he had been become familiar with at boarding school and during travels beyond reservation boundaries.

In the spring of 1881, rumors were adrift that the medicine man was claiming to raise Apaches who had long ago passed away. This new ritual was probably called na′ilde‘, a term referring to the return from the dead (Goodwin 1938:34). Some have described the dance as a kind of “Wheel Dance.” “When observed, this ceremony was conducted by Nakai'doklin'ni, who is said to have used it to restore two chiefs to life at Cibicu . . . The performers were arranged like the spokes of a wheel, all facing inward, Nakai'doklin'ni occupying the center or hub portion around which the whirling backward-and-forward, fanatical participants danced, as he sprinkled them with cattail-flag pollen and prayed over them to his gods" (Reagan 1930:328). In 1975, Apache elder Nick Thompson spoke about the medicine man—a story learned from his paternal grandfather—recently translated into English by Beverly Malone:

> There's a place called *dashį* in Cibecue. Four girls and four boys were involved—the girls were virgins. One medicine man, four drums, pollen. Each of the eight had a feather and a bead. They went to the graveyard and opened the grave of the dead lady. The body had started to decay. The woman wouldn't get up. The eight were standing toward the sunrise, and they started singing and dancing for a long time. Part of the way through the dead lady started to move, squirm around. She was saying "*ayahh*" like in pain. The people got scared and took off back down to the valley, spilling the pollen and allowing the drums to roll away. The medicine man stayed away. The targeted deceased had a place prepared for them, with a blanket and a shelter (down in the valley). When they got back to the shelter they found two white doves inside, even though there were no doors or windows.

Rose Thompson and her daughter, Sharon Thompson, spoke in a 1993 interview about the story they heard from an old man who said he was 11–years-old at the time of the battle. Their narrative parallels the remembrances of Rose's spouse, Nick Thompson. Rose Thompson began:

> He said there is a medicine man, he sing that the dead will come back, the medicine man. They got a drum and they dance—all of Cibecue that wants to dance, they dance by the graveyard, in the night. . . . They dance over there by the graves. They got drum, yellow powder, everything they got. And then that [medicine] man said "The dead will get up, all of them" . . . A *lot* of men that have died already, they dance too over there, they got a drum and everything. There were a lot of people dancing and he was singing in the graveyard. That medicine man and all the men, there was a grave over here [of] an old woman. They just uncovered [cleared off] the grave and then the old woman was there with gray hair and just skin too. . . . Yes, they were singing and they uncover the grave and they dance. Then in the middle of the night, I think, oh, that old woman was trying to get up. She said "Eeee, ayaa, ayaa," that old woman and she tried to get up, it sounds like. And everybody—the medicine man and everybody—got scared, *very* scared, they left everything. They drop everything what they had and then they ran home, you know, as just fast as they can because they got *very scared.*

Most Apaches today cannot fathom any deliberate contact with the buried dead, except in the direst straights, and several stories suggest that the medicine man was only reluctantly involved in these activities. Elder Jennie Henry said in an interview, “The reason they got Nada skíí to do the dances was because the Apaches wanted him to revive the dead. He told them that it wasn't possible. But the people said they could see the people starting to move. But it was the rats making them move, the medicine man said! So he was more or less made to do it.” In similar terms Apache consultant Glenn Cromwell told us, “The medicine man didn't do anything wrong. He just said he could raise the dead and the Apache could go to heaven. He wasn't sure he was going to do that. The medicine that heals sickness is what there is today. There's nothing like what he was talking about. But his believers really believed.”

Whatever the details of the ritual or the forces obliging the medicine man's contravention of the enduring Apache taboo against disturbing places or remains associated with the deceased, Army officials and Agent Tiffany were disconcerted to say the least. Apprehension grew as scouts at Fort Apache began taking leave to attend the ceremonials in Cibecue (Thrapp 1967:220). Elder Abner Tessay said, “I guess they were going to sing some night. They heard about it, those soldiers in Fort Apache. Probably the scouts told the leaders they were having a singing to bring back the dead over here. There must have been a misunderstanding.” Further concern was caused by rumors that the medicine man was now preaching that the dead would only arise once the Whites had been expelled from the country. In July 1881 Nockaydelklinne went to Fort Apache and spoke with Agent Tiffany as well as Colonel Eugene A. Carr, then commanding officer of the 6th Cavalry at Fort Apache (Wharfield 1971:18). A dance was soon held with their permission near the garrison, but then the dances reverted to the Cibecue area. On August 15 Tiffany telegraphed Carr that he wanted the medicine man “arrested or killed or both” and several days later General Willcox, the department's Commanding General, directly ordered Carr to arrest Nockaydelklinne (Collins 1999:24). Several attempts were made to have Nockaydelklinne come in of his own accord. However, Eva Watt said that when a man came to get him to go to Fort Apache, Nockaydelklinne “tried to tell them that it wasn't true, that they were not going to dance or fight for anything . . . and he refused to go. There was no reason to go over there. [The medicine man said:] ‘I didn't do anything. . . . I'm not the leader, I'm just a singer, but I have to teach these young people because they want to learn it.’” After there was no sign of the singer at Fort Apache, Carr decided to leave with his troops on the morning of August 29. The officers spent considerable time discussing whether or not the Apache scouts could be trusted. Eventually, Carr resolved, “I had to take my chances. They were enlisted men of my command, for duty; and I could not have found the medicine man without them. I deemed it better also if they should prove unfaithful it should not occur at the post” (Collins 1999:33).[6]

After spending the night along Carrizo Creek on August 29, the column

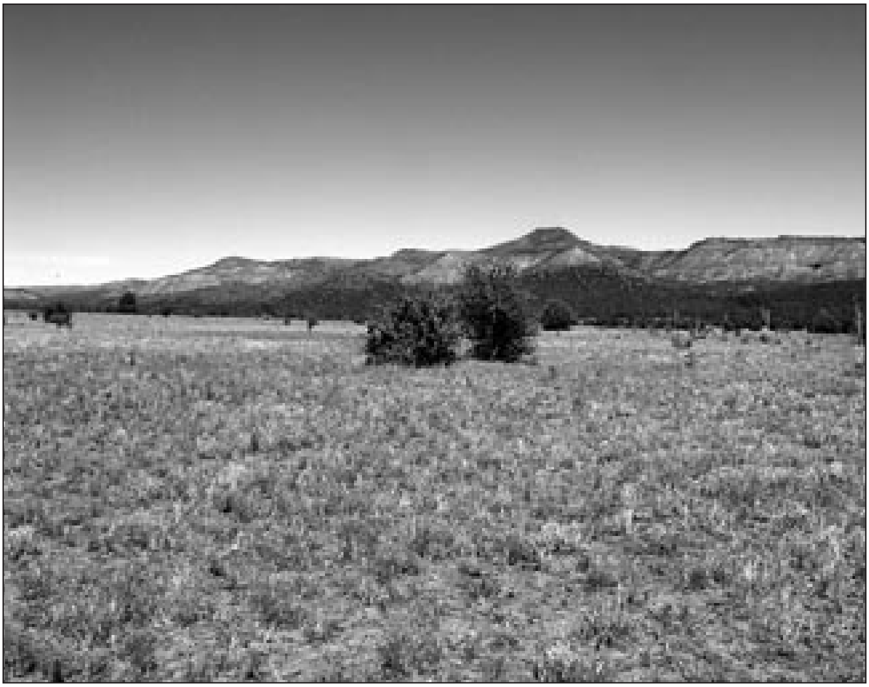

FIGURE 3. Gad ʼOʼááhá (“Juniper Standing By Itself”). (Photo by Chip Colwell-Chanthaphonh.)

arrived at the medicine man’s camp the next afternoon. In the documentary records, this is usually described as being several miles upstream from modern-day Cibecue, and most sources suggest that it was at the place called Gad ʼOʼááhá (“Juniper Standing By Itself”), as noted by Glenn Cromwell and Eva Watt (Figure 3). According to Tom Friday’s 1938 narrative, the scout Dead Shot was ordered to approach the medicine man and ask him to come. But the medicine man refused saying, “No! I no go. . . . you can’t take me. If commanding officer wants me, let him come” (Kessel 1974:130). Frustrated by the rebuff, Captain Hentig entered his wickiup “rough like,” and then “The captain grabbed him right by the top of the hair and took him out of the camp. . . . the Captain told them to put handcuffs on the medicine man” (Kessel 1974:131). In contrast, the army documents reprised in the official narrative recount that the medicine man willingly went with the troops and suffered no immediate harm (Collins 1999:44).

Carr ordered his men to leave the camp and an advance column departed, following Cibecue Creek downstream, while the rest waited behind as the medicine man was brought up. The tension did not lessen even though the medicine man was in the Army’s custody. As one soldier later wrote, “There was a rustling among the crowd of watching Indians that reminded me of the buzzing of a rattlesnake aroused. The Medicine Man's wife ran ahead of him. She moved with a queer dance step and as she swayed she scattered the sacred meal about her" (Wharfield 1971:35). The soldiers continued, on guard. The advance column crossed Cibecue Creek to the east side while the rear continued on some time before crossing, past some cornfields and several low bluffs to the west. The column was split. Arriving at a flat spot, the advance group began to unpack, to make camp for the night. This was likely at a place known as Tséé Palchitin ("Trail Passing Through Gray Rocks"), below the modern-day sawmill. Several Apache narratives indicate that the Army perhaps began to relax, even pausing to wash in the creek. As the troops in the rear began to ford the creek, it seems that Apache warriors began to approach the camp. It is still vague who shot first. "There's always been misunderstandings as long as people have been coming together, and between the high ups, the chief and the commander and captain," Glenn Cromwell told us. "They always tried to hide who started it. They're always accusing who shot first. But [Apaches] were just fighting for their culture and their land." Abner Tessay said, "They came over this way to stop the singing. They were looking for that medicine man. He was home at that time. . . . He went out and talked to the soldiers. They said, 'Are you the one that's gonna sing?' He said, 'yes,' and the soldiers . . . shot him right away."

Army records indicate that Captain Hentig approached the Apaches and shouted at them in their language to go away. Then, Carr later wrote, "the scouts dropped their guns in the position of load, and loaded; an Indian at the head of those mounted and armed, also one of the scouts, Dead Shot, gave war whoops, and the scouts and all commenced firing" (Thrapp 1967:224). Hentig was killed in the first volley of gunshots. In 1938, Tom Friday recalled it was the medicine man's brother who approached the camp. When a guard yelled at him, the Apache "paid no attention to him. He saw his brother in the tent. The commanding officer said to the guard, 'Shoot that man.' He called the medicine man's brother a very bad name. It made the Indians mad, and before the guard could shoot him he raised his gun to shoot the captain. The guard shot him and the commanding officer went into the camp and shot the medicine man, and then all the Indians started shooting and shot Captain Hentig" (Kessel 1974:131). All of the scouts—save one, Sergeant Mose—turned against the soldiers, joining with the Apache warriors.

Chaos ensued, Friday said. "Everyone was shooting. About two o'clock the wind blew very hard. The dust blew and the sand blew in big clouds, and you couldn't see much, and everyone was screaming and they ran away" (Kessel 1974:131). As the firefight began, Nockaydelklinne fell to the ground and began crawling away. A sergeant nearby shot him in both legs, then the Trumpeter, William O. Benites, drew a revolver and shot Nockaydelklinne through the neck (Collins 1999:55). Later that night, somewhat mysteriously, Sergeant John

A. Smith saw Nockaydelklinne was still alive (Wharfield 1971:43). Smith grabbed a hatchet and bludgeoned him.[7] This violent death is recorded—although with varying details—in many of the Apache narratives. Harvey Nashkin in 1932 told Goodwin, simply, "some soldiers had cut off a medicine man's head up there."[8] Nick Thompson said he "was decapitated by the Fort Apache Nantan [boss]." Elaine Narcisco said, "They cut his throat, you know. It was just crazy—all because of gossip." Rose Thompson said, "There was a man that tried to cut his head off, you know? He [the medicine man] was tied like this [wrists together] and he was bending [over] and then his head was chopped off very good." Elder Jennie Henry's version implied that the murder of the medicine man is what started the battle. "They cut him like this," she said as she made the gesture of a knife sliding across her throat. "They didn't shoot him. And then there was a big fight."

Several years later, Carr wrote a letter describing the death of Nockaydelklinne's family: "At the first volley, the sergeant stepped up to the medicine man and shot him, his son attempted to run in with a pony and was killed; and his squaw grabbed a revolver and attempted to shoot a soldier and was killed by another one" (Collins 1999:240). In a variation of this event, Nick Thompson said the medicine man's wife "jumped to him. She had a knife and stabbed the soldier 'Lieutenant' who decapitated her husband." Rose Thompson similarly said, "the one that did it [beheaded the medicine man] was standing right there and the wife of that man that was killed, she jumped to that man and did the same thing [to him] with a big knife. They used to have a big knife that hangs down. She done that like this [whacking] and chop that man's head off too, that man."

After killing the injured Nockaydelklinne, Smith noticed a large medal around the old man's neck and grabbed it (Figure 4). The Peace Medal was given to Nockaydelklinne by President Grant almost a decade before. On the front the medal reads, "Let us have peace." On the back it reads, "On earth peace, good will toward men."

Rumors of the battle immediately spread throughout the Army ranks, citizens of Arizona, and even nationally. On September 4, 1881, the *New York Times* front page announced in an article titled "Shot Down by Indians" that "A massacre by the White Mountain Apaches—seven officers and from sixty to one hundred and ten privates killed—fired upon by their own scouts in trying to arrest a 'medicine man'" (Collins 1999:85). Indeed, decades later, Abner Tessay recalled that "lots of soldiers died." Army records indicate that six privates—William Miller, Henry C. Bird, Edward D. Livingston, John Sondregger, John Sullivan, and Thomas F. Foran—and Captain Hentig died in the battle (Wharfield 1971:85). It is less clear how many Apaches may have perished. Nathanial Narcisco, Sr. heard "a bunch got themselves killed," while Tom Friday and Glenn Cromwell said it was only a couple.

By nightfall, the battle had subsided. The soldiers hastily buried the dead. Then, close to midnight, under the cover of darkness, the column retreated back

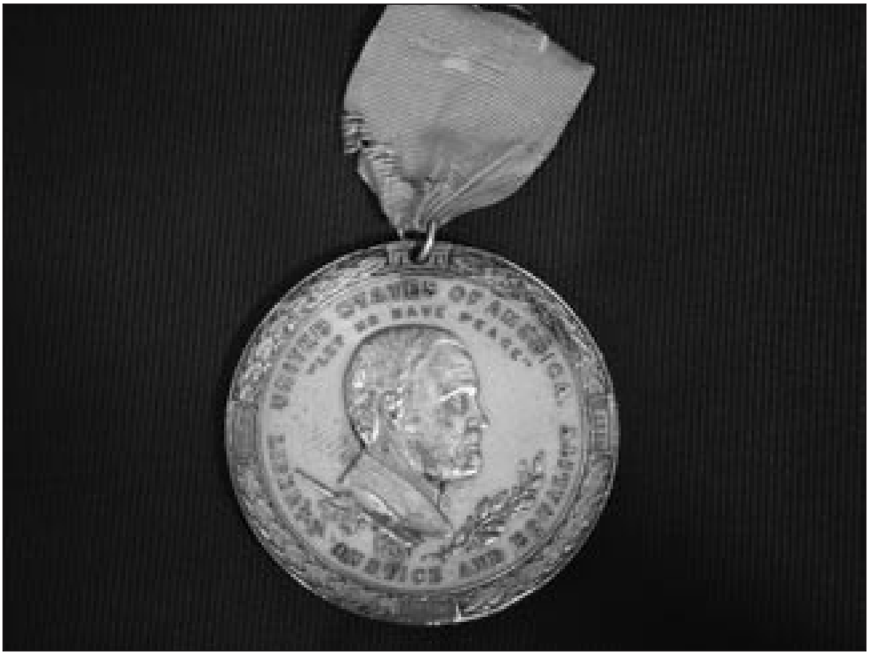

FIGURE 4. Peace medal taken from the medicine man's neck right after his murder. (Photo by Chip Colwell-Chanthaphonh, courtesy of Arizona Historical Society, Tucson.)

to Fort Apache (Collins 1999:58–61). Tom Friday said too, "The white soldiers started for Fort Apache on foot, that same night" (Kessel 1974:131). Compressing some of the events, Abner Tessay for his part noted that "the Apaches killed some of the soldiers and took their guns and some of their horses. The soldiers thought there were a lot of Apaches, so they took off to Fort Apache. They came back with more soldiers. Seeing this, the Apaches went up to the top of the hill [west of town]." After traveling 40 miles, the bedraggled troops arrived at Fort Apache on the afternoon of August 31 (Ogle 1949:205). The next morning, while a burial detail was busy at the cemetery, Apaches attacked Fort Apache with scattered rifle fire from the hills to the south.

Other hostilities followed. Apaches were implicated in the murder of several solders and nine civilians along Turkey Creek (Wharfield 1971:50–51). Apache families, apparently realizing the increased prospects for additional violence or other trouble, fled from the Cibecue Valley in every direction. Nick Thompson thought that some people "took off from San Carlos and west to Łígai Nansdooz. ("Distant White Hills"). There they killed four White people. The killers took off with their horses and cattle and the clothes of the people they had killed." Tom Friday said, "After the fight they [the scouts] went with the Indians far up the canyons" (Kessel 1974:131). "Then they [the fighters] went this way, toward Phoenix, they went," Rose Thompson said. "The old man said 'We went on the way and then spend the night some place. In the morning, everyone was praying, everybody. They gather around or make themselves in a line and they pray for them and everybody was praying not to let the soldiers follow them they said. After they pray, they move on and then they move on." Eva Watt recalled that her own mother and father went to Oak Creek and others went to Bylas, San Carlos, and Whiteriver. Jennie Henry told us that "After the fight—both Apaches and Whites were killed—they said to the people to run to Carrizo, a big mountain there, and they lived there. Then a man came to them saying the war is over. Many Army and Apaches were dead, but it was over. So the people came down from the mountains."

In 1932 Palmer Valor provided Goodwin with one of the most detailed narratives we have on the uncertain days after the battle.[9] Because of its rich reflections of Apache thoughts and actions, we offer this previously unpublished excerpt in its entirety:

> Our old sergeant, Dził-yìn-í, had been discharged some time ago, and now the father-in-law of John Robinson, who died just a few weeks ago, was sergeant. It was while this man was sergeant that we heard they had had some trouble at Cibicu [in 1881]. There were some White soldiers who got killed there. There my father-in-law and some of his band left Fort Apache, and turned renegade. They started for a big mountain in the east. There were lots of soldiers camped at the Sub Agency now. One day Navajo Bill, the interpreter of the Sub Agency, came to me, and said that the White man wanted me to go with three other men and see if we could locate my father-in-law and his band who were still out in the mountains. Before we left the White man in charge gave me a piece of paper written on, as a message for my father-in-law. I guess maybe he thought some of those people understood writing. "While you are out looking for this man, don't go to Fort Apache," he told us. "Go to him, and if you find him, tell him we want him to come back here, and that he will only have to go away to prison for one year. Don't hide this from him, but tell him exactly what he is in for. Keep looking till you find him."
>
> I didn't think that my father-in-law and his people had gone much beyond Warm Springs, on head of San Carlos River, so we started out for this place.
>
> The first night we camped in the head of Salt Creek, and the next day got to that big hill, just to the south of Warm Springs. While we were at Salt Creek, it had snowed. We unsaddled at the foot of the hill, by Warm Springs, and started out to look for tracks. Two of us went around the hill one way, and the other way [sic]. I was only one left of the four of us who went out that time. We two went up on the side of the mountain, to look for deer, as well as to watch for signs of those renegades. About half way up the slope of the hill, a gopher had been working. Right on top of one of those piles of dirt he had dug out, was a fresh moccasin track,

headed towards San Carlos. The trail was so fresh, that when we started on it, we ran right along fast, and could follow easily. We followed the tracks out on the end of a point, and right in, at the foot at the hill, now we could see lots of horse tracks, and mule tracks. There was a sotol plant there, which those people had tried to set fire to, to make a signal. A little further on we saw lots of clothes, and cooking out bits lying on the ground. They had got scared and dropped everything.

We followed on around and came to Warm Springs. Right there, just about where the springs come out, up on the hill, we heard a voice calling out. All four of us were together again, and we called back. We told them, we are looking for you people, they want you to come back to the Agency. Then the father of Chu-di', who was with the renegades, called out my name, and said for me to come over alone, without the others. So I started over. When I got to them, I gave them the paper which the White man had given me. This means that I am out looking for you, I told him. No one could read it, but I told them all the same. You will have to be a prisoner for one year, when you come back, I told him. He wanted to know how many more of us there were. Only us four, I told him. "Are the White people with you?" he asked. None, I said. They are only below, on the Gila River. They told me to go back to the others, that they were going to go to where they had dropped all their property, and got it, and then would meet us four across the canyon a ways. They said for us to do some cooking for them. It was about dark then, when I went back. We sat to work for these people. It was way late though, before the renegades got in to where we were. They had gone all round our camp, to see if there weren't any Whites with us, waiting to ambush them.

The chief said to me, when he got there, "My son-in-law, I am thankful you came to me here. I think you keep your word, and speak the truth as they did in the old days. I find you have told me the truth about there being only four of you. In two days I will come in, and give up at the Sub Agency." The White man had given me a pencil before I left, and with this my father-in-law made a cross on the paper. "Show this to the White man in charge, and tell him I am satisfied that I have been sent after, and that I will be in two days," he said.

The next day the four of us went on back and I reported to the White man what had happened through the interpreter, Navajo Bill. In two days we were looking for my father-in-law and his people. They didn't show up, and I began to think they had gone to the other White Mountain people, further down the river, at Dewey Falls. So they sent me down to Dewey Falls. In a camp there, we found my father-in-law. He was drinking *tu-łi-paí* there. It was midnight now. He said to me, "I already agreed to be there and that is the same as if I gave you my head and my heart. I will be there at the Sub Agency in the morning. I won't try to take back what I said. I will do as I say." In the early morning he was there, with six men, counting himself, and lots of women.

The White man in charge said he would be put in jail, and so they took all six of his men and be put away some place to jail at San Carlos. After the men were

> in jail, they told who are the rest of the renegades out were, and this way all were caught and put in jail at San Carlos. In 10 days they sent all those prisoners away to prison, in wagons, by road. There was no railroad then. After one year they all came back again, so that officer who first told me that the sentence was to be for one year, spoke the truth.

After months of hiding in the mountains and canyons of Arizona, Apache groups, willingly and by force, began to drift back to the reservations. By the late fall, a group of 10 Apaches were held in prison at Camp Thomas without charges or trial, until they were released in early 1883 (Wharfield 1971:57). Five former scouts—Dead Shot, Dandy Jim, Skippy, and two unnamed—had also been arrested and were in custody at Fort Grant (Wharfield 1971:86–89). After a brief military tribunal, the two unnamed prisoners were given long sentences, served at Alcatraz, and were paroled in June 1884. The three named defendants at Fort Grant were not as fortunate. The court found them guilty of mutiny, desertion, and murder and sentenced them to be hanged. President Chester A. Arthur confirmed their sentences. Dead Shot, Dandy Jim, and Skippy were executed at Fort Grant on March 3, 1882. Apache narratives also recount this end. Anna Price told Goodwin, "Later on they took all those scouts to Fort Grant, and hung them. One of the scouts who was hung, was married to my sister. This was not good."[10]

Written records suggest that, not surprisingly, the prisoners disagreed with the sentence. Dead Shot tried to escape the night before the hangings (Whar-field 1971:91). Skippy, while on the scaffold reportedly "said it was not right to hang him an innocent man" (Collins 1999:202). Palmer Valor recalled that one man tried to escape but was later caught. He also said, "It was about this time that the government had three scouts in the jail because they had all three been at that fight at Cibicu where the soldiers had been killed. They were all three White Mountain men and all of them are dead now. Their own people had turned them in and they had given themselves up, so that was how they came to be in jail."[11] The fate of the men is wrapped up in a story that relates how the men were avenged from the beyond. As Tom Friday told it, "When the first scout was on the scaffold he said to the commanding officer and to the priest, 'You are going to hang me, but remember, you are going to follow us too.' . . . Two or three days after that the commanding officer was found dead in his camp: he had died in his sleep. A few days later the priest also died" (Kessel 1974:132). Years later, Rose Thompson told a similar story. "Those men, they were *hang*," she said. "They hang around the neck. 'One more talk before you die,' they tell one man. . . . 'Well, tell me first who was doing this [to me]?' [he said] . . . Then they name about two men . . . 'Yes, I know it now. Those men, they will be with us tonight,' he said. Then all four them were hang, they were killed. Afterwards, in the night, those two men that name those others, they were asleep and they were all died, in their sleep!"

DOCUMENTING THE BATTLEFIELD

The physical remains of the battle are significant today for many reasons. If the battlefield layout could be specifically identified and a representative scatter of associated artifacts documented, unanswered questions about the battle might be addressed including, where the battle began, the extent of the battlefield, the positions and movements of the participants, and the number of Apaches involved. Precisely documenting the battlefield is also important because it can help the White Mountain Apache Tribe define associated management and planning issues, such as where future development might be limited or whether and where a site for tourism, commemoration, or public education might be located. At least as significantly, the material remains of the battle are important because they attest directly to this pivotal moment in Apache history. From the rusted Apache arrow points to Nockaydelklinne's Peace Medal, these artifacts provide the physical evidence of these events—a tangible bridge between past events and our present knowledge, memories, and perspectives.

In 1971, a group of historians and two members of the tribe's Cultural Center staff set out to re-locate the Cibecue battlefield. Wharfield (1971:73–82), reproducing a letter by Janice Fisk, recorded that seven people were part of the effort—James W. Walker, Edgar Perry, Canyon Quintero, Janice Fisk, Dan L. Thrapp, Wendell Towse, and Charles Sollo.[12] With participation of Perry and Quintero, staff members at the White Mountain Apache Culture Center at Fort Apache (Welch 2000), the group apparently had the implicit permission of the tribe. The group located an area on a low hill overlooking Cibecue Creek that roughly matched landscape features on old Army maps of the battle. Using metal detectors, several of the searchers turned up a range of artifacts including cartridge cases, arrowheads, military buttons, flattened slugs, and an Apache "band tag" numbered "V 17." Down below the knoll more artifacts were located along the creek—despite extensive disturbance, such as plowing and irrigation—including cartridge cases, slugs, a hatchet head, bridle parts, buttons, and buckles. Given the assortment of the artifacts, many dating to the early 1880s, and the match with the military records, the group announced that they had precisely established the Cibecue battlefield location.

Based on surviving documents, the group collected at least 76 artifacts over several days, April 16, April 17, May 6, and August 29, 1971 (Table 2). Of these artifacts, 54 could have been on the site in 1881. According to Fisk's letter, "All the artifacts have been donated to Edgar Perry for an exhibit at the White Mountain Apache Culture Center museum at Fort Apache" (Wharfield 1971:74). However, when this ethnohistory project was launched in 2002, the White Mountain Apache Tribe Culture Center did not have possession of any of these artifacts. In an April 2004 conversation with the senior author, Mr. Perry denied any knowledge of the collections, suggesting that they could have been lost during the disas-

TABLE 2. Summary of collections from 1971 work, as reported by Wharfield (1971); whereabouts of most items unknown in 2005.

Artifact Class	Approximate Manufacture Date Range	Number of Items	Remarks on Provenience, Interpretive Issues
Buckles and Metal from Horse Tack	?	7	Ridge, W. of Creek, surface & subsurface
Helmet and Harmonica Fragments	1881–1900	2	Buried on E. side of Cibecue Creek
Button, 15-23 m/m, uniform	1870–1910	4	E. and W. of Creek, buried 1-2 inches; 1 has infantry pattern
Apache ID tag	1873–1876	1	Ridge, W. of Creek, surface; Front side: White Mountain V 17; Back side: 5
Lithic Bifaces	1000–1900	2	Ridge, W. of Creek, surface; both broken
Bullet & Bullet Fragments		8	E. & W. of Creek, buried 1–5 inches deep; Colt 45 and 45/70 Rifle bullets
Cartridge Cases, ?/70, Benet primer	pre-1877	5	E. and W. of Creek; copper (?) cases; 1 headstamp legible: C-F 4/82
Cartridge Cases, ?/70, External primer	1878–1889	18	E. and W. of Creek; brass cases; headstamps: R-F 3/84, R-F4 11/84, C-F 1/85, R-F 4/83, F 3/87, R-F 11/87, F 5/88, R-F 9/82, R-F 11/82, R-B 10/78, R-B 45/70, WRA Co. WCF,
Cartridge Cases, ?2/20, External primer	1882–?	2	E. and W. of Creek; headstamp: WRA Co. WCF
Cartridge Cases, ?0/30 (Winchester), External primer	?	1	E. of Creek; headstamp: WRA Co. 30 WCF
Cartridge Cases, ?/40, External primer	1882–	2	W. of Creek; Peters 44-40, introduced 1882
Cartridge Cases, ?0/40 Krag, External primer	?	1	E. of Creek; headstamp: F 4/01
Cartridge Cases, ?3/40, External primer	?	1	W. of Creek; headstamp: WRA Co. WCF
Cartridge Cases, ?4/40, External primer	?	14	E. and W. of Creek; headstamp: WRA Co. WCF
Cartridge Case, 30/40 Krag, External primer	post-1890	1	Ridge, W. of Creek, south of Sawmill, surface
Cartridge Cases, ?5/60, External primer	1875–?	1	E. of Creek; headstamp: WRA Co. WCF; Used in Winchester 1876
Cartridge Case, less head, 45-70	?	1	W. of Creek
Cartridge Cases, 45 Colt (single action), External primer	1882–?	3	E. and W. of Creek; Peters 45 Colt headstamp, not introduced until 1882; other headstamp: WRA Co. 45 Colt

trous fire that destroyed the Culture Center in 1985 or that they were deposited with the Cibecue School.

Yet it soon became clear that not all of the artifacts initially collected were turned over to the tribe and that other collecting expeditions had proceeded, apparently without any authorization. After our project started, in 2004, the Sharlot Hall Museum of Prescott, Arizona returned to the tribe several cigar boxes and bags full of Territorial-era artifacts labeled as having been collected from the Cibecue battlefield in October 1969, April 1971, February 1995, and July 1999 (Table 3). Personnel at Sharlot Hall reported receiving the materials following the death of Mr. Walker. The date of April 1971 on some of the labels—at the very least—indicates that some collected artifacts were not returned to the White Mountain Apache Tribe. The later dates on other bags suggest that individuals illicitly returned to the battlefield to search for and collect additional artifacts. Wharfield (1971) has preserved basic information about the 1971 collecting efforts, but a complete record remains unpublished and no detailed maps or field notes have been located. Although the earlier collecting forays established "ground truth" of the battlefield location—common knowledge for many Cibecue elders—the fragmentary and incomplete documentation, the missing artifacts, and the repeated site visits all raise serious questions about the ethical basis and analytic utility of the collections, especially those made in the 1990s. Additional analyses are underway to compile a more complete report on the significance and meaning of the historical artifact assemblage, including a detailed comparison of the items on the 1971 roster (summarized in Table 2) with those returned to the tribe in 2004 (Table 3).

In any case, after speaking with Cibecue community members and gathering the Apache narratives, we perceived substantial congruence between the site identified in 1971 and surviving oral traditions (Figure 5). The narratives of Tom Friday, Eva Watt, Glenn Cromwell, Jennie Henry, and Elaine Narcisco specifically pointed to the same area. While no map of the 1971 survey could be found, a newspaper photograph with two large ×s suggested the location of the battlefield. Comparing the 1971 photograph with today's landscape, we were readily able to re-locate the ×s—one × being the hill identified in 1971 as the position of Apache riflemen and one × being the Army camp along Cibecue Creek. Resurveying the knoll we located additional artifacts, including two Apache-style metal arrow points, a cartridge case, a metal comb, and a horseshoe, none of which are diagnostic but all of which could date to 1881 (Table 4; Figure 6). Re-surveying along a portion of Cibecue Creek, in the most likely vicinity of the cavalry camp, was less successful. No 19th century artifacts were located with the metal detector. Nevertheless, the artifacts collected earlier, the documented presence of potentially battle-related artifacts today, and the Apache oral traditions all seem to converge on the same place and to confirm that at least a portion of the battlefield has been documented. At the same time, the documents and oral

TABLE 3. Artifacts returned to the White Mountain Apache Tribe from the Sharlot Hall Museum in 2004.

ID No.	Description	Notes Transcribed from Bags Containing Returned Artifacts
FN 1	Shell	59. Cibecue 11 Feb. 95. Flat area 300 yards S. of Bridge in front of house of [RR]'s mother. JWW. Dick Hishberg [?], Joe Nickolas. C. Collins.
FN 2	Shell	59. Cibecue 11 Feb. 95. Flat area 300 yards S. of Bridge in front of house of [RR]'s mother. JWW. Dick Hishberg [?], Joe Nickolas. C. Collins.
FN 3	45-70	69. From Cibecue Creek
FN 4	45 cal colt (martin)	69. From Cibecue Creek
FN 5	45 cal schofield	69. From Cibecue Creek
FN 6	Shell	68. Shell Recovered from Battle of Cibecue Area (1974)
FN 7	Shell	Cibecue battle. Apache positions across creek from cavalry camp*
FN 8	Shell	Cibecue battle. Apache positions across creek from cavalry camp*
FN 9	Shell	Cibecue battle. Apache positions across creek from cavalry camp*
FN 10	Shell	Cibecue battle. Apache positions across creek from cavalry camp*
FN 11	Shell	Cibecue battle. Apache positions across creek from cavalry camp*
FN 12	Shell	Cibecue battle. Apache positions across creek from cavalry camp*
FN 13	Shell	Cibecue battle. Apache positions across creek from cavalry camp*
FN 14	Metal fragment (long)	Cibecue battle. Apache positions across creek from cavalry camp*
FN 15	Metal fragment (circular defiance SE [?])	Cibecue battle. Apache positions across creek from cavalry camp*
FN 18	Ax	41. Battle of Cibecue, Ariz.
FN 19	Horseshoe	April, 1971 [Muriel cigar box]
FN 20	Tinkler (large)	April, 1971 [Muriel cigar box]
FN 21	Tinkler (small)	April, 1971 [Muriel cigar box]
FN 22	Bullet	April, 1971 [Muriel cigar box]
FN 23	Bullet	April, 1971 [Muriel cigar box]
FN 24	Bullet	April, 1971 [Muriel cigar box]
FN 25	Shell	April, 1971, K-H Butte [Muriel cigar box]
FN 26	Shell	April, 1971 [Muriel cigar box]
FN 27	Bullet	April, 1971 [Muriel cigar box]
FN 28	Button	April, 1971 [Muriel cigar box]
FN 29	Can fragment	Fort Apache Oct. 69 [Roi-Tan cigar box] Battle of Cibecue Recovered 11 July 99
FN 30	Ring (large)	Fort Apache Oct. 69 [Roi-Tan cigar box]
FN 31	Ring (small)	Fort Apache Oct. 69 [Roi-Tan cigar box]
FN 32	Horseshoe	Fort Apache Oct. 69 [Roi-Tan cigar box]
FN 33	Ceramic Utility Line Insulator	Fort Apache Oct. 69 [Roi-Tan cigar box]

*Post-it

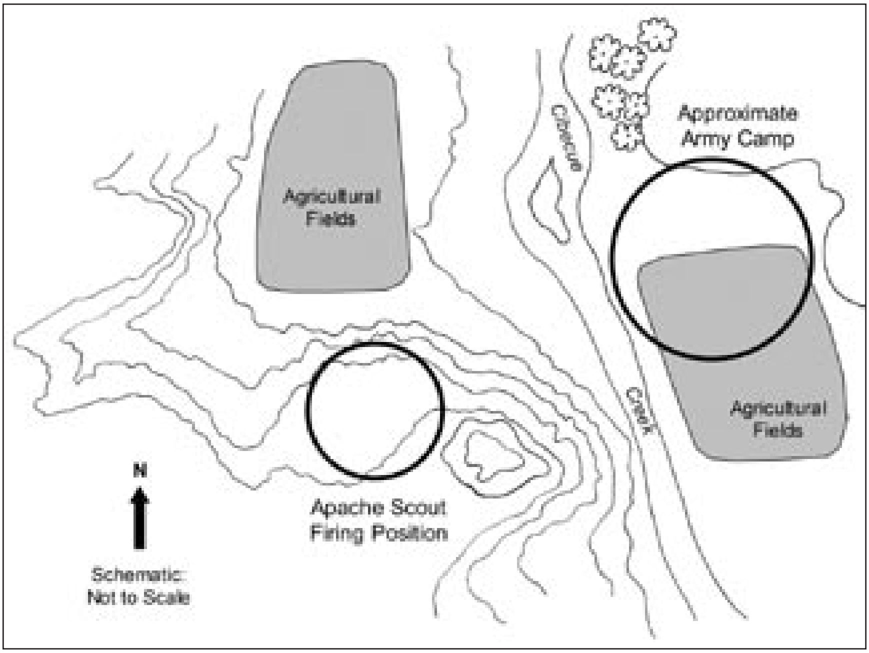

FIGURE 5. Map of Cibecue Battle site. (Drawing by Mark Altaha.)

traditions we consulted indicate that battle events and processes ranged over a much larger area. Additional surrounding areas may still reveal more information and require special consideration in interpretive efforts and in planning community and economic development projects. Furthermore, the battlefield may still be more clearly identified if more artifacts and documents can be located and returned to the White Mountain Apache Tribe for their stewardship.

It is worth noting too that the Arizona Historical Society (AHS) in Tucson, Arizona has curated two artifacts thought to be associated with the Battle of Cibecue. One artifact is a wood bow, donated in 1930 by Charles T. Connell (Catalogue No. 186). According to the AHS documentation the provenance is: "Bow used at Cibicue [sic] Creek Battle, August 30, 1881. Picked up by donor after the fight. Presented by donor who was at the agency at the time." The second artifact is an Indian Peace Medal—minted in 1871 and bearing the profile of President Grant—donated in 1934 by Anton Estate Mazzanovich (Catalogue No. 683). Wharfield (1971:43–44) writes that Anton Mazzanovich was a member of Troop F, of the 6th Cavalry and "secured the medal from [Sergeant John A.] 'Give-a-dam' Smith, and subsequently presented it to the Arizona Historical Society in Tucson. This valued momento of the Apache days is now on display at the museum." The

TABLE 4. Artifacts collected during this project, 2004-2005.

ID No.	Description	Details
FN 16	D Ring	Collected 9/04 by Welch at supposed Cibecue Battle Site on Creek
FN 17	Buckle	Collected 9/04 by Welch at supposed Cibecue Battle Site on Creek
FN 100	Metal Arrow Head	Collected 3/15/05 by Welch, Altaha, & Colwell-Chanthaphonh from supposed Apache firing positions on bluff
FN 101	Metal Arrow Head	Collected 3/15/05 by Welch, Altaha, & Colwell-Chanthaphonh from supposed Apache firing positions on bluff
FN 102	Metal Comb	Collected 3/15/05 by Welch, Altaha, & Colwell-Chanthaphonh from supposed Apache firing positions on bluff
FN 103	Shell Case (45–70?)	Collected 3/15/05 by Welch, Altaha, & Colwell-Chanthaphonh from supposed Apache firing positions on bluff
FN 104	Horseshoe	Collected 3/15/05 by Welch, Altaha, & Colwell-Chanthaphonh from supposed Apache firing positions on bluff

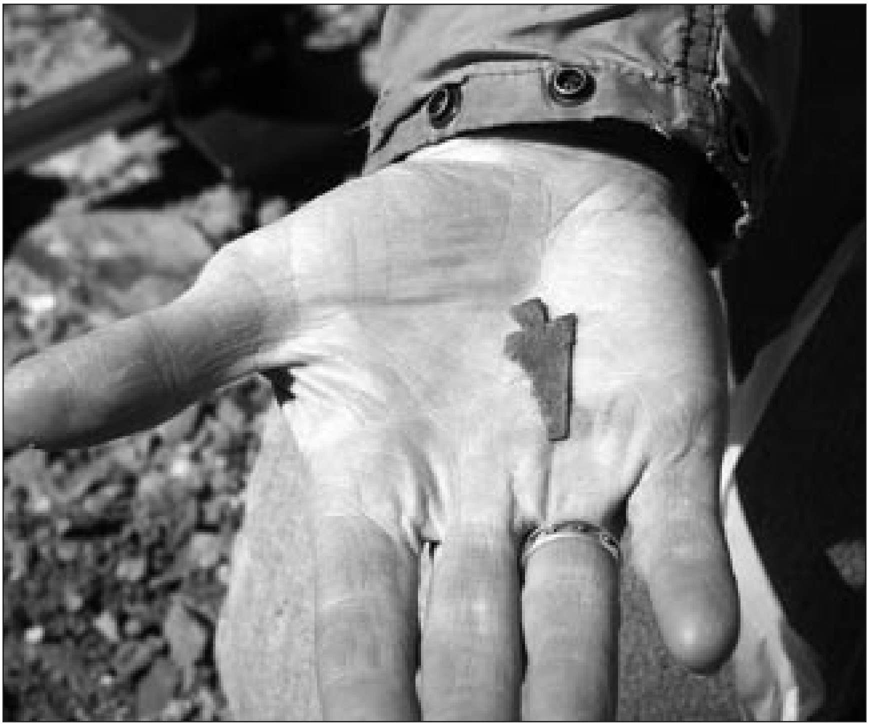

FIGURE 6. Metal arrow point recovered at putative Apache firing position. (Photo by Chip Colwell-Chanthaphonh.)

medal was removed from the Historical Society's public galleries some years ago. Documentation from AHS notes, "Taken from body of Apache Medicine Man, Nokay-del-Klinne after battle at Cibicue [sic] Creek, Aug. 31, 1881."

MEMORY, PRESERVATION, RECONCILIATION

The Army soldiers, the survivors of the battle, cared deeply about the physical remains of their fallen comrades. On September 20, 1881, troops returned to Cibecue. They did not see any Apaches, but they found at least some of the dead soldiers, apparently dug up and mutilated. The troops immediately re-buried the deceased, then fired volleys and paraded to honor the dead (Wharfield 1971:52) Later that winter, the bodies were exhumed and buried at the Fort Apache cemetery. After this mark of respect, the surviving soldiers set out to memorialize the event. A subscription campaign was started and money was collected for a monument. A white stone obelisk was commissioned, engraved rather simply with the names of the dead soldiers and a cavalry insignia of crossed sabers. The monument was moved from the Fort Apache cemetery to Santa Fe National Cemetery in 1932, but was brought back to Fort Apache in 1970 and installed on a concrete pad adjacent to the log cabin popularly known as "Crook's Quarters" (Wharfield 1971:83). Following a period of residence in the courtyard of the community building in Cibecue from about 1986 until 1996 (Figure 7), then-Chairman Ronnie Lupe directed the Tribe's Historic Preservation Officer to return the monument to its concrete pad at Fort Apache, where it has remained. It occurs to us that episodes of monument relocation and signage vandalism at historical sites offer crude initial indicators of contested history, of voices yearning for ears.

The Battle of Cibecue project is among the growing list of projects conducted by the White Mountain Apache Tribe that have integrated cultural heritage research, stewardship, and tourism-focused economic development (Welch 2000; Welch et al. 2005). Our adoption of the goals of Apache leaders has facilitated partnerships, engaged community representatives, and created the opportunity to include the battle site as a featured element in the *Cibecue Parks, Trails, and Monuments Plan*. A number of factors have affected the preservation of the site along Cibecue Creek—salvaging by the Army and Apaches in the battle's aftermath, metal detecting, fence and irrigation ditch construction and maintenance, farm field clearing and plowing, road construction, utility line installation, creek migration and entrenchment, artifact prospecting and collecting, flooding, and borrow pits.

While the battlefield has thus been impacted by many human and natural forces over the decades, the setting of the 1881 event generally retains ample potential to assist in telling the story of the battle. Some Cibecue community members discuss using this place and its history in much the same way that Apaches have always used places—as means for sharing wisdom and memories (Basso

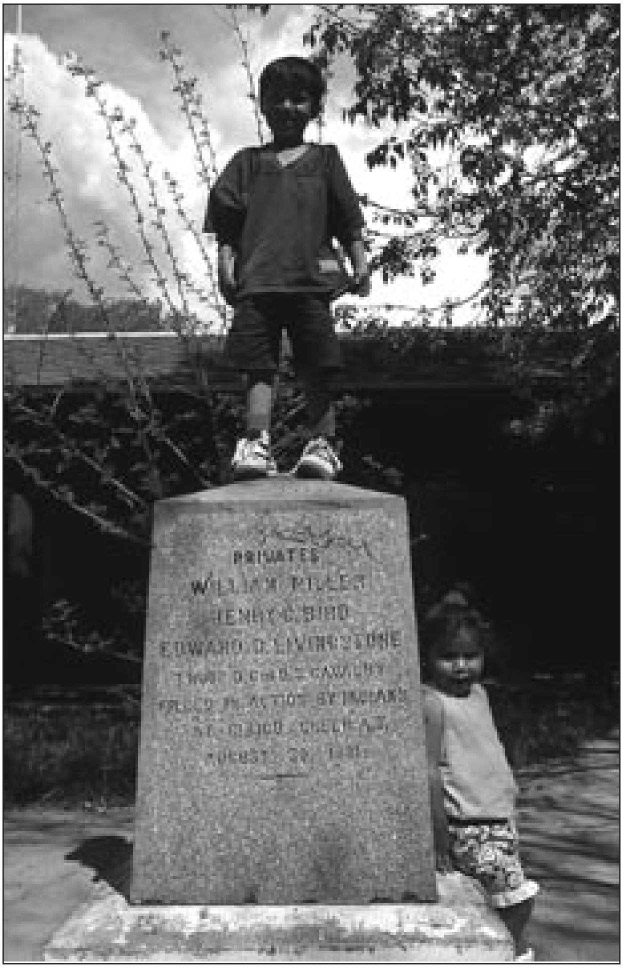

FIGURE 7. Children playing on the monument to the fallen Army soldiers, while it was in the courtyard of the community building in Cibecue. (Photo by John R. Welch.)

1996)—to educate young Apaches as well as outsiders. Others suggest that this bloody tragedy of misunderstanding and spiritual oppression is too sensitive to be a public attraction. A comparable debate occurred when the White Mountain Apache Tribe contemplated restoring and revitalizing Fort Apache, a place marked by conflict and difficult memories (Mahaney and Welch 2002; Welch et al. 2000). Many tribal members asserted that Fort Apache, and the Theodore Roosevelt Boarding School that took over with civilian-administered assimilation efforts where Fort Apache left off with military subjugation, should be destroyed or ignored. Others, including the vast majority of tribal leaders, affirmed their faith in the strength of their own traditions and the growing enlightenment of non-Apaches by adopting Fort Apache and returning it to active duty in constructive service to the Apache people. As a booklet distributed by the tribe said of that place, so too we may consider how by confronting our collective past, the Cibecue battlefield can be a place of reconciliation:

> How can Fort Apache be returned to active duty in service to the Apache community? The first step must be to acknowledge that Fort Apache either caused or symbolizes many of the problems and challenges faced by the Apache people, including diminished territory and cultural integrity. Such an acknowledgment will make possible a stepwise reconciliation among Fort Apache's many stakeholders and a cleansing of the personal and interpersonal wounds caused by the events and the processes of an earlier era. Once individuals and group representatives begin to focus on common ground and shared history and humanity, forgiveness and healing are within reach. (Welch et al. 2000:5)

While the obelisk at Fort Apache honors the Army soldiers, no memorial recalls the fallen Apaches. Perhaps the community of Cibecue will ultimately decide on such a monument for their relatives who died not so long ago. Or, perhaps the tribe will unite in the establishment of a memorial to the hundreds, even thousands of White Mountain and Cibecue Apaches who have made the ultimate sacrifice in fighting for their land, their culture, and their nations—including those lost not only in the "Indian wars," but in the uniforms of the U.S. military in that conflict and every subsequent U.S. war. In the end, we suggest that the ways in which events are to be remembered or forgotten in Cibecue is a decision that should rest with the community of Cibecue. Apaches must, at last, be empowered to tell their own stories, examine their meanings in contemporary contexts, and decide their own future.

EPILOGUE

"That tree used to stand there but now it's not, it's gone," elder Eva Watt said. "Still could see those bullets that went into that tree. Still stuck in the tree."

It is a picture easy to imagine, both sad and poetic. A tree once stood, Watt explains, studded with bullets from the battle. It survived for some time before disappearing, maybe washed away in a flood or cut down to feed someone's fire. The tree, we are sure, was real enough at one time, but perhaps it may also serve as a kind of allegory today. The tree, a living thing, was scarred by gunshots, a permanent wound created by misunderstanding, fear, and violence. People, when they passed by this tree, thought back to the battle and those days in which their ancestors had to fight to protect their homes and families and spiritual freedoms. The tree and the bullets, however, are now gone. They can no longer remind people about what has passed before. Remembering the past is not easy, particularly when the history is so painful and when so little remains to beckon us to the past and to guide us to the truths of what has happened and what can and should be passed down and carried forward.

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NOTES

1. Although many Apache consultants referred to the spiritual leader as a "medicine man," most acknowledged that he was not a healer per se, but a singer. Because many of the Apaches, and most or all of the documentary sources use the medicine man referent, so do we.
2. The narratives collected as part of this project are curated as part of the battlefield site record at the White Mountain Apache Tribe's Historic Preservation Office, Fort Apache, Arizona.
3. Details pertaining to the site location, including the specific citation for the photograph, are withheld to safeguard local residents' privacy and dissuade visitation to the site.
4. A common alternative orthography is *Dishchiibikoh* and *Dishchiibikoh ndee*.
5. In Diary of John Gregory Bourke, August 19, 1879 to Oct. 19, 1881, Microfilm,

Arizona Historical Society, Tucson.

6. It bears mention that there never existed a state of war between the U.S. and the White Mountain or Cibecue Apache and that this and other Army efforts were police actions in which troops were to refrain from interpersonal violence or property damage or seizure, except in self defense or as required to maintain order (see Secretary of War, *Regulations of the Army of the United States and General Orders in Force on the 17th of February, 1881*, U.S. Government Printing Office).
7. Collins (1999:61, note 40) identifies inconsistencies in some of the recollections of this part of the events, noting its absence from official Army documents.
8. Grenville Goodwin Papers, MS 17, F 62, Arizona State Museum Archives, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona.
9. Grenville Goodwin Papers, MS 17, F 37, Arizona State Museum Archives, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona.
10. Grenville Goodwin Papers, MS 17, F 34, Arizona State Museum Archives, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona.
11. Grenville Goodwin Papers, MS 17, F 75, Arizona State Museum Archives, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona.
12. See also "Cibecue Creek: Apache Battle Site Located," *Scottsdale Daily Progress*, 30 April 1971.

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