

Supported by six of my Apache police, I took my position on the porch of the agency building, overlooking the parade ground. The remainder of my squad of twenty-two were deployed in an irregular skirmish line, half of them northward toward the ravine, half southward toward the commissary building. Captain Beauford took his station halfway between the commissary and me. My scouts were instructed to be on the alert, ready for instant combat, but not to shoot: (1) unless ordered to do so by either Captain Beauford, or me; (2) unless Captain Beauford or I began shooting; (3) unless the renegades began shooting. The reserves were instructed that at a signal from Captain Beauford their sergeant would swing wide the great commissary doors and then race eastward along the south line of the parade ground, and that they were to follow hot on his trail, at intervals of about two paces, every man with his thumb on the hammer of his gun.

'Because the renegades believed they held a decided advantage in the matter of numbers, I did not think they would hesitate to assemble on the parade ground in front of my position. This proved true. They came trailing in just as the sun rose gloriously above the New Mexican mountains. Sullen and defiant, they gathered in a compact group in front of me. As was their custom on such occasions, their most daring men, just the men I wanted--Geronimo, Gordo, Ponce, and Francisco--were pressed forward as a menace to my personal safety.'

Geronimo was a psychologist, cunning enough to know that his group of desperate characters standing close up, sneering, with guns resting ominously across their left arms, knife-hilts protruding from their belts, faces hideously smeared with paint, was not a reassuring picture to the twenty-five-year-old paleface agent from San Carlos. With this complicated but portentous stage setting, Agent Clum opened the parley by addressing the renegades in their own language.

'Geronimo,' he said, ' you and your followerw have been killing white