

## **Archie McIntosh.** (1834-1902)

Archie McIntosh was born at Fort William in 1834, the son of James (John) and Charlotte Robinson McIntosh on Sept. 4th, 1838. His father was one of the main organizers of the Hudson's Bay Co. and was from the same Scottish family as Sir James McIntosh. Charlotte, an Ojibway, was a direct descendent of Red Jacket, a chief of the Six Nations. James was killed by Indians when Archie was 18 years old. Archie had arrived with his parents to Fort Vancouver where he worked for the HBC from 1847 to 1850. In 1852, he was in the Snake country and was working for the Army by the mid-1850s as an interpreter and scout. He continued with the US Army as both an enlisted man and as a civilian into the 1880s. He worked for the Hacker and Raines Expeditions at the beginning of the Yakima Indian War in 1855 and was with the Oregon Volunteer Calvary in 1864. He was a guide for General Crook in 1866-67 and was so valuable Crook employed him in Arizona in the war against the Apaches. He lived for a while on a ranch at Globe with his second wife, Susan Grant of Fort Colville. They had married in May of 1861 at Kamloops. They then lived at the San Carlos Indian Reserve, where Archie died in 1902.

Ferenc Szasz in *Scots in the North American West, 1790-1917* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000: 75-77) gives the following account:

Army scout Archie McIntosh served as a cultural broker in quite another manner, both in the Pacific Northwest and in the desert Southwest. Born at Fort William, Michigan, of Scots/Chippewa ancestry, Archie's father moved to the Fraser River with the HBC. During their stay there, the senior McIntosh taught Archie to spell and do elementary mathematics while the two of them canoed the lakes to check their traps. After his father's murder by an unknown assailant (at the time believed to be a Native jealous of white trappers), Archie was sent to Vancouver for two years of school. At age twelve he was put on a ship to Edinburgh to live with relatives, and he received two more years of Scottish education. Upon his return to Vancouver he worked as a clerk with the HBC for about a year.

In 1855 Archie McIntosh entered the service of the U.S. Army as a scout. Working with another Scots-Indian, Donald McKay, he saved a band of U.S. soldiers from a number of Columbia River Native attacks. As one contemporary reporter observed, 'The whole body of troopers would have been massacred had it not been for the strategy of those two cunning half breeds.'

McIntosh's reputation grew steadily, and he soon became General George Crook's favorite scout. Crook trusted him implicitly, and McIntosh played a major role in the campaign against the Pitt River Indians and the Piutes of Northern California. The common soldiers also respected his skills. This respect grew to semi-mythical proportions in January 1867, when Archie McIntosh led General Crook and his men through a blinding blizzard to safety at Camp Warner in Oregon. In 1896 McIntosh confessed to a reporter how he did it:

I knew there was going to be a blizzard and watched the course of the wind. When it [the blizzard] was upon us, General Crook asked if we had not better go into camp until it passed over, but I said "follow me and I will put you into Camp Warner by 4 o'clock p.m." So the General said no more but kept close behind me, and you bet I kept the wind on my right cheek for nine long hours, but had it changed its direction ten degrees my goose would have been cooked.

McIntosh battled a drinking problem all through his military career, but his skills were so admired that his commanders usually overlooked it. In 1871 he was again assigned to General Crook, who had recently been sent to Arizona Territory to battle the San Carlos and Tonto Apaches. There he fought in the 1874 clashes near Florence and Globe and participated in Crook's last campaign against Geronimo. McIntosh was present in Geronimo's camp in the Sierra Madre Mountains of Mexico when Crook had his famous interview with the Apache chief. The situation was so tense, McIntosh recalled later, that if a gun had accidentally discharged, all the whites would have been killed.

After the close of the Apache campaign McIntosh married a San Carlos woman (he seems to have had an earlier Pacific Northwest family as well) and settled on the San Carlos reservation in Arizona. There he gained a reputation as a great teller of stories. He later sent his son to Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania, and McIntosh descendants held important roles in San Carlos affairs well into the twentieth century. Praised at the time for his "gallant and invaluable service" as a scout, Archie McIntosh played an important broker's role in both Oregon and Arizona.



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