



# Carlos Montezuma, MD

## A Yavapai American hero

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**C**arlos Montezuma was a Yavapai Indian from Arizona who grew up in white society and was the first Indian student to attend the Chicago Medical College, which became Northwestern University School of Medicine. He graduated at 23-years-old on March 26, 1889, losing by two weeks the distinction of being the first

American Indian physician. This distinction belongs to Susan La Flesche Picotte, a member of the Omaha tribe, who graduated from the Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia (now the Medical College of Pennsylvania–Hahneman University). Unlike Montezuma, she confined her efforts to her own tribe and was little known nationally.

Montezuma devoted his life to fighting for American Indians. His straightforward, strongly held views, and his personality and character, were formed by his identity as an American Indian. This identity was not a simple

commitment; it was total and passionate dedication that empowered Montezuma to make his people proud of him; to direct his abilities to helping the American Indian (especially his Yavapai tribe); to never deny who he was; and to behave in a way that made him worthy as a hero. In 1912, he took the floor during a discussion period at the meeting of the Society of American Indians and said, "If I should do anything disgraceful in my life or practice, it would reflect as a wrong to my people."

Montezuma was a hero to his many friends and patients, and an inspiration to countless Indians and others who met him, read about him, or heard him speak. He was a hero in American history, playing a pivotal role in shaping national events. He is still a hero to the Arizona Fort McDowell Yavapai, who now number about 1,000 with about 600 living on their reservation. He single-handedly preserved his tribe's land and water rights by obstructing the plans of the federal government. Their ongoing allegiance and affection are his lasting tributes.

The United States government repeatedly attempted to move the Yavapai Tribe, several hundred members, from their small reservation 23 miles east of Phoenix (24,680 acres measuring four miles wide east to west, and 10 miles long in the north-south direction). The federal objective was to gain use of the Verde River water on the reservation to irrigate non-Indian lands. Montezuma's intervention was crucial in a 12-year battle that ended successfully and prevented the removal of the Fort McDowell Indians.

### Early life

Montezuma's Yavapai name was Wassaja (Wa-SAH-jah), which means signaling or beckoning. He was five- or six-years-old in October 1871, when he was camped with his family in an area called Iron Mountain, east of the Superstition Mountains (50 miles east of Phoenix). His family belonged to the southwestern group of Yavapai that now calls Fort McDowell home. The Yavapai people were foot nomads, roaming the land searching for food in central Arizona from the Gila River near Florence to the San Francisco mountain peaks in the north near Flagstaff. These were a few thousand Yavapai occupying about 20,000 square miles.

Pima warriors attacked the Yavapai camp early in the morning, long before dawn. Using guns, arrows,



Montezuma at age six in the Buffalo Bill Show. National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, NAA 06702500

knives, stones, and tomahawks, most of the old men, women, and children were killed (the young men had left camp for a peace conference). The camp was burned and looted, and 13 children were taken captive. Taken by horseback to the area around Florence, Wassaja was sold to Carlo Gentile, an itinerant Italian photographer, who paid nearly all the money he had for him—30 silver dollars.

Gentile had Wassaja baptized on November 17, 1871, in the brand new "La Capila del Gila," in Florence, the first Catholic church in Central Arizona. The building still stands today, next to the newer church. Gentile named him Carlos after himself, adding an "s" for the Spanish

version, and Montezuma, either because of the Montezuma ruins nearby, or because he knew that Montezuma, the great Aztec ruler, was an important mythological figure for the Indians of the Southwest. Although the exact date of Montezuma's birth is not known, the date of record on his baptismal certificate is March 27, 1866.

### Tumultuous moves

Gentile and Montezuma traveled throughout the Southwest, and then headed to Chicago, where Gentile worked in an art gallery. For a short time in 1872, Montezuma was in the cast of Buffalo Bill's first stage show. When some of Gentile's photographs were featured in exhibits and received awards, he and Montezuma then moved to New York City.

In the fall of 1878, a fire destroyed Gentile's New York store and almost all that it contained. Gentile and Montezuma moved to Boston where they met a Baptist missionary, who, learning that Gentile was seeking a stable home for Montezuma, put them in contact with The American Baptist Home Mission Society and its Indian department, directed by George W. Ingalls.

Within two or three months, Ingalls arranged the placement of 11-year-old Montezuma in the household of Reverend William H. Stedman, pastor of the First Baptist Church in Urbana, Illinois.

After one year of private tutoring, Montezuma passed the entrance exam for the Preparatory School of the University of Illinois, a special school operated by the university because of the poor quality of high schools at the time.

In 1880, Montezuma entered the University of Illinois at the age of 14, and four years later, he graduated as president of his class and president of the Adelpic Debate Society. Ten days after graduation, he entered the Chicago Medical School. Even though the school did not charge him tuition, it took him five years to graduate because he could not attend classes full-time, maintaining a job in a pharmacy throughout his medical school years.

### At the Chicago Medical School

During his early years as a student in Chicago, Montezuma presented many lectures on Indians to a variety of groups ranging from ladies' clubs to church organizations. His standard speech was entitled, "The Indian of Tomorrow."

At that time, Montezuma totally accepted and enthusiastically promoted the philosophy of assimilation, which is not surprising given his immersion in the prevailing Protestant environment.

The objective of assimilation, to make white men out of red men, was derived from a fundamental conflict between the communal life and customs of American Indians and the Protestant focus on individualism, based strongly on the Puritan work ethic. The fervent reformers believed that the force of Christianity could bring about changes within one generation. They viewed Indian culture and way of life as heathen and pagan.

### Working for the Indian Bureau

After graduating from medical school, Montezuma opened an office on the south side of Chicago. He had little business. It would have been nearly impossible to attract paying patients by a young inexperienced Indian physician with no family or business connections. Montezuma had to continue to work as a pharmacist. This financial difficulty motivated him to accept a post as a physician in the Indian Service.

He began work with enthusiasm and optimism at Fort Stevenson, a military fort converted into a school for the children of the Fort Berthold Reservation in the northern part of North Dakota. The frustrations he encountered and the conflict between Montezuma's message of assimilation and the old tribal ways kept Montezuma moving. After less than a year in North Dakota, he moved to the Western Shoshone Agency in Nevada, and two-and-one-half years

later, he was appointed as physician on the Colville Agency in Washington. He became increasingly disillusioned.

### Boarding school physician

Richard H. Pratt, the founder and supervisor of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania became Montezuma's mentor and hero. Carlisle was the foremost example and proponent of assimilation. The boarding school's mission was summarized in the masthead of its weekly newspaper, "To Civilize the Indian; Get Him Into Civilization. To Keep Him Civilized; Let Him Stay."

Pratt heard of Montezuma's unhappiness and suggested that Montezuma apply for the position of school physician. Montezuma served in this position from July 1893 to December 1895, with an annual salary of \$1,200.

Besides his medical duties, Montezuma made inspections, taught hygienics, lectured the Indian children

about being on the grass, and worried about his financial affairs. Part of his shortage of money can be attributed to his generous practice of providing notes to allow the bearers (colleagues and older students) to draw funds against his school account.

Toward the end of the 19th century, American Indians, now locked on reservations, had become completely dependent on federal programs. A traditional way of life, including the methods of achieving economic well-being, had been destroyed. Instead of assimilation into mainstream society, Indian communities had sunk into a dispirited existence on the dole, which was barely sufficient to sustain life.

Montezuma's experiences on the reservations convinced him that the Indian Bureau and the reservation system were failures, and prisons. He believed that the path to success required the insertion of Indians into civilized communities. This was the primary objective of the Carlisle School, to transform the Indian into a copy of the European-derived white man—the philosophy and process of assimilation. This became Montezuma's credo until late in his life.

Montezuma came to believe that working in the more civilized environment of the Carlisle School was not sufficient, that he had a higher mission in mind. His time on the reservations had forged his resolve to succeed in white society. He



Montezuma at the University of Illinois, circa 1880. Courtesy of the University of Illinois Archives.(PD-US expired)



## Carlos Montezuma, MD



Montezuma, circa 1906. Source: Wood, Norman B. *The Lives of Famous Indian Chiefs*. Aurora: American Indian Historical Publishing Company, 1906

had to prove to people that an Indian could succeed in white society; he would be a model, proof that the process of assimilation was the right solution for Indians.

In November 1895, he resigned from the Indian Service and entered private practice in Chicago. He turned from being an Indian Bureau employee to a major opponent and antagonist—a thorn for the U.S. Government.

### Private practice

Montezuma maintained a private medical practice of medicine on the south side of Chicago from 1896 to 1922.

He was a lecturer in the Postgraduate Medical College, a school that no longer exists, and he was on the faculty of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, affiliated with the University of Illinois, supervising medical students in the medical clinic on Tuesday and Friday mornings. He was also on the faculty at the Chicago Hospital College of Medicine (a school that later merged with the Mount Sinai Hospital) and lectured on gastrointestinal disorders.

When Montezuma began his private practice at age 30, his challenge was to attract patients by using his knowledge and personality in a competitive environment. This competition was a powerful force in causing physicians to use methods and treatments that would yield obvious short-term effects, easily recognized by patients. Montezuma had his special salve.

### Montezuma's special salve

Patients who moved away from Chicago wrote to Montezuma and requested that he send his special salve. He also mailed it to his relatives at Fort McDowell. His salve, which he first developed when he was working on Indian reservations, was a mixture of vaseline (a purified petroleum jelly) and menthol, a preparation that became familiar in later years as Vicks VapoRub.

Vicks was developed by Lunsford Richardson, a druggist in Selma, North Carolina, who combined petroleum jelly and menthol just like Montezuma did. The commercial promotion of the product began around 1907 by

Richardson's son in Greensboro, North Carolina. H.S. Richardson named the product after his brother-in-law, Joshua Vick, who was a physician. BenGay was introduced in the early 1900s, a combination of methanol and methyl salicylate.

Montezuma's salve predated the commercial products by many years, and was a principal weapon in his armamentarium. It never occurred to Montezuma to patent and promote his salve.

In the middle of the day, Montezuma saw patients in his downtown office at 100 State St. in the Reliance building. The rest of the time he worked in his office at home. His downtown office was on the 14th floor (Suite 1400), a location known to require higher rental fees. Seeing patients for only one hour a day in a high-rent office made it extremely likely that Montezuma shared the office with other professionals; he paid rent of only \$10 per month.



Montezuma in his Chicago State St. Office, in 1903. DN-0001055, Chicago Sun-Times/Chicago Daily News collection, Chicago History Museum

### In his State St. office

One day, as Montezuma was walking slowly along State St., a hand clapped him on the back. "How are you, Monty?" exclaimed Fenton B. Turck, a former classmate and now director of his own clinic specializing in gastrointestinal problems. Learning of Montezuma's difficulties in establishing a practice, Turck offered him a position in the Turck Clinic, and the two physicians worked together for the next 17 years.

Montezuma developed his expertise as a gastroenterologist by means of an apprenticeship with Turck. When Turck moved to New York City in 1913, Montezuma continued to work in the specialty clinic.

Montezuma learned colonic lavage from Turck. Turck and Montezuma introduced hot or cold air into the colon. They also used large volumes of water, hot water with temperatures increasing to a high of 131°F, alternating with ice-cooled water to 41°F. They even inserted a flexible cable high into the colon to produce “mucosal massage” by electricity. These methods were used to treat a host of diagnoses including chronic liver disease, diabetes, kidney problems, early stages of appendicitis, and typhoid fever. This vigorous treatment was best applied with the hips markedly elevated, and for this purpose, Turck constructed a special table.

Montezuma saw most of his patients in his home office where the door of his house announced his name and office hours in gold letters. Opening the door, a first-time patient would have been surprised to see two Indians in full traditional regalia sitting in a corner awaiting advice and counsel from Montezuma before resuming their journey to visit Washington bureaucrats.

The walls of his study held various Indian artifacts.

Montezuma was a short man (five-feet, six inches) with a thick, stocky (but not fat) body. His skin and eyes were dark; his hair was straight and jet-black. His voice was deep, soft, and gentle, and like modern Yavapai Indians, had a lyrical rhythm that was pleasant and easing.

Montezuma would never make a house call, even in the middle of the night, until he was well dressed in his collar and cuffs. He was always careful to represent himself well, not allowing even a single opportunity for a derogatory thought or comment to be directed against an American Indian. He was consistent and serious in his decision to represent his people.

Montezuma never became wealthy as he funneled his energy and resources into his fight for his people and against the Indian Bureau. He did have time for lady-friends and fell in love easily. But he was repeatedly unsuccessful in convincing women to join him in marriage until he married Marie Keller in 1913, a blue-eyed, fair-skinned, German-speaking Romanian immigrant, 22 years younger than Montezuma, and the daughter of his housekeeper.

### Staying afloat

Money became a problem for Montezuma in the last 10 years of his life. His patient volume declined at the same time he was writing hundreds of letters; paying for travel, lodging and meals at national meetings; and supporting his monthly newsletter, *Wassaja*. Even a \$2 payment from a patient was noteworthy and highly appreciated.

Most of Montezuma’s patients came to his home

office from the surrounding neighborhood. After 1910, Montezuma’s neighborhood dropped lower on the socio-economic scale, and after 1915, his home office was in the middle of a rapidly growing Black community.

Beginning in 1914, he would write gripping notes on the bills he mailed to patients: “I am in need. Do for me as I have done for you.”

At times there was no cash, and Montezuma would go a day without eating. For many years, he supplemented his income with small honoraria from lectures.

His many lectures were variations of the same basic speech with the same fundamental message: the process and value of assimilation. He was a splendid speaker, and by 1914, had a collection of 200 hand-colored glass lantern slides, most of which were pictures taken by Gentile. Despite different titles, every talk had the same call to arms:

Are we to disappear as the buffaloes or rise above the horizon of the twentieth century and respond, ‘We are here!’ The sound of your own voice at the roll call will be at the end of the final battle to gain your freedom by your individual self.

### Wassaja

In 1915, Montezuma gave his speech “Let My People Go,” at the annual meeting of the Society of American Indians. Newspaper accounts of the speech and its publication in the *Congressional Record* gained Montezuma a wave of publicity.

Montezuma published the first edition of his newsletter in April 1916, and soon was receiving letters from all over the U.S. with subscriptions to the newsletter, and invitations to speak. *Wassaja* was published monthly until November 1922 (the last issue appeared only two months before Montezuma died), costing five cents a copy or 50 cents for a year’s subscription.

Currently, *Wassaja* is the name of a weekly television news series dedicated to Indian stories and events.

The public response to *Wassaja* was limited. The years of *Wassaja* were during Woodrow Wilson’s presidency, a time when America first tried to avoid war, then fought in a world war, and then turned victory in war into an international defeat. Republicans and Democrats were focused on gaining ascendancy over each other. American Indians and their problems dropped lower and lower on the list of interests and issues.

Montezuma’s political activism got him into trouble during World War I. Montezuma was against the war writing “Well, can you beat it? Just think, Christian nations

killing each other by millions. And sending missionaries to teach "Thou shalt not kill." The government regarded his statements as unpatriotic. The Justice Department considered treason charges. In August 1919, the Bureau of Justice (the forerunner of the FBI) sent an investigator to Montezuma's home. It is evident in the investigator's report that the interview was lengthy, and the investigator was the recipient of a good lecture by Montezuma. His report was objective and reasonable, stating that Montezuma was a single man making a lonely noise about 300,000 people who were not organized, not meeting in rallies, and of the 150,000 eligible, not many voted. The government decided to ignore Montezuma.

### Saving the Yavapai land and water

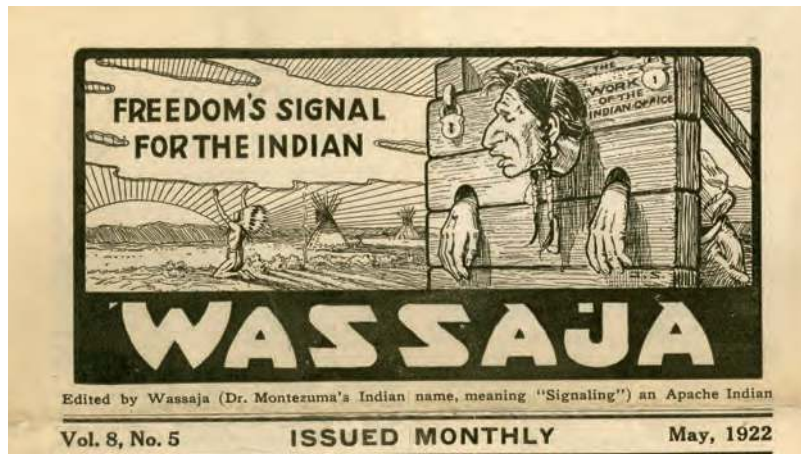
In the first decade of the 20th century, Montezuma rediscovered his tribe. Every autumn from 1901 to 1920 he spent several weeks in Arizona with his cousins. The U.S. government, responding to white businessmen and farmers who coveted the water of the Verde River, repeatedly tried to move to the Salt River Reservation the several hundred Yavapai from their small reservation, Fort McDowell, established by an executive order in 1903 by Theodore Roosevelt.

In 1910, the Fort McDowell Yavapai formally enlisted the aid of Montezuma, naming him their official representative. He was granted power-of-attorney to act with the authority of the Tribe. No other Yavapai had his education and experience.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs expected those on reservations to show absolute cooperation and total obedience to superintendents and agents. Montezuma made sure that the Yavapai signed nothing without his approval.

Government officials came to view Montezuma as a major obstacle and troublemaker very early in this 12-year battle. He was more articulate and educated than most of the Bureau employees and his intervention was pivotal in preventing the removal of the Fort McDowell Indians.

Montezuma went to Washington, D.C. early in June 1821, and established himself in an inexpensive hotel. The trip was a considerable sacrifice for Montezuma. His income depended on his being home and seeing patients.



Wassaja newsletter. The Picture Art Collection/Alamy Stock Photo

By 1921, his practice had dwindled; he was seeing patients only in his home office and earning only \$200 per month. He had only \$500 in available cash.

Frustrated by his repeatedly unsuccessful attempts to meet with government officials, after two weeks,

he left for a trip to Rochester, Minnesota. Charles H. Mayo (AQA, Northwestern University, 1927) had invited his fellow classmates in the Chicago Medical College Class of 1888 to visit the Mayo Clinic; to watch surgery and clinical demonstrations; to attend a formal meeting with medical presentations; and to have a class dinner. With his sense of honor and loyalty, Montezuma felt obligated to respond to Mayo's invitation. But also, Montezuma, nattily dressed in his blue serge suit, cuffs, collar, and white bow tie, could mingle as an Indian, as an equal among his Anglo-Saxon classmates—an opportunity that Montezuma could not resist.

When Mayo learned of Montezuma's mission in Washington, and his frustration in gaining an audience with those at the top, he provided Montezuma with a letter of introduction to Harding's personal physician, Carl E. Sawyer. Montezuma returned to Washington and visited Sawyer. Sawyer gave Montezuma a letter of introduction to present to President Harding's secretary, George B. Christian. When Christian asked Montezuma if he had seen the Commissioner of Indian Affairs or the Secretary of Interior, Montezuma responded, "No, they have refused me a hearing." The secretary immediately telephoned the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Charles H. Burke, and ordered him to grant Montezuma a hearing.

The very next morning, Montezuma was in Burke's office for a two-hour meeting. The official transcript of Montezuma's meeting with Burke on June 24, 1921, fills 16 pages with single-spaced typing. The language is blunt and tense. At one point, Burke said, "But, Doctor, don't discuss this in an unfriendly spirit," and he accused Montezuma of sedition.

Montezuma replied, "I want the Indian Bureau abolished."

Burke said, "That isn't going to happen in this immediate time—you think it is, but you and I will not live to see it happen."

"I would be ashamed of that flag that floats over there [visible through the window] where it tells of freedom, where it tells of justice, and democracy. You are violating



the freedom of that flag and what it expresses just as long as you uphold that view and the Indian Bureau," Montezuma explained.

"And when you preach that doctrine to Indians you are preaching sedition," was Burke's retort.

"If America is going in the wrong direction, I would not be a citizen should I encourage it to go in the same direction; that is not sedition," Montezuma said.

"We differ in our opinion of sedition. When a man preaches a doctrine contrary to what the courts of the country have decided, he is preaching sedition," Burke concluded.

To his credit, Burke responded to Montezuma by reopening the Fort McDowell case. Colonel L.A. Dorrington, assigned to investigate, concluded only a month later, on July 23, 1921, "They [the Yavapai] are not receiving enough water on Salt River to irrigate five acres. They should be given preference on their own reservation."

Fortified by Dorrington's report, Burke decided that irrigable land at Fort McDowell should remain tribal land. Secretary of the Interior Albert Fall agreed with the decision and referred it to the president. President Warren G. Harding approved and signed the decision on February 8, 1922.

Montezuma practically single-handedly prevented the loss of Fort McDowell land and water rights, changing the plans of the federal government.

### **Last days on the reservation**

On a cold Sunday at midday, in the middle of December 1922, Montezuma, a man who had been to almost all parts of the U.S., boarded the Navajo train in Chicago for the last journey of his life, on the Santa Fe Railroad to Phoenix. The decision to go to Arizona was made almost impulsively and quickly carried out. Marie was to stay in Chicago and sell everything they had because "we will need all the money we can get to keep us alive."

In the last stages of tuberculosis, Montezuma awaited death in an *oo-wah*, a brush hut constructed by his relatives in a secluded spot along the river bank on the Fort McDowell reservation.

Nineteen days before he died, Montezuma wrote his last letter to his wife. He signed it: "Your sick and useless husband, Wassaja."

Montezuma died at the age of 56, on Wednesday, January 31, 1923, at 3 p.m.. It was a breezy, cloudy day, but dry until evening when a light rain began to fall. The Yavapai burned the *oo-wah* and all of its contents.

After a funeral in Phoenix, Montezuma's body was taken to Fort McDowell. Marie was concerned over the impression the usual black hearse would have on the

reservation, and therefore his body was wrapped in canvas and roped to the body of a truck. The next day, a second funeral attended by the Yavapai and led by the Masons was held at the Fort McDowell Presbyterian Church. The rain had stopped, and Montezuma was buried in the Fort McDowell cemetery on Sunday, February 4.

When he died, all that he had left for his wife were his files, his collection of Indian artifacts, the payment (amount unknown) from his life insurance, and his house.

### **The change in Montezuma's philosophy**

Montezuma's philosophic position was one of rigid opposition to the Indian Bureau and the reservation system. But it was overly simplistic. Leaving Indians to abruptly fend for themselves was true to his assimilationist ideas, but inconsistent with his inner generosity and compassion. Until late in his life, he never succeeded in bridging his public policy with the subsequent plight of individuals. Montezuma, true to his acquired late 19th century, Protestant philosophy, focused on the individual, ignoring Indians as a group, a community. He failed to consider that preservation of tradition does not preclude evolution and change in response to contemporary political and economic problems and pressures.

Montezuma was an educated, assimilated, Protestant American Indian, who for decades wanted to eliminate the reservations and make Anglo-Saxons out of Indians. Yet he chose to die as a reservation Indian, and in the last years of his life, he successfully fought for his tribe's land and water rights.

His philosophy in his early adulthood was understandable considering his many years of immersion and development in the dominant, white, Protestant society of the late nineteenth and early 20th centuries. In recent years, Montezuma received criticism and dislike because of his early efforts as an assimilationist. He collected Indian artifacts, but he viewed these pieces as historical relics, not as symbols of an ongoing heritage.

Historians have repeatedly concluded that Montezuma's return to the Yavapai was a simple, emotional return to his roots. But Montezuma was a very intelligent, orderly, and rational man. He lived in a time of acute and profound change, and his behavior reflected the changing times.

Montezuma's formative years (1872–1900) spanned decades of Protestant dominance in America, with its focus on the individual: individual property ownership, individual accumulation of wealth, and survival of the most rugged, fittest individual. In the last decades of his life, the political and social philosophy of America changed

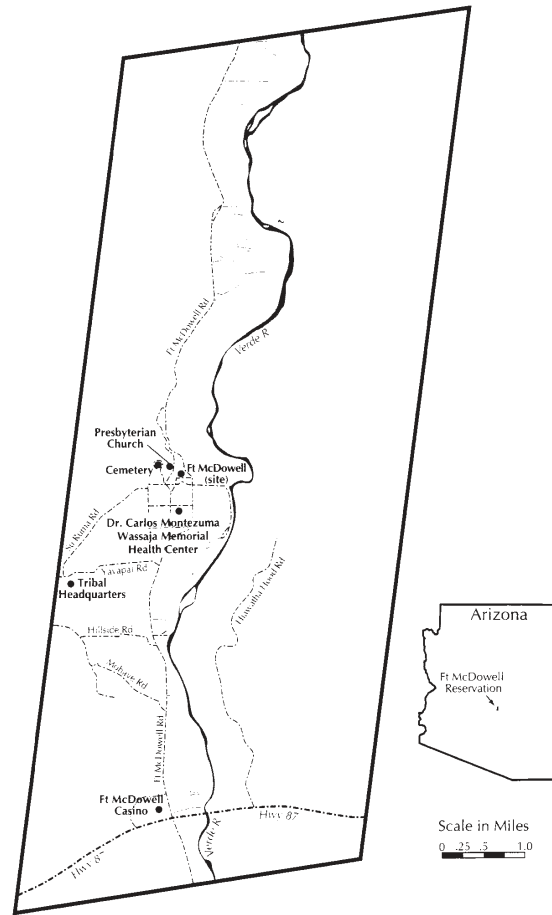
to a greater consideration of the public good. The shift had its roots in the rapid acceleration of scientific and technologic knowledge, and the social unrest that was a consequence of industrialization. The emphasis moved from the individual to social reform, with an effort to establish political and economic controls.

For years, Montezuma lectured on the importance of environment over nature, emphasizing that the Indian was dependent upon his environment. Repeatedly articulating this theme, he was sensitive to his environment. He could perceive social changes simply by reading the Chicago newspapers, and he viewed social forces through the lives of his patients.

As a member of the Chicago Medical Society and the faculty of three academic medical centers, he had multiple opportunities to learn and assess the new advances in medicine.

His interactions with the Yavapai demonstrated for him that philanthropic kindness and generosity were not sufficient to solve social problems, that laissez-faire individualism did not work for everyone, especially those oppressed by difficult political and social conditions. Scientific progress and the changes it brought in medicine and industry had challenged the simple notion of Puritan rugged individualism.

The philosophic shift in Montezuma from assimilation of individual Indians to concern for his tribe was a testimony to his ability to respond to the intellectual and social world around him. One of his strengths was the ability to adapt and remain influential and effective. Just as state and federal governments took on the collective interests of the people, Montezuma began to think collectively of his tribe. He knew from his own experience that the problems of American Indians were low on the priority list of the federal government, and that the Bureau of Indian Affairs would do little to change conditions without prodding and



Map of Fort McDowell Reservation. Illustration by Becky Slemmons

agitation. It was appropriate for Montezuma to fight for the rights and welfare of his tribe. Thus, it also became appropriate for him to choose to die as a Yavapai in his tribal home.

### The Dr. Carlos Montezuma Wassaja Memorial Health Center

The Fort McDowell community re-organized as the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation under a new constitution approved by the Secretary of the Interior on November 17, 1999. The Fort McDowell Yavapai are proud of the role played by Montezuma from 1910 to 1922, and Montezuma would be proud today to see his band of the Yavapai on their own land and doing well,

benefitting from their gaming center with solid income, new houses, and better and free education. In addition, they have better health care with specialized counseling.

On December 12, 1996, the Fort McDowell Yavapai community dedicated its new health center, the Dr. Carlos Montezuma Wassaja Memorial Health Center.

Montezuma was an energetic man of honor. The force within him that formed his life was his identity as an American Indian. He lived a life of decency, responsibility, and honesty that merits admiration; he was a man who kept his word. Montezuma was an American physician who deserves to be remembered as a man of historical importance.

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