

Approximately 7000 words

What became of

M I C K E Y F R E E ?

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Tombstone, Arizona.

Down below Patagonia in southern Arizona, the road to Nogales (Arizona Highway # 82) parallels for a bit the old Sonoita Creek. Barely a couple of miles outside of town you will find on the left side of the road a cluster of old and crumblin' 'dobe walls. Overgrown with mesquite, few who pass here have any realization that they exist. Fewer still know their story.

This, I am told, is all that is left of the home of one John Ward, an Irishman, who, in the year 1860, was engaged in the business of hauling timber from the Santa Rita Mountains and the Patagonia Hills for the Mowry, San Antonio and other mines then operating near Patagonia. With John Ward lived his wife and her son.

The kidnapping by the Apaches of this young boy, somewhere between the ages of six and twelve years, was to result in twelve years of the bitterest of Indian wars ever to inflame this country; it was to cause the disillusionment of the powerful Cochise, chief of the Chiricahua Apaches, at peace for many years with the whites. It was to plunge him and his people into an unwanted war of almost annihilation and to result in the

horrible deaths of hundreds of settlers, the loss of thousands of head of stock and the destruction of property the value of which is incomprehensible. The story runs fairly clearly tho in some details there are differences of opinion in the writings of those who participated in the tragedy.

It seems generally agreed that, in early October of the year 1860, a band of Coyotero or White Mountain Apaches were on a raid into Mexico and southern Arizona. In the course of their depredations, they came upon the house of Ward on the Sonoita. Ward, himself, was off in the mountains about his business and the boy and his mother were alone at the ranch. It so happened that the boy was out with the stock, which was the primary interest of the Indians, and he was picked up with the work oxen and horses, and hauled off to the haunts of the band beyond the Gila River. Pedro, the notorious, was the leader of this group.

What became of the little captive boy there - after? What became of the many little captive boys the Apaches took regularly from their homes and families? In the excitement of the subsequent war, this boy seemed to drop completely out of sight. His own parents died years later thinking he was dead. Only his youth saved him from a premature and violent death. The Apaches rarely took adult male prisoners and then only for very specific reasons. They wanted only women and children, especially boys. The boys became braves, Apache braves;

the women became slaves to do the work and maybe, if fortune smiled, they became Apache wives to raise more Apache braves.

We became intrigued with the fate of this particular boy. We dug out what there was to be found of the story. It is, perhaps, not too good a story as it is rather fragmentary. Nor yet is it too bad a story. But a story it is, nevertheless, - the story of Mickey Free.

As was the custom among the Apaches and other Indians, this boy captive was turned over to an Apache family to be raised as an Indian. Apparently he was an apt pupil and, to all intents and purposes, he grew up to be a real Apache. In some respects, it might be said, he almost out-Apached the Apaches. He developed into a slim, wiry brave of about the usual Apache stature, which was not large, and he developed the unusual Apache stamina and endurance. As a scout and hunter, he was superb, as were all Apache braves. But he was a sly, scheming, somewhat sinister and not too trustworthy individual. It is reported that in later years he was wholly trusted by neither the whites nor the Indians. To his credit, however, it should be said that he enlisted against the renegade Apaches and served with the U. S. Army for many years as a scout, guide and interpreter.

The Indian to whom the boy captive was allotted

had another real son whose Indian name was Tlol-dil-xil, which converted into English meant Black Rope. He was commonly called John Rope and he, too, in later life became a trusted scout and guide for the Army, and a member of the old Indian police force on the San Carlos reservation. John Rope and Mickey Free grew up as brothers and, writing his memoirs* in 1935, John Rope says this. "Mickey Free was raised by my father. He was given to him ~~maantikkixix~~ by the San Carlos people when a little boy. Mickey and I were brought up together, so we called each other brothers. He is dead now, but his son, Willie Free, is still living at San Carlos, and I call him my nephew. Mickey used to have long red hair."

(* See Arizona Historical Review, Vol.VII #1 Jan. 1936. "Experiences of an Indian Scout," excerpts from the life of John Rope, an "old-timer" of the White Mountain Apaches-as told to Grenville Goodwin.")

Willie Free died on May 8, 1938 at the age of fifty-five according to the records of the San Carlos Apache Indian Reservation. He left a daughter, Rose, who was born in 1921.

Where, why or how the little captive acquired the name of Mickey Free was a mystery. No one seemed to know anything about it until I caught up with Judge* Donald Mac Intosh at San Carlos. He explained it very simply. In answer to my question as to how Mickey got his name he said. "Why, yes. I can tell you how he

got it. My own father was one of those who named him. Mickey's father, or rather step-father, John Ward, was an Irishman. An Irishman is forever and aye, a "Mick." Hence, the little step-son of an Irish step-father became "Mickey." He was pretty free to come and go in those days and the Free may have been tacked on for that reason."

As the story unfolds Mickey is credited with four fathers, a fair-skinned Mexican, an Apache brave, an Irishman named Hughes and an Irishman named Ward. His mother has the choice of two maiden names, i.e., Martinez or Salvador. But when she married John Ward, as we assume she did, the boy became Felix Ward.

According to Charles Connell, writing for the old ARIZONA magazine in December 1906, his mother's maiden name was Jesus Salvador. She was one of three women taken by a band of Pinal Apaches in 1849 when they ambushed an elegant Mexican cavalcade travelling from Santa Cruz, just below the border, to Magdalena to attend the annual fiesta de San Francisco. She, Jesus Salvador, was the maid-servant to the beautiful and aristocratic, Inez Gonzalez. The third woman taken was Inez' aunt, Mercedes Pacheco. All the men in the party were slain, and that included an uncle of Inez. Only a small boy, Francisco Pacheco, was spared.

It has been said that Inez was sold to a couple of degenerate traders whose purpose it was to sell her into a life of shame in Santa Fe. Happily, however, their

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party fell in with that of Captain John R. Bartlett, head of the U. S. Boundary Commission, who freed the girl from her captors and returned her to her people in Santa Cruz. Little is known of the fate of the tia Mercedes, nor of little Francisco. Probably, he, too, grew up to be a good Apache brave. Somewhere it has been said, I believe, that Aunt Mercedes was early sold to the Navajos.

Jesus Salvador was retained by the Apaches and, according to Connell, one of the Pinal bucks eventually took her to wife. The result of this union, says Connell, was a small son destined to be known as Mickey Free. About a year after the birth of the child, the mother managed to slip away from a group of women with whom she had been working and, with her baby, worked her way down the Gila River to haven with the friendly Pimas, traditional enemies of the Apaches. From there she finally was able to return to her people at Santa Cruz sometime in 1856.

When, after the Gadsden Purchase, the mines in Patagonia began to come to life, Jesus Salvador, with her boy, came to be the housekeeper and then the wife of John Ward. Mr. Connell continues with the story after the kidnapping of the boy by the Apaches in 1860, at which time, he said, the boy was six years of age. The Chiricahua Apaches were unjustly accused of the theft by Ward on very flimsy, circumstantial evidence.

He, Connell, tells in detail of the deceit of an inexperienced junior officer in dealing with Cochise, in a high but under-handed manner. Cochise was the leader of the Chiricahuas, a fierce and powerful tribe. Personally, he was a man of considerable stature intellectually as well as physically. He was known as a man of honor and integrity. Long ago he had realized the futility of fighting the Americans whose numbers simply continued westward in an unending stream, while those of his own warriors were depleted with every clash. As a result of this foresight he had been able to control his people for a matter of some years heretofore and had lived in peace with the whites. When the stage line came thru Apache Pass on the old Butterfield Trail, he had held off his braves and, by not interfering, had helped the Americans carry on the work of communication and travel.

The story of Lieutenant Bascom and his dealings with Cochise has been told and retold. The recent and popular novel by Elliott Arnold, "Blood Brother," is based upon the incident and upon the bond between Cochise and Tom Jeffords. This book has been made into the movie, "Broken Arrow." This part of the story is of interest to us here only because it is the terrible result of a relatively insignificant happening.

During all this war period, our captive boy, Mickey Free, was an embryonic Apache brave. Whether his father was an Apache, as Mr. Connell states, doesn't really matter. Whether his mother's name was Salvador

is of similar unimportance. What does matter - the boy grew up an Apache.

Mr. Connell tells of an experience with Mickey in 1880 when he was assigned "to enumerate the Apaches on the San Carlos Reservation." He said, "This wandering half-breed, whose being caused the woeful events of a decade, today lives the life of a wild and restless Apache." He tells of having the choice of three interpreters, Piute Bill, Navajo Bill or Mickey Free. "It was a gamble as to who was the best," he said, "but from later events, there was a decided preference in the matter of treachery and utter uselessness in the choice of Mickey Free, for he deserted the outfit before the party reached Fort Apache. During the days and nights en route, a study revealed the make-up of this indolent creature, and a more repulsive object could not be imagined, for, in his youth from a fierce combat with a bear, Mickey Free had lost the sight of one eye. He was small of stature, slim with long tawny hair, straight, ragged and unkempt. He usually allowed the hair to fall over the affected eye, but his appearance with a defective eye, sneer and rough features gave him a decidedly repulsive appearance.■

"His associations around San Carlos gave him an opportunity to pick up a little English and, at many times, he was used to advantage as an interpreter and finally was given a position as first sergeant of Indian scouts, and while his reputation was not of the best or ~~his reputation~~

his reputation for honesty of the highest, he proved a good scout.

" In conversation now (1906) over twenty-five years ago, Mickey Free said that he had faint recollection of his home on the Sonoita and that he remembers the long, long ride that he took on being captured. Other than this he remembers nothing, and, so far as his condition at San Carlos was concerned, he was satisfied with the roaming, free and easy life that the reservation afforded - gambling, riding and the reception of the ample rations issued by the government.

"Thus," continues Connell, " we find today among the burdens of this government a character of note, whose life story has never been told, innocently the cause of strife and bitter warfare, a wandering refugee among the Apaches near White River. An Apache at heart, a cruel warrior and treacherous foe, unreliable and not particularly honest.

"You find pioneers ~~xxxx~~ who live today in every county with scars of knife wounds inflicted - with bullets in their limbs, aged, stooped and faltering from the wounds of Apache arrows, wrinkled and with whitened hair from the blasts of the sweeping, burning winds of the waterless, shadeless desert - yet today there is left in solitude and freedom in the wilds of the most beautiful spot in ^{all} Arizona, the White Mountains, - the

creature of circumstance - with a life of freedom and without care - the half-breed, Mickey Free."

Unless I have misinterpreted this story, Mr. Connell's opinion of this "creature of circumstance" is not of the highest. In all justice, however, it must be noted that the dislike must have been mutual. Nowhere else do we find that Mickey Free deserted his post with the Army during his operations as a scout and interpreter.

Santiago Ward, Mickey Free's step-brother, who died in 1935 at the age of seventy-five, was highly indignant about this statement of Mr. Connell's, according to Mrs. George F. Kitt, of the Pioneer Historical Society in Tucson. Before he died, he prepared the following statement dated March 12, 1934 and it was published in the October 1935 issue of the Arizona Historical Review.

"I was born at Sonoita near Patagonia, July 25, 1860. My father was John Ward, one of the first settlers, and my mother was Jesusa Martinez. I know very little of my father as he died when I was five.

"My mother was a Mexican born in Santa Cruz, Mexico. She had been married before to a man named Tellez. He was a very light Mexican with blue eyes and brown hair and they had two children, Felix and Thelora. These children were taken into my father's family and always went by the name of Ward.

"As I said, he was my half-brother, the son of my mother and Mr. Tellez and was grey-eyed and brown-

haired like his father. He was raised by us and went by the name of Ward. When he was about twelve years old and we were living at Sonoita, he was stolen by Apaches and never came back. A posse of men went after the Indians but they divided into three groups. One group took my brother, a second took the cattle they had stolen from the ranch and elsewhere and the other group just kept on foraging. Of course, they decoyed the men into taking the wrong trail.

"Father and Mother both died thinking that brother had been killed. But years later a friend of the family told me that he had seen my brother at San Carlos; that he had grown up as an Indian and was an interpreter for the government. So I went up to San Carlos to see him. That was in 1881. I didn't know him at first, but he looked very much like his sister, fair with greyish eyes. They called him Mickey Free. I do not know why.

" I tried to get him to come home and see the family, but he would never do it, always made some excuse. He wanted me to stay with him and he got me work and I stayed with the government for a year. Mickey and I went down to the San Bernardino Ranch on the border with forty wagons drawn by mules and along with five companies of soldiers, to help bring in the Indians from the Sierra Lares to the reservation. We carried provisions for them all and Mickey went among them to interpret. We were all

under Captain (Emmett) Crawford and Lt. (Britton) Davis."

Thus, Santiago Ward flatly denies that Mickey ~~Free~~ Free, or Felix Ward, was the half-breed son of Jesus Salvador and a Coyotero Apache brave who married her during her captivity with his band. On the other hand, he gives his mother's name, her maiden name, as Martinez, not Salvador, and names as the father of Mickey Free, her first husband, one Señor Tellez, a grey-eyed, brown-haired Mexican who transmitted his light coloring to his children, Felix (Mickey Free) and Thelora.

He says that at the time of his capture, Mickey was twelve years of age, not six, as Connell noted. This would have placed his birth sometime during 1848 or a year or more before the capture of his mother with Inez* Gonzales' party, on September 30, 1849. It will be remembered that Mickey was taken from the Ward ranch on the Sonoita on an October morning in 1860.

Everyone, including Santiago Ward, his step-brother, seems to agree on the light complexion of Mickey, and Santiago gives, with seeming authority, the source thereof, his father, Sr. Tellez, a fair-complexioned Mexican.

It does not seem unreasonable to consider that Mickey's own half-brother should have the facts pretty well in hand. He seems to be able authoritatively to name names, give dates and places and to point out facts and the reasons therefor. His testimony, therefore, we feel

should be given careful consideration.

Tom Horn, Indian scout and interpreter, who operated with the Army for a while during the latter part of the campaigns against the Apaches, seems to have known Mickey Free pretty well. In his autobiography, "The Life of Tom Horn," (copyrighted by John C. Coole in 1904 and published by the Louthan Book Co. of Denver) he describes Mickey's physical appearance similarly but his story differs in other respects.

"Mickey Free was born in 1855 on the Sonoita River, close to the Mexican line," says Horn. "His father was an Irishman named Hughes and his mother was a Mexican. His father and mother were killed in 1862 by the Indians and he and his sister were carried off into captivity.

(The italics are ours) Mickey was then about seven and his sister nine years old. He now spoke both Mexican and Apache like a professional, and was the wildest dare-devil in the world at this time. (Here Horn is obviously talking about the first time he contacted Mickey Free as an Army scout and interpreter, for he was describing the three Indian scouts he had with him on this particular expedition.) He had long fiery red hair and one blue eye, the other having been hooked out by a wounded deer when he was twelve years old. He had a small red mustache and a mug that looked like the original map of Ireland."

While Horn is either confused or in error about Mickey's origin and age, it seems apparent that he is describing the same person, even tho the story doesn't follow the exact course at all times. The complexion stays light, however, and the hair red, and one eye continues defective. According to this scout, Mickey Free was considered "invaluable" by the government. He was a thoroughly qualified scout and guide and absolutely fearless. In 1904 he "lived in the White Mountain part of the reservation and has a large Indian family, and is wealthy in horses, cattle, squaws and dogs."

In this autobiography, Horn tells of many scouts and expeditions with Mickey Free during the Apache campaigns. He seemed to think rather well of him. Certainly he said nothing to indicate that Mickey was the "repulsive" creature Mr. Connell considered him.

Britton Davis, a former officer of the 3rd U. S. Cavalry, in telling "The Truth About Ceronimo," (Yale Univ. Press, 1929) gives a description of the various Indian scouts with whom he campaigned. He goes a bit more into detail on Mickey Free because he was longer associated with him than with any other scout.

"Mickey Free, five feet five, slim but muscular, was the son of an Irish father and a Mexican mother. He had lost the sight of one eye which gave him a sinister appearance. Captured by the Apache when a small child, his life had been spent among them and he had become to all intents

and purposes an Apache; was married to an Apache, dressed as an Apache and lived as the scouts lived. He had retained or acquired a knowledge of Spanish of which I also had a smattering, and became my interpreter during almost the entire time of my service. The Indians suspected him of coloring things to suit the whites; Sieber's opinion (Al Sieber, chief of scouts) of him could not be printed in polite words. He may have fooled me on occasion, but if he did it was done so skilfully that I never found it out."

A bit farther on in his story Lt. Davis has this to say. "The Chiricahua secret service man and woman I had there distrusted Mickey, fearing that he would betray them to some of their friends."

There there is smoke there must be some fire, and in Mickey Free there must have been something that people didn't trust. Even Geronimo didn't seem to like Mickey, but that might be considered as something quite to Mickey's credit. Geronimo didn't like a lot of good people. Perhaps it was because Mickey was working for the government, or maybe it was just a personal grudge. Quien sabe? At any rate, it is recorded that in his opening remarks to General Crook at the time of their Conference in the Cañon de los Embudos on March 25-27, 1886, just before his surrender, Geronimo put the bee on Mickey Free immediately. "I was living quietly and contentedly," says Geronimo, "doing and thinking no

harm while at the Sierra Blanca (White Mountain Reservation). I don't know what harm I did to those three men, Chatto, Mickey Free and Lt. Davis. I was living peaceably and satisfied when people began to speak bad of me,"

(Treatment of Apache Indians, Washington, 1890. A letter from the Secretary of War in respect to Senate Resolution of Jan. 20, 1890, reports relative to treatment of certain Apache Indians.) * See page 17.

This may have been a case of the pot calling the kettle black. It was well known then as it is now that the truth was not in Geronimo. He was an inveterate liar and this may have been just an attempt to fog the issue. Chatto was a good Indian scout, once a member of Geronimo's own band, who served the Army well for a long time. Lt. Davis was the Britton Davis heretofore quoted on Mickey Free.

Dr. Frank C. Lockwood's version of Mickey Free's origin is given in his "Apache Indians." Says he, "On the Sonoita River, about twelve miles west of Fort Buchanan, in the early sixties, lived an Irishman named John Ward with Jesusa Martinez, a Mexican woman, and her son - later known as Mickey Free, whom Ward adopted."

Later, in discussing the make-up of one of General Crook's organizations taking the war path against the renegade Apaches, Dr. Lockwood says, "Al Sieber was made Chief of Scouts, and Sam Bowman and Archie Mac Intosh (father of Judge Donald Mac Intosh now of San Carlos and heretofore quoted on the source of Mickey Free's name) served with him as assistants and as masters of the pack trains. The

(* "Washington, D. C. March 17, 1890 Official transcript of Conference held March 25 - 27, 1886, at Cañon de los Embudos, 20 miles sse San Bernardino Springs, Mexico, between General Crook and hostile Chiricahua Chiefs.") (The above should be added to the reference on page 16 marked with asterisk.)

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 ill-starred Mickey Free (adopted son of the Irishman, John Ward) was attached to the organization as interpreter with the rank of first sergeant . A chapter might well be devoted to extended characterizations of these four remarkable men, each of whom bore a significant part in Apache affairs during the seventies and ~~six~~ eighties."

During July of 1886, Mickey Free was sent with a delegation of Apaches to Washington as an interpreter. With him as interpreters went also Sam Bowman and Concepcion. Chatto was in charge of the group of Indians under Captain J. H. Dorst. The object of the trip was to see what the government would do for the Chiricahuas if they moved peaceably from their homes and ranches on Turkey Creek on the reservation to allegedly larger and more productive holdings elsewhere to be provided. Hated and feared by the Arizonans and disliked by the White Mountain and other Apaches, the Chiricahuas had been trying to live as General Crook had persuaded them to live. They were doing very well, too, it seems, but they had never

harm while at the Sierra Blanca (White Mountain Reservation). I don't know what harm I did to those three men, Chatto, Mickey Free and Lt. Davis. I was living peaceably and satisfied when people began to speak bad of me,"

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been dismounted nor disarmed by the Army. However, the Army kept a close guard on the four hundred fifty-odd Chiricahuas and held them virtually under the status of prisoners of war. General Miles, who succeeded General Crook, was anxious to be g rid of them, and he, President Cleveland, Interior Secretary Lamar, War Secretary Endicott and General Sheridan had about decided to send them all to Fort Marion, Florida. The delegation sent to Washington was hardly more than a smoke screen - so much hog-wash. Nothing at all was accomplished by the delegation, but Chatto was given certain decorations and honors which made him feel a bit more comfortable and less concerned about what was to happen to his people.

In the meantime, there was much to-do between General Miles and Washington. As a result, the entire delegation was imprisoned at Fort Leavenworth on their return trip and then sent along to Fort Marion, where they joined the other Chiricahuas already sent there by force. This was about the low point in U. S. - Indian relations. There were in this group a number of Indians who had served the U. S. faithfully for a long time and without whose efforts the renegades would have been overcome only with great difficulty. Chatto was certainly one of these. There were also Loco, Kay ya-ten-na, Ki-e-ta and Martinez, Sam Bowman, a half-breed, Noche, Kayitak, Martine, Toklanni, and there was also Mickey Free. Mickey was not even an Indian. He was an Indian captive who had aligned himself with our troops against the renegades

and had served faithfully.

Why were these imprisoned with the renegades? No distinction was made between good or bad Indians. Those who had cooperated with the Army and other government agencies and thru whose efforts mainly the renegade Apaches had been overcome were all imprisoned with the outlaws and received the same ill-treatment from an ungrateful and perfidious government.

What happened to these Indians in Florida is a matter of history. Transplanted from their dry native desert to the humid lowlands of Florida, they sickened and died in large numbers. In spite of repeated warnings from those in charge, nothing was done for these poor devils for a matter of several years. Then they were gradually moved back westward to Oklahoma and some even reached the Mescalero Apache Indian Reservation in New Mexico.

Dr. Lockwood traced the usings of many of the more important of these Indians and especially those of the delegation of which Mickey Free was a part. Nothing is said, however, of the fate of the red-headed scout and interpreter. Geronimo was returned to Fort Sill in Oklahoma and lionized in Washington, the Chicago World's Fair and elsewhere all over the country. Naiche, or Mescalero Naiche as the reservation records ~~if~~ show it, was returned to New Mexico. Others fared so- and-so. But of Mickey Free we know only that he was returned to Arizona

because " in 1904 he lived in the White Mountain part of the reservation," (Tom Horn) , and Connell complained that in 1906 " This wandering half-breed, whose being caused the woeful events of a decade, today lives the life of a wild and restless Apache."

In an effort to fill in some of the gaps of the story and to round it out, I went to Bylas and to San Carlos to see what could be dug up. I remembered seeing in the Desert magazine for April of this year (1950) a reference to John Rope having been interviewed by the writers of one of the articles. No dates were given but it seemed a rather recent happening.

At Bylas I talked with the Reverend A. Schuppenhauer, Lutheran Missionary, who told me that John Rope whose father raised Mickey Free and who, himself, called Mickey*brother; had passed to his "happy hunting grounds" in or about 1940. However, he called over the ocotillo fence to a young Indian matron nursing a new babe under a ramada. She came over and a series of questions and answers developed the fact that she was, ^{Maggie,} the daughter of Chris Adam Rope, son of John, and the grand daughter of old John Rope himself. Chris is still living at Bylas. She, herself, knew nothing of Mickey Free and subsequent talks with Chris elicited nothing more than that he had heard his father tell of Mickey Free many times during his life.

Maggie Anderson, Chris' daughter, called her

husband, Paul, and he took me out to Calva to talk with Neil Buck, an ancient Apache well over eighty, it is said, who seems to be determined to let nothing interfere with his passing the rest of his days reclining in peace in the cool shade of his ramada. He, it was, who helped Mr. Grenville Goodwin develop the story of "The Life of John Rope." Yes, he remembered Mickey Free. He had red hair. And that seemed to be that. In spite of much palaver with me in English and with Paul in Apache, we got nothing more than that about our hero.

But, yes, we did get something more. We asked the old man about Willie Free and he said he was dead. "But," said he, "Rosie Free is up at San Carlos." Well, now this was something. Rosie Free was Willie's daughter and the granddaughter of Mickey.

We hit the road to San Carlos and in surprisingly short order we were in conversation with Rosie. It was brief, however, quite brief. Rosie was a buxom gal of twenty-nine summers, very friendly and jolly, but she knew nothing about her grandfather - period. And that was all there was. Yes, she was Willie Free's daughter but she knew nothing about her grandfather and she had nothing to say about her father. This may have been a real lack of knowledge or it may have been the traditional reluctance of the Apache to discuss or even to think of the dead. In the old days, when an Apache died, that was all there was. His survivors burned his clothes,

his equipment, his dwelling and all that he owned. They killed his dogs and his horses. They never visited his grave and never again spoke of him. He was finished.

Rosie was rather reluctant to have her picture taken but she finally consented in spite of the fact that, "O, I look terrible."

The following morning I talked with Mr. Lyman Priest, chief clerk, of the reservation administrative staff and, while he knew nothing of Mickey Free, he said he would have the files checked to see what there might be there. In the meantime, he suggested that I go see Mac Intosh. I found Mac Intosh to be Judge Donald Mac Intosh of the Tribal Council, and spent a most delightful morning in his company. He looked at me rather sharply when I asked about Mickey Free. I told him why I wanted the information and he seemed satisfied. Then he smiled and looked out far beyond the distant horizon. He half closed his eyes, and the smile in them let me know he was seeing again pleasant scenes in retrospect, way back over those many years.

"Yes, of course, I remember Mickey Free," he said in beautiful English that would shame many of our people these careless days. Again he smiles, and again he looked out back across the years and said, "Now you're getting into history, real history, but I can see it just as clearly as tho it were yesterday. I saw Mickey Free first, let's see, it must have been in

1887. My father took me to Fort Apache and I saw Mickey Free then. I was only fifteen years old then and I'd never seen anything quite like Mickey Free. That's why I remember him so well I guess. He was a scout and interpreter for the Army and he was all dressed up in a fine blue uniform. He had big cavalry boots on, the kind that came up high in front above the knee, you know. They were probably fine for bucking brush, but they must have been awful for fast manouvering on foot.

"He had a big pistol belt around his waist and in it he carried two big dragoon pistols.. And he had two long, red braids. He presented a fine figure in the prime of his life - and also of his ego. " Scouts, then, were allowed to draw uniforms if they so desired, but not all of them did so. If they preferred to go without, they were permitted to draw the equivalent in money.

"Mickey was a 'big shot' at that time," continued the Judge. " You see, when an Indian became an interpreter, he automatically became a big shot, and Mickey sure was one of those. And," added the Judge, with a twinkle in his eye, " he was a bit of a rascal, too. "

" In 1887 Mickey Free had three wives, one of whom was ^{Edith,} a Tonto Apache. The Tontos were the worst of the renegade Apaches," said Judge Mac Intosh. " They caused the whites even more trouble than the Chiricauwas. This Tonto wife became the mother of his son, Willie

Free, who in turn became the father of Rosie. Hickey was brutal with his wives. Whenever things didn't just suit him he always took it out on his wives. He used to beat them with a blacksnake bull whip. Eskiminzin, chief of the Arivaipa Apaches, was another who used to beat his wives with a bull whip.

"But they didn't do it when my father was around. He would stop them every time. He'd use a pistol on them if he had to, but he stopped them. My father was Archibald Mac Intosh and he was a member of the military here - the old Indian police. Because my father was a Chippewa and my mother an Apache, I'm considered by some to be a half-breed. My father came to this country with his family way back when he was a little boy. His father, John Mac Intosh, had been killed back in the Chippewa country of eastern Canada and his family fled and came out here. But that's another story," smiled the Judge.

"The next time I saw Hickey Free was in 1901, and, now the mighty had fallen. He was no longer the swasnbuckling big shot in blue uniform and big boots. He was a dried-up, bent, little old man, a rather pathetic figure. Again in 1902, I saw him when he came from Fort Apache to visit my mother with whom he claimed some sort of clan relationship. That was the last time I ever saw Hickey Free. I don't know just when he died, but it must have been shortly thereafter as he was

certainly in a sad state then."

But Mickey Free lasted quite a bit longer than the Judge figured. He even out-lived his wives, the last of whom, Nalenechene (Band # A 90), died on February 26, 1912. Certain correspondence in the files of Mr. R. D. Holtz, Supt. of the Fort Apache Indian Reservation intimates that Mickey died sometime during the year 1914. But he was still listed on the 1915 census, at which time his age was noted as 55 years. His name does not appear on the 1916 census, however. It therefor seems likely that he departed to his Happy Hunting Grounds sometime during the ~~ye~~ latter part of 1915 or the early part of 1916.

The record which shows his age as fifty-five years in 1915 must be either incorrect or quite conservative. If, as his step-brother, Santiago Ward, states, his age was twelve years when he was taken into captivity by the Indians in 1860, his age in 1915 would have to be in the vicinity of sixty-seven. On the other hand, if Charles Connel, was correct in saying that he was but six years of age when taken in 1860, he would then be but sixty-one in 1915. Therefor, at the time of his demise in 1915, Mickey Free would have had to be between sixty-one and sixty-seven.

In addition to his son, Willie Free, Mickey Free was survived by a daughter, Fannie. She, it seems married one Carter Josay and their three children, Freda, Jackson and Pauline, are now married and all living at the Fort Apache Indian Reservation.

Thus does Fate circumvent the Mendelian law of heredity. Mickey Free came into this world apparently a full-blooded Mexican with blue eyes, red hair and a fair complexion. In two generations, his get become to all intents and purposes full-blooded Apache Indians, living on an Indian reservation as wards of the government. The one granddaughter with whom I talked certainly showed no trace of the fair complexion of her grand father. She was all Apache, dark skin and eyes and long black hair.

But the law of Mendel wasn't really circumvented. The Apaches simply absorbed this captive as they probably have absorbed hundreds and thousands of others in the many generations of the past. The Chinese, it is said, are unconquerable because they simply absorb their conquerors. The Apaches absorbed those they conquered. He lived and died an Apache. Mickey Free became an Apache. His sons and daughters were born Apaches. He has now at least four living ~~gr~~ Apache grandchildren and perhaps many great grandchildren.

So ends the story of Mickey Free, Apache Indian.