

THE TWILIGHT OF THE CONFEDERACY IN
INDIAN TERRITORY, 1863-1865

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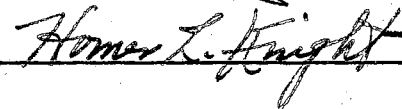
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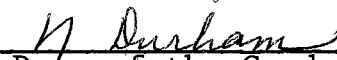
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PREFACE

This study has a threefold purpose. First, it is the desire of the author to present a detailed, accurate, and interesting narrative of the military activities in Indian Territory during the latter part of the Civil War, a period of time from September, 1863, to June, 1865. Due to the emphasis on military history, other materials are included only for reader orientation and balance. A decided effort has been made to present the red man as a soldier in Indian Territory. Though not always appreciated, the Indian soldier faithfully served the cause of his choice to the end of the war. Second, the author hopes that this thesis will rectify the misconception that there were not important military activities in Indian Territory during the latter part of the war. After the spectacular capture of a Federal wagon train at Cabin Creek in 1864, for example, the Confederate Congress and President Jefferson Davis sent the congratulations of the entire Confederacy to the leaders of the expedition. Third, the author hopes that the facts, information, sequence of events, and the interpretations add to the knowledge of the Civil War.

The author extends appreciation to the Library Staff of Oklahoma State University for its assistance in locating obscure sources essential to the writing of this thesis.

It is also the desire of the writer to thank the staff of the Oklahoma Historical Society and the librarians of the Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art. Their assistance in locating and making available a wide variety of sources was valuable in extending the scope of this study.

My special and everlasting thanks and appreciation go to two people: Dr. LeRoy H. Fischer and Phillip D. White. It is impossible to adequately thank these two persons who have made this work possible. Professor Fischer suggested the topic and helped the author through its entire research and editorial process. His exactness has made it possible for the writer to acquire a firm foundation in scholarly writing techniques. This thesis is much a part of his thinking.

To Phil White I owe a personal debt that can be given only to a long-time friend. He spent many hours in helping the author make this thesis an accomplished fact. His encouragement helped to overcome many of the exasperating moments that only a project of this type can present.

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CHAPTER I

CONFEDERATE SUPREMACY AND DECLINE

In mid-July, 1863, the Union and Confederate armies met in the pivotal Battle of Honey Springs, near present-day Muskogee, Oklahoma. For several hours fighting raged over both sides of Elk Creek and the surrounding countryside in a running battle for supremacy over Indian Territory. The Union force pushed the Confederate units back to their nearby supply depot at Honey Springs, and by late afternoon the fighting had faded to sporadic skirmishing. The Confederates had lost the contest for the possession of the area north of the Arkansas River, and the door was opened also to the region to the south. The Confederate position in Indian Territory had rapidly deteriorated since the war began in the spring of 1861, when the Southern forces in that area appeared to have the odds in their favor.

With the states of the East and the South preparing for war, the people of the region west of the Mississippi were in a quandary. The peculiar geographic position of Indian Territory caused it to be pressured from all sides. To the north lay the state of Kansas, overflowing with Union sympathy; to the east were the states of Arkansas and Missouri, both of which displayed strong pro-Southern tendencies; to

the south was the Confederate state of Texas. Three commissioners were selected by the Texas State Convention to go to Indian Territory carrying instructions to invite the "speedy and prompt co-operation" of the Choctaws, Chickasaws, Creeks, Seminoles, and the Cherokees, known as the Five Civilized Tribes.¹ In its report, the findings of the Texas commissioners were so favorable that by early April, 1861, the Union forts in Indian Territory were in the hands of the Confederates.

The interest of the Confederate government in Indian Territory had a practical side. The Confederacy was interested in the possibility of the area becoming a storehouse for provisions that could be transported to the Eastern theater of war. Also it was planned that the southern part of Indian Territory would function as a secure highway to and from Texas, where a part of the valuable Confederate cavalry's horse supply was located. The Confederacy hoped also that if the war were prolonged, Indian Territory could be used as a pivotal point in which invasion forces could swing up into the state of Kansas and Colorado Territory.²

Pressure from prominent Southerners was also being put on the chiefs and sub-chiefs of the Five Civilized Tribes,

¹Ohland Morton, "The Confederate States Government and the Five Civilized Tribes," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XXXI (Autumn, 1953), p. 299.

²Annie H. Abel, "The Indians in the Civil War," American Historical Review, XV, (January, 1910), pp. 283-284; Morton, "The Confederate States Government and the Five Civilized Tribes," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XXXI, pp. 299, 315.

and in particular on the Cherokees. The governor of the neighboring state of Arkansas, Henry M. Rector, and his cousin, Elias Rector, Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Southern Superintendency, put pressure on the chief of the Cherokee Nation, John Ross. The Cherokee Nation and Chief Ross were the most powerful tribe and most influential individual in Indian Territory. Because Ross believed that the quarrel between the North and South was no concern of the Indians, he gave no sign of interest to the feelers put out by those who wanted the Cherokees in the camp of the Confederacy.³

The situation in Indian Territory was made worse by a drought in 1860 that was the most devastating experienced in thirty years. Corn crops were destroyed, and grass was non-existent in areas that heretofore had ample supplies. All of the Five Civilized Tribes were faced with starvation and suffering unless the United States Congress would appropriate enough money to take care of their needs until the weather improved.⁴ To add to the state of unrest of Indian Territory, 1860 was an election year in the United States. Feeling in and around the border states ran unusually high. An atmosphere of doubt was prevalent among the tribes when they

³Abel, "The Indians in the Civil War," American Historical Review, XV, pp. 282-283; Dean Trickett, "The Civil War in Indian Territory," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XVII (September, 1939), p. 322.

⁴Joseph B. Thoburn and Muriel H. Wright, Oklahoma: A History of the State and Its People (4 vols., New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1929), I, p. 306.

heard that one of the presidential aspirants, William H. Seward, advocated the expulsion of the Five Civilized Tribes from Indian Territory. To some these words indicated the plans of the incoming administration, and a point of view that the Indians disliked and rejected.

At the outset of the war, Indian Territory was left virtually defenseless, and its location made permanent neutrality impossible. With war sweeping the United States, it was up to the Union and the Confederacy to make the next moves to win Indian Territory.

There were at that time, three military posts located within Indian Territory. They were Fort Washita, Fort Arbuckle, and Fort Cobb, all garrisoned by the United States Government for the purpose of protecting the Five Civilized Tribes. In addition, Fort Smith was situated on the eastern border of Indian Territory for the purpose of serving as the supply depot for the other three forts. Lieutenant Colonel William H. Emory, the commanding officer of the district, had a total aggregate force of only eleven companies of infantry and cavalry. He was ordered to concentrate all of his available troops at Fort Cobb, the northern-most post. With the secession of Arkansas, the Arkansas River would be closed to Union traffic and the outposts in Indian Territory would be at the mercy of the Confederate Texans who were threatening the region. A rumor circulated that the Federal stockade at Little Rock, Arkansas, would be reinforced; and on the basis of this groundless report, Arkansas forces seized the arsenal.

In quick succession Arkansas authorities sealed up the Arkansas River from Federal use, thereby isolating much of Indian Territory from Union forces. Threatened by an invasion expedition, the post commander of Fort Smith, Captain Samuel D. Sturgis, ordered the city and the fort evacuated. Captain Sturgis moved his two troops of cavalry to a rendezvous with Colonel Emory near Fort Washita. An hour after Captain Sturgis vacated Fort Smith, 300 Confederate militia, with ten pieces of artillery, arrived by steamboat to take possession of the fort and town.⁵

Finding Colonel Emory near Fort Washita, Sturgis joined the column as it proceeded into the fort. Colonel Emory, expecting an attack by a superior number of the enemy forces, abandoned Fort Washita and hurried to the relief of Fort Arbuckle further east. The Arbuckle garrison had already been overwhelmed and paroled by a force of Texas Confederates. The growing Federal column then turned north to relieve the soldiers at Fort Cobb, the northern-most post in Indian Territory. Colonel Emory, finding that his column was being hotly pursued by a large force of the enemy, wheeled and with a swift motion engulfed the Confederate advanced party. After a conference, the Confederates were paroled and

⁵Ibid., pp. 309-310; Charles Richard Francis, "Confederate Ascendancy in Indian Territory 1860-1861," (Unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, 1963), pp. 17-30; W. B. Morrison, "Fort Washita," Chronicles of Oklahoma, V (June, 1927), pp. 256-258; Stephen B. Oates, "Recruiting Confederate Cavalry in Texas," Southwestern Historical Quarterly, LXVI (April, 1961), pp. 468-469.

gave up the chase. For the next three weeks the combined Union garrisons, numbering about 750 men from the four recently-abandoned forts, headed for Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. They arrived with a loss of only two men, and these had deserted.⁶

Previously, on May 13, 1861, Ben McCulloch of Texas had been commissioned a brigadier general and given command of Confederate regiments from the states of Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas. This force was supplemented by three regiments of Indian troops; one was composed of Choctaw-Chickasaw volunteers, another combined the troops of the Creeks and Seminoles, and still another consisted of Cherokees. These troops under McCulloch were given the mission of capturing the forts in Indian Territory and the garrisons they contained.⁷ McCulloch hoped to establish his headquarters within the borders of the Cherokee Nation, but was overruled by the objections of Chief Ross, who issued a proclamation on May 17, 1861, calling for a policy of strict neutrality.⁸

Refused permission to establish a headquarters within the Cherokee country, McCulloch moved on to Fort Smith and there met, in the latter part of May, with Albert Pike,

⁶Ibid., pp. 310-311.

⁷Morton, "The Confederate States Government and the Five Civilized Tribes," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XXXI, p. 302; Thoburn and Wright, Oklahoma: A History of the State and Its People, I, p. 311.

⁸Abel, "The Indians in the Civil War," American Historical Review, XV, p. 284; J. D. Head, "Albert Pike," The Southern Magazine, II (Winter, 1935-1936), pp. 16-19, 47.

recently appointed special commissioner for the Confederate States. From Fort Smith they proceeded to Tahlequah, and then on to Park Hill to meet with Chief Ross. Ross received them with courtesy, but stated that the Cherokee people had nothing to do with the quarrel between the two rival governments. He did, however, agree to call a session of the Cherokee executive council, where he would have to face the large element within the tribe that favored secession.⁹ When the executive council met at Tahlequah in August, 1861, attended by some 4,000 Cherokees, resolutions were adopted that seemed to commit the Cherokee people to the Confederacy. Ross showed further acceptance of the sentiments of the people by giving the authorization to John Drew to raise a regiment of 1,200 men. A messenger was sent to Pike, and a meeting was arranged for Ross and Pike to discuss a treaty. On October 7 the Confederate-Cherokee treaty was signed, an instrument quite similar to those agreed upon by the other tribes. Two days later Chief Ross explained to the National Council why he recommended ratification of the treaty with the Confederacy. In December, Chief Ross addressed Colonel

⁹Edward E. Dale, "Arkansas and the Cherokees," Arkansas Historical Quarterly, VIII (Spring, 1949), p. 106.

Drew's regiment and again expressed his support regarding the Confederate-Cherokee Treaty.¹⁰

The treaty provided that the Cherokee Nation and the Confederate States enter into a bilateral offensive and defensive alliance. The Confederacy assumed all debts of the signators, guaranteed the possession of their lands, and promised arms and ammunition in order for them to protect themselves against invasion. A section of the treaty promised the Cherokees that they would never be called upon to fight outside of their own boundaries unless they volunteered; it was violated, nevertheless, several times during the war.¹¹

The treaties made by Pike were promptly ratified by the Confederate Congress in December, 1861, and Indian Territory was designated as a military district with Brigadier General Pike in command.¹² He selected a site for a military installation on the south side of the Arkansas River, across from Fort Gibson, and called it Cantonment Davis, soon to be renamed Fort Davis. Due to preparations for obtaining

¹⁰Morris L. Wardell, A Political History of the Cherokee Nation, 1838-1907 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1938), pp. 132-134; Joseph B. Thoburn, "The Cherokee Question," Chronicles of Oklahoma, II (June, 1924), pp. 150-152; John Bartlett Meserve, "Chief Louis Downing and Chief Charles Thompson," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XVI (March, 1939), p. 318; Francis, "Confederate Ascendancy in Indian Territory 1860-1861," pp. 33-41.

¹¹Edward E. Dale, "The Cherokees in the Confederacy," Journal of Southern History, XIII (May, 1947), pp. 165-167.

¹²Dale, "Arkansas and the Cherokees," Arkansas Historical Quarterly, VIII, p. 106; Dale, "The Cherokees in the Confederacy," Journal of Southern History, XIII, p. 167.

supplies for his men, General Pike did not arrive at Fort Davis until February 26, 1862.¹³

Between the time of Pike's appointment to the command of Indian Territory and his arrival, bitter feeling had erupted between Union sympathizers, known as the "Pins," and Southern adherents of the Creek Tribe. These Pin Indians were most numerous among the Creeks and were led by the aged Opothleyahola who hoped to maintain Federal authority in Indian Territory and was willing to use the force of arms to do so. Late in 1861 he began to gather his followers, and accompanied by a small group of Seminoles who had also refused to adhere to the treaty signed by their tribe with the Confederacy, he began the trek north to Kansas.¹⁴ On his way, Opothleyahola was attacked by the treaty faction of the Creeks. These Confederates consisted of a regiment commanded by Colonel D. N. McIntosh; a Creek-Seminole Battalion under Colonel Chilly McIntosh; six companies of the First Choctaw and Chickasaw Mounted Rifles, led by Major John Jumper; and a part of the Ninth Texas Cavalry Regiment. In total the attacking force was made up of 1,400 men. The Northern

¹³Ibid., p. 168; Robert Underwood Johnson and Clarence Clough Buel eds., Battles and Leaders of the Civil War (4 Vols., Grant-Lee Edition, New York: The Century Company, 1888), III p. 454; Grant Foreman, "Fort Davis," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XVII (June, 1939), pp. 147-150.

¹⁴Morton, "The Confederate States Government and the Five Civilized Tribes," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XXXXI, p. 308; Abel, "The Indians in the Civil War," American Historical Review, XV, p. 289; John Bartlett Meserve, "Chief Opothleyahola," Chronicles of Oklahoma, IX (December, 1931), pp. 440-453.

Creeks, in repelling the vigorous enemy assaults, were twice successful, but on December 26, 1861, they were routed in the engagement at Chustenahlah.¹⁵

The defeated Creeks made their way northward to the border of Kansas and to safety. They found protection at the military camp of General David Hunter, the commander of Fort Leavenworth. General Hunter and William G. Coffin, the Superintendent of Indian Affairs, used what supplies were available at the fort to help the destitute Indians. Coffin even used his own private funds and then his personal credit to purchase needed supplies.¹⁶

General Pike was in Richmond, Virginia, the Confederate capital, and was not present in Indian Territory during the pursuit of Opothleyahola. In March, 1862, Pike was ordered to take his command and join the army of General Earl Van Dorn located just across the border in Arkansas. This offensive force had the dual mission of making one grand attack upon the Union army in Missouri and defeating the advancing Federal force which was pushing south in western Arkansas.¹⁷

¹⁵Thoburn and Wright, Oklahoma: A History of the State and Its People, I, pp. 325-328; Abel, "The Indians in the Civil War," American Historical Review, XV, p. 289; Morton, "The Confederate States Government and the Five Civilized Tribes," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XXXI, p. 308; Dale, "The Cherokees in the Confederacy," Journal of Southern History, XIII, pp. 167-168.

¹⁶Thoburn and Wright, Oklahoma: A History of the State and Its People, I, pp. 328-329.

¹⁷Abel, "The Indians in the Civil War," American Historical Review, XV, p. 289; Morton, "The Confederate States Government and the Five Civilized Tribes," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XXXI, p. 309.

Pike was joined by Stand Watie and his regiment of Cherokees and the regiment of Drew. In addition to two regiments of Cherokees, Pike had a regiment of Creeks and a combined regiment of Choctaws and Chickasaws. Accompanying these troops were two detached battalions of Creeks and Seminoles plus several detached companies.

The Confederate column met the Federal army at Pea Ridge, Arkansas, in a battle lasting from March 6 through March 8, 1862. The engagement was more like two armed mobs assaulting each other rather than combat by professional armies. Fighting was vicious and in some cases brutal; the Confederate Creeks, under Drew, were accused of scalping dead and wounded soldiers on the field.¹⁸ The engagement at Pea Ridge resulted in the death of Confederate field commanders General McCulloch and General James McIntosh and the abandonment of the territory they had been ordered to hold and defend.¹⁹ After the Pea Ridge repulse, Pike retreated south,

¹⁸Dale, "The Cherokees in the Confederacy," Journal of Southern History, XIII, p. 168; Grant Foreman, A History of Oklahoma (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1934), p. 109; Abel, "The Indians in the Civil War," American Historical Review, XV, p. 289; Dale, "Arkansas and the Cherokees," Arkansas Historical Quarterly, VIII, p. 107; Mabel W. Anderson, "General Stand Watie," Chronicles of Oklahoma, X (December, 1932), pp. 540-548; Maury to Pike, March 21, 1862, Pike to Maury, March 14, 1862, Curtis to Wade, May 21, 1862, U. S. War Department, War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies (70 vols., 128 books in U. S. Serial Set, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), i, VIII, pp. 286-292, 292, 796. Hereinafter cited as Official Records: series cited in small case Roman numeral; volume cited in large case Roman numeral; part of each volume cited as "Pt."

¹⁹Robert L. Duncan, Reluctant General (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1961), p. 232; Van Dorn to Secretary of War Walker, March 18, 1862, Official Records, i, VIII, p. 282.

leaving Colonel Watie, commanding the First Regiment of Cherokee Mounted Volunteers, to cover his rear and harass the enemy. Gathering what forces he could from his scattered command, Pike halted his retreat twenty miles from the Red River, in present-day Bryan County. He built Fort McCulloch, named after his recently-fallen comrade, on the Texas Road, the main overland artery in Indian Territory.²⁰

In establishing his new headquarters, Pike assured his Indian allies that he had not abandoned them, explaining that for logistical reasons, his present location was an advantageous one.²¹ As a supply base, the location of Fort McCulloch was desirable; the only drawback was that Indian Territory was last on the Confederate priority list and never received even the minimal supplies needed for carrying on military activities.²²

Watie and Drew remained in the Cherokee country and engaged in guerrilla warfare, establishing headquarters on Cowskin Prairie, located in the northern area of the Cherokee Nation. Through extensive use of furloughs, Watie's force was reduced to less than 300 men, and a large segment of this number was scattered throughout the region on scout

²⁰Edward E. Dale and Gaston Litton, eds., Cherokee Cavaliers (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1939), p. 114; Foreman, A History of Oklahoma, p. 110; Barney King Neal, Jr., "Federal Ascendancy in Indian Territory, 1862-1863" (Unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, 1966), pp. 22-23.

²¹Dale, "The Cherokees in the Confederacy," Journal of Southern History, XIII, p. 169.

²²Neal, "Federal Ascendancy in Indian Territory, 1862-1863," p. 23.

duty.²³ With the coming of summer, 1862, military activity on both sides increased. Colonel Watie attacked a Union force at Neosho, Missouri, on April 26, 1862. Though repulsed and forced to return to his base at Cowskin Prairie, Watie made a good showing in his first independent action. In consideration of the fact that his primary mission was to harass the enemy, the engagement was a Confederate success.²⁴ During the next two months the Confederates scored several other coups in the Missouri-Arkansas area.²⁵

Early in the fall of 1861, Senator James H. Lane, the most influential man in Kansas politics, had petitioned President Abraham Lincoln for permission to invade Indian Territory. His intention was to separate Indian Territory from Texas, thus accomplishing a dual mission of isolating it from the rest of the Confederacy and freeing the thousands of slaves within its borders.²⁶ This expedition was approved by Lincoln but was decried as a political expedition by Federal military leaders since Lane had proposed himself as the expedition commander.²⁷ The intervening months from January,

²³Dale, "Arkansas and the Cherokees," Arkansas Historical Quarterly, VIII, p. 107; Worten Manson Hathaway, "Brigadier General Stand Watie, Confederate Guerrilla," (Unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, 1966), pp. 33-34.

²⁴Ibid., pp. 34-35.

²⁵Ibid., pp. 35-37; Francis, "Confederate Ascendancy in Indian Territory 1860-1861," pp. 49-72.

²⁶Albert Castel, A Frontier State at War: Kansas, 1861-1865 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1958), pp. 78-79.

²⁷Neal, "Federal Ascendancy in Indian Territory, 1862-1863," p. 26.

1862, to June, 1862, were spent by the Federal high command in hot debate.²⁸

The commander of the Kansas District, Major General James G. Blunt, settled the dispute by appointing Colonel William Weer as expedition leader.²⁹ The appointment was made the first week in June, and until the expedition was launched on June 28, Colonel Weer spent innumerable hours gathering supplies, training his novice troops, and pouring over strategy with his staff. A tribal war dance having been held, the expedition started its long columns south. Leaving Fort Scott, Kansas, the 6,000 man expedition lumbered down the Grand River at the rate of ten miles a day.

Colonel Watie was the first to feel the sting of the invasion force. A 1,000 man vanguard under Colonel Charles Doubleday struck Watie a surprise blow at Cowskin Prairie, reeling him back to Spavinaw Creek, where he encamped to await for orders and regroup. It developed that the only forces opposing the Federal tide were the regiments of Drew and Watie augmented by a battalion of Missourians under Colonel J. J. Clarkson, stationed at Locust Grove.³⁰

²⁸Abel, "The Indians in the Civil War," American Historical Review, XV, pp. 290-293; Neal, "Federal Ascendancy in Indian Territory, 1862-1863," pp. 27-35.

²⁹Ibid., p. 35.

³⁰Doubleday to Weer, June 8, 1862, Official Records, i, XIII, p. 102; Hathaway, "Brigadier General Stand Watie, Confederate Guerrilla," p. 37; Neal, "Federal Ascendancy in Indian Territory, 1862-1863," pp. 35-38.

Major General Thomas C. Hindman, commander of the Confederate Trans-Mississippi Department, ordered General Pike to evacuate Fort McCulloch and move to the support of Watie to help him cope with the invasion forces. General Pike refused; instead he ordered Colonel Douglas H. Cooper to take command of Indian troops in the field and proceed to the aid of Watie. Pressured by Hindman to take positive action, Pike in a series of reports to General Hindman deplored the conditions of Indian Territory, placing the blame on his superior, and tendered his resignation.³¹

Colonel Weer sent a detachment down the east side of Grand River to engage Watie on Spavinaw Creek; with the remainder of the command, Weer moved to make contact with Colonel Clarkson, the Confederate at Locust Grove. Colonel Watie and Colonel Drew were again surprised in camp and driven southward. Colonel Clarkson was captured when his command was overrun at Locust Grove. His force scattered to the south and was hotly pursued for the remainder of the day.³² Passing through the Cherokee capital, Tahlequah, on their way south, the white and Indian refugees of Clarkson's

³¹Hathaway, "Brigadier General Stand Watie, Confederate Guerrilla," pp. 38-39; Pike to Hindman, July 15, 1862, Official Records, i, XIII, pp. 857-858; Florence E. Holladay, "The Powers of the Commander of the Confederate Trans-Mississippi Department," Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XXI (January, 1918), pp. 279-282.

³²Weer to Moonlight, July 4 and 6, 1862, Official Records, i, XIII, pp. 137-138; Edwin C. McReynolds, The Seminoles (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1957), p. 305.

command spread panic among the populace and convinced a number of them that they had made a grave blunder in the repudiation of the 1835 treaty with the United States.³³

With the defeat of the Confederate forces in Indian Territory, many of the Cherokees took this opportunity to desert to the Union ranks. A substantial number from Drew's regiment deserted to Federal lines en masse, nearly 1,000 in all. Those who did not enlist in the Union army disavowed their Confederate allegiance.³⁴

With victories at Cowskin Prairie and Locust Grove, Colonel Weer pushed his columns farther south toward the Confederate-held post of Fort Gibson. While he was consolidating his scattered command on the Grand River, ten miles above the Confederate fort, Colonel Weer sent scouting and reconnoitering parties to feel out the strength and disposition of enemy troops around the fort. Rumors of Confederate troops massing for a counter-attack unnerved many of Colonel Weer's subordinates. These false and unauthenticated reports disrupted rapport between Weer and his line officers. Depending on Fort Scott for all their supplies and war material, these line officers were afraid they might be flanked

³³Neal, "Federal Ascendancy in Indian Territory, 1862-1863," p. 42.

³⁴Wiley Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War (Kansas City: Franklin Hudson Publishing Company, 1922), p. 73; Foreman, A History of Oklahoma, p. 111; Weer to Moonlight, July 6, 1862, Watie to Cooper, October 28, 1862, Official Records, i, XIII, pp. 138, 336-337.

and isolated in hostile territory with no possible chance for relief.³⁵

Moving on to capture Fort Gibson, Colonel Weer sent communications to Chief Ross of the Cherokees in hopes of breaking Cherokee attachment with the Confederacy. On the same day as the capitulation of Fort Gibson, Weer dispatched a small patrol to the Tahlequah region with orders to open if possible peace negotiations with the Cherokees. On July 15, Captain H. S. Greeno, the patrol commander, moved his force to Park Hill, home of Chief Ross. A report of the presence of a detachment of Confederate Cherokee troops, 300 men strong, made for a tense moment as Greeno led his small and numerically inferior patrol into the yard of the palatial residence of Chief Ross, called Rose Cottage. Ross and segments of the command of Colonel Drew, the First Cherokee Mounted Rifle Regiment, greeted Captain Greeno warmly and relieved any apprehension held by the Union force.³⁶

Chief Ross desired to repudiate the treaty alliance his nation had with the Confederacy, but being bound by his word, both oral and written, he could see no way to do this and keep his reputation as a gentleman. Ross was also being pressured by Colonel Cooper, who was demanding that the

³⁵Neal, "Federal Ascendancy in Indian Territory, 1862-1863," p. 43; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, p. 67.

³⁶Weer to Moonlight, July 16, 1862, Greeno to Weer, July 15 and 17, 1862, Official Records, i, XIII, pp. 160-161, 473, 161-162.

Cherokees live up to their obligations and send men to assist him in repelling the invasion. Afraid to obey, yet reluctant not to because of likely reprisals, Ross looked to the Union patrol as his salvation. The arrival of Greeno destroyed the unwanted treaty and gave the old chief a chance to change his allegiance. Ross willingly accompanied the Union column as it retreated northward three weeks later, taking with him his family, Cherokee treasury funds, and the Cherokee national archives.³⁷

All opposition to the Indian Expedition had been removed by mid-July, 1862. Colonel Cooper was desperately trying to organize a counter-attack near Fort Davis, but he had waited too long: the latest split between the Cherokee factions had dashed hopes for any large scale resistance, and even his attempts to organize and encourage Confederate Indian units known to be loyal failed miserably.³⁸

By mid-July General Blunt, the commander of the District of Kansas, had become worried about the Indian Expedition because that expedition represented the majority of the forces in his district. Any attack and defeat would tarnish not only his military reputation, but that of his protege, Senator Lane, both of whom were supplementing their

³⁷Wardell, A Political History of the Cherokee Nation, 1838-1907, p. 155; Neal, "Federal Ascendancy in Indian Territory, 1862-1863," p. 46.

³⁸Cooper to Drew, July 18, 1862, Civil War Cherokee File, Grant Foreman Papers, Indian Archives Division, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

government salaries by rebates from granting army contracts to local merchants and speculators. Blunt pleaded for more reinforcements from the Secretary of War, Edwin Stanton, while trying to discourage Weer from continuing his campaign.

General Blunt's warning to Weer that he might be cut off produced a fear in the command of Weer that soon erupted into action. On July 18, 1862, Colonel Weer who had a reputation for intemperance and was foolhardy in isolating his command from its base of supplies deep in hostile territory, caused his subordinate officers, in particular his second-in-command Colonel Fredrick Salomon, to put him under arrest. The physical discomfort of the white troops and their disgust at being made to serve with Indian soldiers brought little resistance on the part of the white regiments in accepting the coup. Colonel Salomon issued a long list of reasons for his actions and called for a withdrawal that would begin the following morning at 2:00 a.m.³⁹

The sudden retrograde movement of the Union forces was a complete surprise to the Confederates. They were taken aback even more when reports came to them stating that only three Indian regiments would be left to hold the conquered area.

Colonel R. W. Furnas, commander of one of those units, the First Indian Regiment, called together the other two

³⁹General Order, Indian Expedition, July 18, 1862, Salomon to all Commanders, July 18, 1862, Official Records, i, XIII, pp. 476, 475-476.

regimental commanders and laid out a plan of action: they would form into a brigade, with Furnas commanding; they would stay to protect and hold the captured territory as best they could and protect themselves against reprisals, especially the Third Federal Indian Regiment, which was mostly composed of recent Confederate Indian deserters. Selecting a site on the Verdigris River, the new First Indian Brigade moved into camp. Numerous desertions and a complete absence of morale forced Colonel Furnas to abandon the camp on the Verdigris and move toward the Kansas border. On his way he overtook Salomon, who had finally halted his retreat and set up temporary headquarters at Camp Quapaw in the northeast corner of the Cherokee Nation, closer to his supply depot at Fort Scott. Colonel Furnas persuaded Salomon to augment Furnas' force with a section of artillery, a small detachment of infantry, and much needed supplies. Taking up a station on Horse Creek, Colonel Furnas established Camp Wattles and began to regroup his command. With the bolstering of his brigade, Furnas was able to send out patrols far and wide. These patrols had the dual mission of protecting Indians friendly to the Union and keeping a close surveillance on enemy activity in the area. During the confusion and bewilderment caused by the sudden Federal withdrawal, the Confederates missed an opportunity to engage remaining forces which were considerably weaker than they, with a possibility of regaining all territory lost in the recent week. Neither Cooper

nor Watie attempted to move forward to take advantage of the situation.⁴⁰

The Indian Expedition was now split into two elements; the white regiments under Colonel Salomon were stationed on Hudson's Crossing on the Grand River, while the Indian portion of the command was forty-five miles due south. The two commands were connected in communications only by a series of outposts.⁴¹

During July, 1862, there was only one brush between the two opposing forces. Major William A. Phillips, with 400 men, was on a scouting expedition in the Tahlequah region when he met and defeated a smaller Confederate force which attacked at Bayou Menard, seven miles northeast of Fort Gibson. The Confederate commander of the attacking command, Lieutenant Colonel Thomas F. Taylor, on patrol with part of the First Cherokee Regiment, blundered into the center element of Phillips' divided patrol. The two flank columns of the Union force arrived at the engagement and engulfed and routed the Confederate patrol. Major Phillips, who would later prove to be the main opponent of Watie in Indian

⁴⁰Grace Steele Woodward, The Cherokees (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), pp. 280-281; Abel, "The Indians in the Civil War," American Historical Review, XV, p. 293; Hathaway, "Brigadier General Stand Watie, Confederate Guerrilla," p. 41; Neal, "Federal Ascendancy in Indian Territory, 1862-1863," pp. 50-52.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 52.

Territory, came out with an easy victory in his first action against a segment of Watie's regiment.⁴²

Colonel Salomon had put his men into column and crossed the border into Kansas and safety, having learned from intelligence reports of scouts that an expedition was forming on his flank in Missouri. He stopped his weary command for the last time at Fort Scott. Thus the Indian Brigade again was left unsupported, isolated, and in danger of being engulfed by enemy troops massing in the area. Being in such a desperate position necessitated the moving of the Indian Brigade within supporting distance of the main body. Colonel Furnas encamped at Baxter Springs, Kansas, and reestablished his outposts up to Fort Scott.⁴³

Refugees numbering 1,500 had optimistically followed the expedition into Indian Territory with hopes of returning to their homes. Now they had to retreat with the army and spend the winter in their old camps, among privations, starvation, death, and hatred from their Indian host. The winter of 1862-63 would bring as many hardships as the preceding one.⁴⁴

⁴²Phillips to Furnas, July 27 and August 16, 1862, Official Records, i, XIII, pp. 181-184; Hathaway, "Brigadier General Stand Watie, Confederate Guerrilla," pp. 41-42; Sharon Dixon Wyant, "Colonel William A. Phillips and the Civil War in Indian Territory," (Unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, Oklahoma State University, 1967), p. 15; Wiley Britton, "Some Reminiscences of the Cherokee People," Chronicles of Oklahoma, V (June, 1927), pp. 180.

⁴³Salomon to Blunt, August 9, 1862, Official Records, i, XIII, pp. 551-553.

⁴⁴Dale, "The Cherokees in the Confederacy," Journal of Southern History, p. 171; Wiley Britton, The Civil War on the Border (2 vols., New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1890-1904), I, pp. 309-311.

During August, 1862, the Union forces underwent reorganization. General Blunt took personal command of all troops in the Kansas Department. Colonel Weer was restored to his rank, sent back to his command, and the whole matter of his alleged incompetence was quickly and conveniently forgotten by those involved.⁴⁵ By orders from the War Department, the districts of Kansas, Missouri, Arkansas, and Indian Territory were fused together under the over-all command of General Samuel R. Curtis, a slow and overcautious individual who won his star for political connections, not for engaging an enemy.⁴⁶ The two commands of John M. Schofield and Blunt were brought together and renamed the Army of the Frontier, with General Schofield in command by date of rank.⁴⁷

In October, 1862, General Schofield received reports that a Confederate army in northwestern Arkansas was planning an attack on his force. Schofield sent General Blunt to deal with the detachment of Confederate troops reported to be in the vicinity of Maysville, just across the border in Arkansas. Blunt moved his command to Bentonville, Arkansas, where he stopped for rest and let the supply train catch up. Receiving reports that Confederate forces under Cooper had

⁴⁵Neal, "Federal Ascendancy in Indian Territory, 1862-1863," pp. 60-61.

⁴⁶General Order, War Department, September 19, 1862, Official Records, i, XIII, p. 653.

⁴⁷Wyant, "Colonel William A. Phillips and the Civil War in Indian Territory," p. 18; General Order, War Department, October 12, 1862, Official Records, i, XIII, p. 730.

been pinpointed at Fort Wayne, a few miles above Maysville, Blunt issued orders for an all-night forced march to be followed by a dawn attack on the enemy force.

Despite impediments of darkness and rough, unfamiliar terrain, General Blunt arrived near Fort Wayne one hour before dawn on October 22, 1862. Led by a Negro guide from the area, Blunt was able to locate the exact Confederate position. Rejoining his command, he was chagrined to learn that the bulk of his force had not closed up on the lead element. He elected to put what available forces he had into the attack and move the remainder in as they arrived on the scene. By this aggressive move, a force of 400 would engage a reputed 7,000 of the enemy.

The attack was launched by a slashing cavalry charge across a prairie in front of the enemy implacements. While the cavalry was cutting down the half-asleep infantry of the First Choctaw and Chickasaw Regiment and the First Cherokee Regiment, other Union forces were sent in as they came up, increasing pressure on Confederate resistance. The cavalry, augmented by two mountain howitzers and by the skill of the gun crews, beat down any semblance of a Confederate counter offensive. The Confederates tried a flanking movement on the exposed ends of the Federal lines, but were flanked themselves by troops of the Third Indian Regiment. A four-gun battery was the holding point of the Confederate resistance. This battery had to be taken before the Federals could be successful. Seeing the importance of the enemy battery, five

companies of the Second Kansas Cavalry were ordered to attack. The assault was a complete success: the battery was overwhelmed by the onslaught. Seeing their center pierced and their artillery captured, the Confederates fled from the field and were not brought under control until they reached Fort Gibson, seventy miles to the south.⁴⁸ The engagement at Fort Wayne was an unqualified victory for General Blunt. It proved that this Federal general was a man of considerable military ability. Despite the rationalizing done by the Confederate commander in his reports to his superior, it was evident that General Cooper was outclassed.

Following the Fort Wayne defeat, General Cooper led his command further into the interior of Confederate-held territory and encamped near Skullyville, in the Choctaw Nation. Colonel Watie joined him there briefly, and for the winter located his command at Briartown, within supporting distance of Cooper.⁴⁹

The Army of the Frontier spent the winter of 1862 in Arkansas trying to keep contact with the Confederate commander of the region, General T. H. Holmes. Most scouting carried on by the First Division was done by Phillips,

⁴⁸Hathaway, "Brigadier General Stand Watie, Confederate Guerrilla," pp. 43-46; Neal, "Federal Ascendancy in Indian Territory, 1862-1863," pp. 62-67; Grant Foreman, Fort Gibson (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1936), p. 123.

⁴⁹Cooper to Hindman, January 8, 1863, Official Records, i, XIII, Pt. 2, p. 770; Frank Cunningham, General Stand Watie's Confederate Indians (San Antonio: The Naylor Company, 1959), p. 87.

recently promoted to the rank of Colonel. Since the Third Indian Regiment was composed mostly of defected Confederates, Phillips wanted to stay as near as possible to the homes of the men to insure their undivided cooperation. To improve the morale as well as for military reason, in December, 1862, Phillips led a combined force of white and Indian commands into hostile territory. This Union raiding party crossed the Arkansas and attacked Fort Davis, routing the smaller Confederate garrison. After a short pursuit, Phillips returned to the fort and had it and all surrounding outbuildings burned.⁵⁰

The complexity of Federal activities in 1862 led to the dismembering of the cumbersome Department of Missouri into administratively easier-to-handle segments. General Blunt was put in command of the Kansas District, and General Schofield was assigned the district in southwest Missouri, both districts still being under General Curtis. Schofield reorganized the First Division under the command of Blunt, and added a new brigade, the Third Brigade, better known as the Indian Brigade. Colonel Phillips was selected as the Indian Brigade commander because of his activities in organizing and commanding the Third Indian Regiment. Accompanying this command was responsibility for the districts of Western

⁵⁰Foreman, A History of Oklahoma, p. 114; Curtis to Halleck, January 2, 1863, Phillips to Curtis, January 19, 1863, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 2, pp. 7, 61.

Arkansas and Indian Territory.⁵¹ From January to early April, 1863, Colonel Phillips pushed his way into Indian Territory, his 3,000 man brigade proving too strong for any Confederate force in the area. Phillips moved into Fort Gibson early in April, 1863, and for the rest of the war it remained a Federal post.⁵² Phillips renamed Fort Gibson Fort Blunt, in honor of the Union district commander. By mid-April, the Union Indian Brigade had a firm hold on Fort Blunt and the surrounding territory.⁵³

With Federal domination soon to be realized, the Cherokee Council called a meeting in February, 1863, and renounced the Southern allegiance of the tribe. The council gave a vote of confidence to Chief Ross and repealed the Confederate treaty signed in 1861.⁵⁴ To counter the effect of this council, the Confederates called one of their own to be held commencing April 24 at Webber's Falls. Watie was

⁵¹Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 168, 187; Neal, "Federal Ascendancy in Indian Territory, 1862-1863," pp. 72-74; Wyant, "Colonel William A. Phillips and the Civil War in Indian Territory," pp. 23-24.

⁵²Grant Foreman, "The Centennial of Fort Gibson," Chronicles of Oklahoma, II (June, 1924), p. 126; Neal, "Federal Ascendancy in Indian Territory, 1862-1863," pp. 82-83.

⁵³Wiley Britton, Memoirs of the Rebellion on the Border, 1863 (Chicago: Cushing, Thomas and Co., 1882), pp. 198, 205.

⁵⁴Phillips to Curtis, January 29 and February 4, 1863, Phillips to Curtis, February 15, 1863, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 2, pp. 85, 96-97, 112; Woodward, The Cherokees, p. 284; Abel, "The Indians in the Civil War," American Historical Review, XV, p. 295; Carolyn Thomas Foreman, "Colonel Jesse Henry Leavenworth," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XIII (March, 1935), p. 17.

elected chairman and subsequently Chief of the Cherokee. Upon receiving reports of the meeting at Webber's Falls, Colonel Phillips went there with a 600 man force and in a dawn attack routed Colonel Watie, who was caught by complete surprise. The Federal force destroyed the Confederate encampment and returned to Fort Blunt. In the next month, the Confederates repaid the compliment and raided the Fort Blunt remuda pastured just outside the fort. Eight days later Watie harassed an incoming wagon train, but was driven off by a 1,000 man relief column led by Phillips. The increased activity necessitated the reinforcement of Fort Blunt by the First Kansas Colored Infantry Regiment and an artillery section of the Second Kansas Battery. Another skirmish was fought at Greenleaf Prairie, its result negligible to either side.

On June 30 of that same year a wagon train, containing desperately-needed supplies, making its way from Fort Scott to Fort Blunt encountered part of the Confederate command of Watie, which was stationed near Cabin Creek as pickets. The Federal commander, Major John A. Foreman, secured his wagons and moved to meet the Confederate force. The fighting became sporadic after a Federal attack was repulsed. On the following day, the command of Watie was blanketed by a forty-minute artillery barrage of both solid shot and infantry-killing cannister. The Federal infantry charged with much vigor and routed the entrenched Confederates. In attempting to cross

the Arkansas and Grand River in the ensuing retreat, several men of the Confederate force were drowned.⁵⁵

Having received reports from Phillips that Phillips' position was daily becoming more unstable because of the increased activity of Confederate troops in the Fort Blunt area, General Blunt led a relief column in person to the fort as soon as reports reached him of the engagement at Cabin Creek. On July 11 the Federal general arrived unexpectedly at Fort Blunt, where he announced that he would lead an offensive campaign against Confederate forces that were quartered at Honey Springs near Elk Creek, seventeen miles south of present-day Muskogee.⁵⁶

Reports from spies had stated that the Confederate armies of Cooper and Brigadier General William L. Cabell were in the process of combining, and from their rendezvous at Honey Springs would move against Fort Blunt and its supply line with the purpose of driving the Federals out of Indian Territory. If Cabell were allowed to join with Cooper, the total force would be 7,000, an invincible number; but if an

⁵⁵Hathaway, "Brigadier General Stand Watie, Confederate Guerrilla," pp. 51-59; Neal, "Federal Ascendancy in Indian Territory, 1862-1863," pp. 83-87, 95-103; Wyant, "Colonel William A. Phillips and the Civil War in Indian Territory," pp. 41-42, 46-53; Annie Rosser Cubage, "Engagement at Cabin Creek, Indian Territory," Chronicles of Oklahoma, X (March, 1932), pp. 44-51.

⁵⁶James G. Blunt, "General Blunt's Account of His Civil War Experiences," Kansas Historical Quarterly, I (May, 1932), pp. 243-245; Britton, Memoirs of the Rebellion on the Border, 1863, pp. 342-343; Charles R. Freeman, "The Battle of Honey Springs," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XIII (June, 1935), p. 154; Blunt to Curtis, July 13, 1863, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 2, p. 367.

attack were launched immediately, before the two commands could combine, Blunt felt that these forces could be defeated piecemeal. He started his forces on July 6, 1863. Crossing the Arkansas, they pushed forward throughout the night. At dawn advance elements of the Federal force engaged a Confederate outpost.⁵⁷

Blunt, as was his habit, made a personal reconnaissance to evaluate the dispositions of the enemy. He found them entrenched in a timber line astride the Texas Road leading to Fort Blunt.⁵⁸ Returning to his fast-approaching column, he stopped it for a two-hour rest-break which would allow the men time to eat. In answer to his officers' call came all regimental and company officers. He explained to them in detail what he planned to accomplish in the proposed assault.⁵⁹ He would move his forces in a column formation for a quarter of a mile; then it would execute flanking movements and form into an assault line parallel to the Confederate implacements and trenches. Artillery would wait on the flanks and in the center until the infantry

⁵⁷Cabell to Duvall, December 7, 1863, *ibid.*, Pt.1, p. 604; Britton, The Civil War on the Border, II, pp. 115-116; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, p. 273.

⁵⁸Phillips to Blunt, July, 1863, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 2, pp. 355-356; Cabell to Duvall, December 7, 1863, Blunt to Schofield, July 26, 1863, *Ibid.*, Pt. 1, pp. 604, 447; Britton, The Civil War on the Border, II, pp. 116-117.

⁵⁹Neal, "Federal Ascendancy in Indian Territory, 1862-1863," p. 106.

drew fire from the Confederate battery. Blunt reiterated that once the attack started, it had to be kept moving to accomplish complete success.⁶⁰

At 10:00 a.m. on July 17 the column moved forward and the largest single engagement of the Civil War in Indian Territory commenced. After traveling the proper distance, the column received orders to deploy, and the units of Federal infantry and cavalry moved at the double-quick into the desired formation.⁶¹ Pushing through the underbrush, the extended lines of infantry drew the fire of the concealed Confederate artillery battery, revealing its position to the waiting sections of Federal artillery. Firing in quick succession, the Union guns quickly silenced the fire of the four-gun battery of the Confederates. To this crippling loss was the added disadvantage of poor quality gunpowder: the morning dew had turned all exposed gunpowder of the Confederate forces to paste, which did not produce enough force to drive the ball from the piece.⁶²

The turning point in the engagement was reached when the Twenty-Ninth Texas Cavalry Regiment made an inopportune

⁶⁰Blunt to Schofield, July 26, 1863, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 1, pp. 447-448; Wyant, "Colonel William A. Phillips and the Civil War in Indian Territory," p. 54; Britton, The Civil War on the Border, II, pp. 118-119.

⁶¹Blunt to Schofield, July 26, 1863, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 1, p. 447; Britton, The Civil War on the Border, II, p. 119.

⁶²Freeman, "The Battle of Honey Springs," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XIII, p. 163; Britton, The Civil War on the Border, II, p. 119.

assault and was repulsed with heavy losses by the First Kansas Colored Infantry Regiment. The hasty retreat of the Texas regiment caused the Confederate center to buckle and break.

The retreat of the Texans was noted by the other Confederate units, which quickly followed them to the rear and to safety. The uncontrolled retreat evolved into a disorganized rout, and the Federals pursued them to their supply depot at Honey Springs and a mile beyond before the chase was stopped and the command reorganized.⁶³

Later that afternoon Confederate reinforcements of Cabell arrived on the scene. He did not push forward with the combined forces to attack because of the disorganization and feeling of dejection prevalent in Confederate ranks. During the night the Confederate regiments retreated further south toward the Red River. Cabell left Cooper enroute and retraced his line of march back to Arkansas to protect Fort Smith from a probable Federal attack. In comparison to engagements heretofore fought in Indian Territory, the losses were unusually heavy with Federal casualties numbering seventy-five and Confederate losses totaling 186 killed, wounded, and missing in action.⁶⁴

⁶³Bowels to Judson, July 20, 1863, Blunt to Schofield, July 26, 1863, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 1, pp. 450, 448.

⁶⁴Freeman, "The Battle of Honey Springs," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XIII, pp. 156, 158; Britton, The Civil War on the Border, II, pp. 121-122, 125.

Not realizing the importance of his victory, General Blunt waited until the next day for an expected counter attack. Scouts, however, reported the enemy in headlong flight to the south. Blunt put the Federal columns in line and returned to Fort Blunt.⁶⁵

General Blunt spent the next three weeks flooding his superiors with urgent requests for reinforcements. The cautious Curtis and the jealous Schofield made no definite move to comply until the middle of August, when a 1,500 man regiment, the Second Kansas Cavalry, was sent to the border area of Missouri and Kansas. Blunt, by direct order, moved the unit to his position and combined them with his forces.

The Army of the Frontier was now 4,500 men strong and ready for the second phase of the campaign. Blunt set his dual objectives for the immediate future: take Fort Smith and capture or disseminate Confederate forces in Indian Territory and the immediate vicinity.⁶⁶

By the autumn of 1863, there was little hope for Confederate forces in Indian Territory. The Army of the Frontier under General Blunt had driven them below the Arkansas River, where they held a tenacious grip on an area only half the size it had been two years before.

The year of 1861 had ended with the Confederacy in unopposed control of Indian Territory, and the Five Civilized

⁶⁵Neal, "Federal Ascendancy in Indian Territory, 1862-1863," p. 110.

⁶⁶Ibid., pp. 110-115.

Tribes won over to the Confederate camp by liberal promises of the Confederate government. Dissident factions had been either driven out of Indian Territory or quieted and pushed into the background.

The overconfidence of easy victory had caused Confederate leaders to pass over some important weaknesses that were to bring unending trouble to the Confederate cause in Indian Territory and reopen the hushed internal strife of the Indian allies. The most glaring of those weaknesses had to do with leadership. Cooper, for instance, had demonstrated his lack of ability in field command and a lack of the drive necessary for a successful military campaign. McIntosh, until his death at Pea Ridge, had proved he had too much imagination and aggressiveness. Both were lacking in the basics necessary for leadership ability. Watie was the only Confederate officer that possessed desirable traits of leadership; he and Phillips would clash again and again in the fight for dominance in Indian Territory.

By the beginning of 1862, Federal commanders had become aware of the importance of Indian Territory. In occupying this area, they could isolate Texas from the rest of the Confederacy, and pulling this valuable food-producing state out of the Confederate ranks would have a telling effect, not only in the East, but in the Trans-Mississippi. Though the first Federal attempt at liberating Indian Territory had ended in a fiasco, results had been attained. The Union had been shown that even a feeble and mismanaged invasion was

able to overawe anything put into the field by the Confederates.

With the Federal victories at Webber's Falls, the taking of Fort Gibson, and the Confederate defeat at Honey Springs, no hope was in sight for the Confederates, either white or red, in Indian Territory. All that was left for the Confederates to do was to fall back below the Arkansas River and harass the enemy at every opportunity, using Fabian tactics in the hope that a military blunder on the part of the Federals might let the Confederates recoup its losses of territory and prestige. This the Confederate forces tried to do from the latter part of 1863 to the close of the war in the spring of 1865.

CHAPTER II

CONFEDERATE GUERRILLA OPERATIONS BEGIN

Being driven below the Arkansas River in defeat proved to be disastrous to the morale of the Confederate Indian troops. Many deserted their units and returned home, while some made their way through the lines and enlisted in the Federal army. General Cooper tried several times during the ensuing months to recoup his territorial losses and build up hope in his beleaguered Indian units, but he failed each time. The hopelessness of the situation soon became evident to all of the Southern forces in Indian Territory when General William Steele, district commander of Indian Territory, resigned, effective December 11, 1863. Though he had been aggravated by the antagonism and sometimes openly hostile attitude of his subordinate, General Cooper, the general futility of the situation in Indian Territory was the main factor for moving Steele to ask his superior for a relief from command and another assignment.¹

¹Steele to Anderson, February 15, 1864, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 1, pp. 28-36; Victor E. Harlow, Oklahoma Its Origins and Development: A History (Oklahoma City: Harlow Publishing Corporation, 1949), p. 191; Special Orders, No. 7, Adjutant and Inspector General's Office, January 3, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 2, p. 848.

After the repulse of Confederate forces at Honey Springs and the subsequent bolstering of his army by reinforcements, Blunt put the second phase of his strategy into play. Reinforced by the Second Kansas Cavalry Regiment, a 1,500 man unit under the command of Colonel W. F. Cloud, the Union commander of the Army of the Frontier had a total aggregate force of 4,500 troops. The bulk of these troops was assigned to the Third, or Indian Brigade.² Although he was to use his Indian Brigade to good advantage in the concluding phases of his Indian Territory campaign, Blunt did not like the performance of the Indian as a soldier. He told his department commander, General Schofield, that he preferred Negro troops to Indian soldiers by a ratio of ten to one.³

On July 22, 1863, General Blunt again crossed the Arkansas River, taking his entire force of white and Indian regiments south. His immediate objective was to close with and defeat the concentrating forces of Cabell, Cooper, and Watie. The Confederate mass of troops was reported at 9,000 men. In a forty-eight hour forced march, the offensive-minded Union general arrived at the site of the Confederate camp, located sixty miles south of Fort Blunt, below the

²Cloud to McNeil, August 22, 1863, Blunt to Schofield, August 22, 1863, *ibid.*, XXII, Pt. 2, pp. 466-467, 465-466, General Report, Schofield, December 10, 1863, *ibid.*, Pt. 1, p. 15; Wiley Britton, "A Day with Colonel W. F. Cloud," Chronicles of Oklahoma, V (September, 1927), pp. 311-312.

³Blunt to Schofield, August 22, 1863, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 2, p. 465; Fairfax Downey, Indian Wars of the U. S. Army 1776-1865 (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1963), p. 192.

Canadian River. The encampment indicated the enemy force had divided and begun a retreat twenty-four hours before. General Blunt learned that the 3,000 man brigade of Cabell had withdrawn in the direction of Fort Smith. McIntosh, in command of the Creek regiment, had pushed west deep into the Chickasaw Nation, while Cooper, Steele, and Watie with the remainder continued their retreat south to the Red River and safety.⁴

In a pre-dawn scout the Confederate force of Steele was located twenty miles south of the Texas Road, between Perryville and North Fork Town. The scout reported a presence of nearly 5,000 enemy soldiers. This did not deter Blunt, who threw forward all of his cavalry and light artillery in an effort to make contact and slow the Confederate retreat. After seven hours' hard riding, the vanguard fired upon a company of Confederate Choctaws that had been sent to watch their progress. By aggressive action the Confederate company commander was captured and four of his men were killed. The captured Confederate officer reported the reinforcement of General Steele by an 800 man-strong Choctaw regiment sent up from the Red River district. Undeterred, the Union vanguard pushed forward to keep contact with the retreating enemy. The advance element spread out as a line of cavalry skirmishers. When contact was made with a segment of the Confederate command, the main body of the advance party

⁴Blunt to Schofield, August 22, 1863, Steele to Snead, August 28, 1863, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 1, pp. 597, 599-600; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, p. 288.

would move forward to test the enemy resistance. In this way, the direction and speed of the Confederate retreat could be accurately ascertained. During the night of July 25 the Confederates surprised the vanguard with an ambush which left four Union casualties on the Texas Road. Blunt, sensing a stiffening in the resistance, moved up and dismounted the Sixth Kansas Cavalry Regiment, having them deploy as skirmishers on both sides of the Texas Road. The Sixth Kansas Infantry Regiment, supported by artillery, maneuvered to within 300 yards of the enemy barricades. When the Federal howitzers loosed a twelve salvo barrage, the Confederates fled into the darkness of their nearby supply depot in Perryville.⁵

The holding action by the rear guard of Steele was the only part of the Confederate strategy that was successful. Moving into Perryville, the Union cavalry pursued the fleeing Confederates only a short distance due to exhausted mounts and the darkness. General Blunt found that most of the structures in Perryville were being used by the Confederates to store their military supplies: munitions, shoes, boots, clothing, flour, and various pieces of camp equipage.

⁵Cloud to McNeil, August 27, 1863, Cloud to Schofield, September 8, 1863, Blunt to Schofield, August 27, 1863, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 1, pp. 598, 598, 597; General Report, Steele, February 15, 1864, *ibid.*, pp. 33; Clement A. Evans, ed., Confederate Military History (12 Vols., Atlanta: Confederate Publishing Company, 1899), X, pp. 202-203; Britton, Memoirs of the Rebellion on the Border, 1863, p. 402; Muriel H. Wright, "Additional Notes on Perryville, Choctaw Nation," Chronicles of Oklahoma, VIII (June, 1930), pp. 145-148.

He designated the town a military depot for Confederate forces in the area and ordered the whole place put to the torch.⁶

The Confederate plan was to pull the numerically superior Union force deep into their own territory. By separating and heading in different directions, General Steele hoped to force the Union commander to divide his expedition. A chance for Confederate victory might appear if the Federal force could be isolated and surrounded. By cutting Federal communications and stopping the supply lines, the smaller Confederate command could defeat the Federal force piecemeal. Success of this plan depended on two thin hopes: the ability of the scattered Confederate cavalry units to concentrate for the felling blow, and the arrival of the much-needed and long-promised reinforcements of General S. P. Bankhead, who was bringing up his command from Texas.⁷ The failure of Creek cavalry regiments and Choctaw units to join Steele and a delay of Bankhead en route caused the plan to be dropped and the withdrawal south to continue. With large numbers of

⁶Thoburn and Wright, Oklahoma: A History of the State and Its People, I, p. 346; Blunt to Schofield, August 27, 1863, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 1, pp. 597-598; General Report, Steele, February 15, 1864, *ibid.*, p. 33; Neal, "Federal Ascendancy in Indian Territory, 1862-1863," p. 116; Evans, ed., Confederate Military History, X, p. 203; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 290-291.

⁷Neal, "Federal Ascendancy in Indian Territory, 1862-1863," pp. 114-116; Steele to Snead, August 28, 1863, General Report, Steele, February 15, 1864, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 1, pp. 599-600, 33; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 288-289.

desertions within the Confederate command, the Federal pressure proved to be overwhelming. The burning of Perryville left the Confederate commander no alternative but to have the divergent segments of his force continue their withdrawal in their respective directions.⁸ Steele sent orders to Bankhead instructing him to advance on the Fort Towson Road to the vicinity of Fort Smith, and there to support the command of Cabell, who was being hard pressed. Union scouting and advance parties were trying to penetrate his defenses to take Fort Smith.⁹

After dispersing the forces of Cooper and Steele, Blunt sent an Indian unit to garrison Webber's Falls and drive Watie out of the area. The balance of his force was ordered to return to Fort Blunt. The Union general took the brigade of Cloud with all of his artillery, and moved forward to make contact with Cabell in the vicinity of Fort Smith.¹⁰

The brigade of Cabell, with an aggregate force of about 3,000, was posted on the Poteau River, located nine miles southwest of Fort Smith, and eight miles east of Skullyville. Arriving there on August 21, the Confederate brigade

⁸Ibid.

⁹Cabell to Duvall, December 7, 1863, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 1, p. 608; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, p. 291.

¹⁰Cloud to Schofield, September 8, 1863, Blunt to Schofield, August 27, 1863, Cloud to McNeil, September 20, 1863, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 1, pp. 509, 509, 602; Neal, "Federal Ascendancy in Indian Territory, 1862-1863," p. 117.

commander proceeded to block all river fords and roads allowing access to the Fort Smith area.

Cloud led his own command of the Sixth Kansas Cavalry Regiment and the attached Sixth Missouri Cavalry Regiment, accompanied by two sections of artillery. With this unit he went in pursuit of the Confederate force. Cabell pulled his force back to Fort Smith, leaving a regiment to skirmish with the advancing Federals. At Fort Smith the Confederate general ordered the post commander to load all public property on wagons and send it south toward Waldron, Arkansas. On August 31, Cloud pushed his advance to the outskirts of Fort Smith. Pressed back against the Arkansas River, Cabell ordered a unit forward to hold the Union forces; taking the balance of his command, he posted himself at the base of Devil's Backbone, a mountain located sixteen miles below Fort Smith in the Choctaw Nation. At 12:00 noon two battalions of the Sixth Kansas Cavalry Regiment under Captain Edward Lines caught up with the Confederate rear guard of Colonel Lee L. Thomson, commanding a regiment of J. C. Monroe's Cavalry. Pursuing the fleeing Confederates along the Waldron Road as they retreated to the south, Lines was caught in an ambush set up by Thomson at the base of Devil's Backbone. The accurate fire of the Southern artillery and musketry dismounted all save two in the first two companies of the Federal advance party. Captain Lines was numbered among the dead. Falling back a safe distance, the remainder of the vanguard waited for the main body to arrive.

Colonel Cloud of the Union forces came up on the scene shortly thereafter and, on making a reconnaissance of the Confederate position, found a line of dismounted cavalry and several pieces of light artillery. Ordering up the entire command, Cloud steadily drove the Confederate regiments from their position at the base of Devil's Backbone. He pushed the Confederate line back up the mountain for a quarter mile. Reaching the summit of Devil's Backbone, Cloud found the main Confederate force entrenched, protecting their retreating trains. The Federal colonel threw his entire line forward in an all-out assault, and for three hours the two opposing forces fought for possession of the position atop Devil's Backbone. During a lull in the fighting, the Confederate forces broke contact and retreated down the back side of the mountain. They left fifteen to twenty dead on the field. Returning to the captured Confederate position, Cloud secured the area and posted his pickets. Colonel Cloud lost fourteen men in the engagement.

The Federal attack had been so successful that several Confederate regiments broke and ran for safety. Cabell reported that his command would have captured all of the attacking Union force if his men had "fought as troops fighting for liberty should."¹¹ Only the exhausted condition of

¹¹Cloud to McNeil, September 20, 1863, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 1, p. 603; Evans, ed., Confederate Military History, X, pp. 203-204; Hood, "Twilight of the Confederacy in Indian Territory," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XLI, p. 427; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 293-295; Cabell to Duval, July 27, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 1, pp. 604-608.

the Federal cavalry mounts and the weariness of the infantry prevented extensive pursuit. They had marched and fought over 450 miles of rough terrain within sixteen days.¹²

Securing the position on Devil's Backbone, Cloud returned to Fort Smith. General Blunt, who had pushed into Fort Smith with his personal bodyguard and a newly formed regiment, the First Arkansas Infantry, was taken ill again and had to relinquish his command temporarily to Cloud, who was to supervise the securing of the post and surrounding area. This recurring malady that struck General Blunt from time to time, by its symptoms, was malaria.¹³ Informing General Schofield that all of Indian Territory and a large portion of western Arkansas were secured by Federal armies, he went to bed.¹⁴

With the capture of Fort Smith on September 1, 1863, and the retreat of the Confederate forces below the Arkansas River, the second Federal invasion of Indian Territory came to an end. This expedition under the command of General Blunt was better planned than the first attempt by Colonel Weer early in 1862. The major result of this second

¹²Cloud to Schofield, September 8, 1863, Cloud to McNeil, September 20, 1863, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 1, pp. 598-599, 616; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, p. 296.

¹³Cloud to Schofield, September 8, 1863, *ibid.*, p. 599; Neal, "Federal Ascendancy in Indian Territory, 1862-1863," pp. 91, 117.

¹⁴Blunt to Schofield, September 11, 1863, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 2, p. 525; Neal, "Federal Ascendancy in Indian Territory, 1862-1863," p. 117.

expedition was that it reduced all concentrated opposition put into the field by the Confederates to scattered and desultory hit and run raids. Confederate forces in Indian Territory would not be able to effectively resist Union advances. Only by guerrilla tactics could the Confederacy hinder the enemy enough to prevent further conquest of the region between the Canadian River, the Arkansas River, and the Red River.

Until the end of the war, military activities in Indian Territory were all directed at protecting or securing the Texas Road supply line. Only in closing or keeping open this overland route could either side hope to further its plans of conquest in the area. The Texas Road would be the artery in Union-dominated territory, with the encampment at Fort Blunt being the heart. If the supply lines to Fort Blunt were severed, the territory would come within Confederate grasp again. The rest of 1863 and all of the two subsequent years of the war were spent in continuing efforts toward that goal.

The Federal successes of 1863 were not all due to Confederate lack of military ability. Though a contributing factor, they could be attributed more to the low state of morale of the Confederate Indian troops and the lack of even a bare minimum of military supplies. These troops were poorly clothed, underfed, abused by their white officers, and not paid for months at a time; when paid they received the near-worthless Confederate script which would buy almost nothing. General Steele blamed a portion of the 1863 set-

backs of the Confederates on the lack of proper military discipline, specifically the fact that all Union units composed of Indian troops were officered by white men, whereas the comparable Confederate commands were not.¹⁵

Though the active large-scale campaigning had come to an end with the taking of Fort Smith, the fighting was far from over. Patrols and scouts from both sides were continuously brushing into each other. The infamous guerrilla of Missouri, William C. Quantrill, passed through Indian Territory many times going to and from his base camp established at Bonham in upper Texas.

With the Fort Smith area secured, General Blunt returned in the latter part of September, 1863, to his supply depot at Fort Scott, Kansas. On October 4 Blunt received dispatches stating that the post at Fort Smith was being endangered by a superior force of the enemy. Gathering together his staff, he prepared to move his headquarters to that post. His escort consisted of one company of the Third Wisconsin Cavalry Regiment and a company of the Fourteenth Kansas Cavalry Regiment, in total about one hundred fighting men. To this escort were added his clerks, orderlies, and the brigade band, which rode in a specially-built wagon. Leaving late

¹⁵Thoburn and Wright, Oklahoma: A History of the State and Its People, I, pp. 346-347; Steele to Anderson, May 1, 1863, Steele to Boggs, June 8, 1863, Steele to Anderson, October 24, 1863, Steele to Cooper, November 8, 1863, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 2, pp. 833-834, 862-863, 1048, 1063; although renamed Fort Blunt in July, 1863, the old name of Fort Gibson quickly came back into common usage, while Fort Blunt remained the official name until the close of the Civil War.

in the afternoon, the train traveled only six miles the first day before going into camp near Dry Woods, located on the Texas Road. The next morning the column headed south on the Texas Road. General Blunt planned to go to Fort Smith via Fort Blunt. After a thirty-four mile march, the Federal party set up camp again, this time at Cow Creek, so that by noon of October 6 the group arrived in the vicinity of Baxter Springs.¹⁶

Baxter Springs was situated as an intermediate point between the supply depot at Fort Scott and the forward post of Fort Blunt. It was there that supply trains bound for Indian Territory picked up detachments to bolster their escorts while in the hostile territory; by the same token, the extra guards were released at this point on the trip back. By maintaining this outpost, they could provide trains with an adequate escort to and from Fort Blunt, and also a strong force of troops could be held in readiness for use in the surrounding area as needed. Lieutenant James Pond of the Third Wisconsin Cavalry Regiment was assigned to Baxter Springs in late September and upon the arrival of General

¹⁶Blunt to Marsh, October 19, 1863, Blair to Greene, October 15, 1863, Henning to Greene, October 7, 1863, *ibid.*, Pt. 1, pp. 688, 690, 693; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 313, 314; John P. Burch, Charles W. Quantrell: A True History of his Guerilla Warfare on the Missouri and Kansas Border During the Civil War of 1861 to 1865 (Vega: no publisher, 1923), pp. 223-227.

Blunt was in the process of enlarging the fortifications.¹⁷

By October 6, 1863, Blunt had arrived at a point within 400 yards of Baxter Springs; but due to an intervening ridge, the camp was still out of sight. Being in advance of his main body, the Federal general halted to wait for the wagons to close up. After the wagons had regained their interval and the column remounted, the order was given to resume the march. It was at this time that the attention of Blunt was called to a large body of men approaching from his left front. Since they were 500 yards distant and their identity was hard to ascertain, scouts were sent forward and the two escort companies were formed in lines of battle, sixty strong. The rest were in reserve to protect the train. Closing the distance to 300 yards, the unknown body halted. General Blunt at first supposed them to be part of the command of Lieutenant Pond as they were all dressed in Federal uniforms. Blunt became suspicious because of the fast approach of several men from the east who joined the halted body and the lack of any semblance of organization or discipline in the group.

With scouts reporting a fight at Baxter Springs, and designating these men as unidentified guerrillas, Blunt went

¹⁷Pond to Blair, October 7, 1863, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 1, pp. 698-699; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, p. 310; William E. Connelley, Quantrill and the Border Wars (Cedar Rapids: The Torch Press, 1910), pp. 423-425; Jay Monaghan, Civil War on the Western Border 1854-1865 (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1955), pp. 291-295.

forward to make a personal reconnaissance. After advancing seventy-five yards, Blunt was halted by irregular pistol fire coming from the guerrilla command. Simultaneously he was able to hear the firing from the command of Pond at his immediate left front. Returning to his escort, Blunt was chagrined to see his command scattering in all directions across the prairie, leaving the train and non-combatants to fend for themselves. Blunt--with a superior mount--rapidly overtook the fleeing escort and with his adjutant, Major H. Z. Curtis, attempted to rally his men.¹⁸

The guerrillas, seeing this rout, moved from a walk to a gallop and proceeded to overtake and wipe out the escort, killing all prisoners that fell into their hands. Blunt and Major Curtis managed to rally only fifteen men, of which six were sent to get relief from Fort Scott. With the remainder General Blunt turned and moved to make contact with the enemy force for the purpose of watching their movements and assembling as much of his dismantled command as possible.¹⁹

While Blunt was attempting to rally part of his force, Major Benjamin S. Henning, commander of a company from the Third Wisconsin Cavalry, had become separated from his

¹⁸Henning to Greene, October 7, 1863, Blunt to Marsh, October 19, 1863, Pond to Blair, October 7, 1863, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 1, pp. 693-695, 688-689, 698-699; Schofield to Halleck, October 9, 1863, *ibid.*, Pt. 2, p. 622; Richard S. Brownlee, Grey Ghosts of the Confederacy (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1958), pp. 128-132.

¹⁹Blunt to Marsh, October 19, 1863, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 1, p. 689; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 320-321.

command and was isolated on the fringe of the fight. By the time he had shaken off his pursuers, he was closer to the Baxter Springs command than his own. He elected to cut in behind the enemy force and go to the Baxter Springs camp, where he hoped to get reinforcements to help Blunt beat off his attackers. Reaching the Baxter Springs fortifications, Major Henning found the meager command there being hard pressed by a guerrilla force of about 300 men. The arrival of Henning in his encampment was the first Lieutenant Pond knew of the fight over the ridge. To his disappointment, Major Henning learned that all of the cavalry had left early that morning as escort for a forage train and was not expected back for several days.²⁰ Hearing this, the major returned to the fight as it moved to the southeast across the prairie. Reaching the brow of a hill, Henning was able to see the remaining few men of the train lose their lives, including the murdering of the entire brigade band and other non-combatants with the train. All of the brigade band was shot and then thrown under the wagon, which was set afire.²¹

In answer to a call for reinforcements, Lieutenant Colonel Charles W. Blair arrived in the afternoon of the ninth, three days after the attack. He brought with him three companies of the Twelfth Kansas Infantry Regiment and

²⁰Henning to Greene, October 7, 1863, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 1, pp. 694-695.

²¹Blair to Greene, October 15, 1863, Henning to Greene, October 7, 1863, ibid., pp. 692, 695-696; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 419-420.

two of the Second Kansas Colored Infantry Regiment, having about one hundred cavalry troopers riding in the vanguard. Colonel Blair arrived in time to escort the general back to Fort Scott and see to the burial of the dead and the treatment of the wounded.²² It was not until late evening that it was confirmed that the Confederate force was that of Quantrill, though he had been previously reported in the vicinity headed south.²³

From Baxter Springs, Quantrill moved his command south on the Texas Road until they crossed Cabin Creek. After crossing Cabin Creek the guerrilla force turned west, crossed the Verdigris River, and then forded the Arkansas River eighteen miles above Fort Blunt. On October 8, Quantrill's men captured a scout of twelve men belonging to the First Indian Home Guard Regiment and murdered them all in cold blood. On the night of October 11, they camped on the North Canadian River, forty-five miles south of the Arkansas River. The last report of them was that they had moved into north Texas and set up a winter camp at Bonham.²⁴

The void in guerrilla activities left by Quantrill when he went to Bonham was filled by Colonel Watie in mid-October;

²²Thoburn and Wright, Oklahoma: A History of the State and Its People, I, p. 349; Blunt to Marsh, October 19, 1863, Blair to Greene, October 15, 1863, Henning to Greene, October 7, 1863, Quantrill to Price, October 13, 1863, Pond to Blair, October 7, 1863, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 1, pp. 689, 691, 697, 700-701, 698.

²³Blair to Greene, October 15, 1863, *ibid.*, p. 691.

²⁴Blunt to Marsh, October 19, 1863, Quantrill to Price, October 13, 1863, *ibid.*, pp. 689, 700-701.

1863. The Cherokee guerrilla was sent back into Indian Territory to harass the Federal supply line and spread havoc among rear elements of the Federal detachments and towns.

On October 29 Watie rode into Tahlequah and nearby Park Hill. He killed a few Federal Cherokees and broke up a council meeting being held there by local leaders. Watie then rode to Park Hill and burned Rose Cottage, the home of Chief Ross. Some Federal troops from the First Kansas Colored Infantry Regiment were found there, and two were killed in the skirmish that followed. Two white soldiers from the First Kansas Colored Infantry Regiment were also killed. Colonel Watie captured and sent south several of Ross's slaves and burned their houses and outbuildings.²⁵

Never using a force larger than 500 men, Watie would carry the war to the Federals when all other means were exhausted and Confederate hopes were at their lowest. Fear gripped the Union sympathizers as his raids grew more daring. As his legend grew, it was reported that he was massing a force of over 3,000 troops and was planning to invade Kansas.²⁶

²⁵Edward E. Dale, "Some Letters of General Stand Watie," Chronicles of Oklahoma, I (January, 1921), pp. 41-42; Dale and Litton, eds., Cherokee Cavaliers, pp. 144-145; Foreman, A History of Oklahoma, p. 124; Hathaway, "Brigadier General Stand Watie, Confederate Guerrilla," p. 63; Carolyn Thomas Foreman, Park Hill (Muskogee: The Star Printery, Inc., 1948), p. 129.

²⁶Thompson to Blair, November 28, 1863, Burnett to Ewing, November 28, 1863, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 2, pp. 723-724, 722, 723.

The guerrilla activity of Watie brought on the last major engagement of 1863. On December 26, Watie, William Penn Adair, and Quantrill made a sortie against Fort Blunt. The raid was of a harassing nature because the Confederate guerrillas quit the fighting at first signs of stiff resistance. The following morning Captain Alexander C. Spilman of the Third Indian Home Guard Regiment was sent out from Fort Gibson in pursuit. He took with him a 300 man infantry force drawn from the Indian Brigade. Taking the Park Hill Road north to Tahlequah, Spilman was informed that Watie had plundered the Murrel house and burned the surrounding Negro quarters. From residents of the area, the Union captain learned that Watie was accompanied by a force of 500 to 800 men. Spilman was able to trace Watie to the Illinois River bottom. Moving to the Illinois River also, Spilman encamped, putting out a strong security to prevent a surprise attack by the Confederates.²⁷ The next morning Spilman still did not know the exact location of the Confederate camp, though he was sure it was somewhere near. Twice that morning the Federal column was approached by Confederates who had mistakenly thought them to be friendly.

²⁷Hathaway, "Brigadier General Stand Watie, Confederate Guerrilla," pp. 64-65; Spilman to Phillips, December 23, 1863, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 1, pp. 781-783; Annie Heloise Abel, The American Indian as Participant in the Civil War (Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1919), p. 312; Abstract from Record of Events, December 16, 1863, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 1, p. 779; Cherrie Adair Moore, "William Penn Adair," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XXIX (Spring, 1951), pp. 37-41.

Traveling up the Barren Fork River, Spilman located the Confederates in force. Forming his men in line and pushing forward their single piece of artillery, Spilman prepared for battle. Brought under sporadic fire of the enemy force, the Federal captain ordered the fire to be returned. The Confederate line broke and retreated under the fire of the Federal howitzer. Lieutenant L. F. Parsons, commanding the Cherokee element of the Union force, drove them for a quarter of a mile; and when the Confederate line formed again, he broke it and drove them from the field. Spilman consolidated his force on a hilltop and awaited the Confederates. Spilman's position was no sooner secured than the Confederates attacked. A few discharges of cannister drove the Confederates out of the valley and to the top of an adjoining hill.

Since they were firing at each other from concealed positions, the fighting gave neither side any advantage. Spilman decided to use a ruse to get the Confederates into the open where he could defeat them. He ordered his command onto the road as if quitting the fight. When the Confederate Indians rushed forward to clinch the victory, Spilman ordered his men back to their former positions, where they delivered a deadly fire that broke the Southern force and drove them back. This time the rout was complete; the Confederates made no attempt to rally. Spilman lost one killed and one wounded. Several of his artillery and supply train animals were wounded and had to be abandoned. The Confederate loss was estimated by Spilman at twelve killed and twenty-five

wounded. Leaving his wounded at a nearby house, Spilman continued on to Rhea's Mill, where he attached himself to the command of Major Foreman.²⁸

With 1863 coming to a close, General Steele had lost all confidence in the ability of the Confederate Indians. The only Indian he held in high esteem was Watie.²⁹ On December 11, Steele was removed from command of Indian Territory at his own request and was replaced by Brigadier General Samuel Bell Maxey.³⁰

The appointment of Maxey over Cooper greatly antagonized and disappointed Cooper, who had fought for the position. He used all the influence he had in Richmond, Virginia, the Confederate capital, to get the position turned over to himself as being the best qualified.³¹ General Cooper displayed

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Thoburn and Wright, Oklahoma: A History of the State and Its People, I, p. 347; Steele to Anderson, February 15, 1864, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 1, pp. 35-36; Hathaway, "Brigadier General Stand Watie, Confederate Guerrilla," p. 67.

³⁰Special Order, Headquarters Trans-Mississippi Department, December 11, 1863, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 2, p. 1094; Hathaway, "Brigadier General Stand Watie, Confederate Guerrilla," p. 67; Cunningham, General Stand Watie's Confederate Indians, p. 133; McNeil to Totten, January 7, 1864, Official Records, XXXIV, i, Pt. 2, p. 42; Harlow, Oklahoma Its Origins and Development: A History, p. 191; Anderson to Maxey, December 11, 1863, Samuel Bell Maxey Papers, Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

³¹Hood, "Twilight of the Confederacy in Indian Territory," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XLI, p. 431; Cooper to Davis, December 11, 1863, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 2, p. 1038; Joseph B. Thoburn, A Standard History of Oklahoma (5 vols., Chicago: The American Historical Society, 1916), I, pp. 316-317; Muriel H. Wright, "General Douglas H. Cooper, C.S.A.," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XXXII (Summer, 1954), p. 171; Thoburn and Wright, Oklahoma: A History of the State and Its People, I, p. 347.

complete disregard for the chain of command by writing directly to the President of the Confederacy, Jefferson Davis, urging his appointment to the command of Indian Territory.³² Maxey not only had trouble with his subordinate officers, but the territory he was to command had earned the reputation as being an impossible one. For a military man, this assignment was career-killing.

Faced with terrific odds, Maxey displayed a keen insight into the situation as he described the importance of Indian Territory to his department commander, General Edmund Kirby-Smith. He proposed to divide the available forces into two brigades, with all Indian forces under Cooper and the remaining troops under Watie. His low opinion of Indian troops became evident when he stated he would have a small battalion of white troops attached to Cooper acting as scouts and couriers. The Confederate commander also urged that experienced staff officers and cadre personnel be sent to him so he could make his command more efficient.³³ General Maxey, in the belief that the Confederacy could win back the lost

³²Cooper to Davis, February 29, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 2, p. 1007; Hood, "Twilight of the Confederacy in Indian Territory," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XLI, p. 432; Wright, "General Douglas H. Cooper, C.S.A.," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XXXII, p. 171; Maxey to Boggs, October 24, 1864, Maxey to Williamson, June 3, 1864, Samuel Bell Maxey Papers, Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

³³Maxey to Anderson, January 12, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 2, pp. 856-857; Hood, "Twilight of the Confederacy in Indian Territory," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XLI, p. 432; Hathaway, "Brigadier General Stand Watie, Confederate Guerrilla," pp. 68-69; Wright, "General Douglas H. Cooper, C.S.A.," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XXXII, pp. 171, 178.

territory, decried the conditions in the Trans-Mississippi Department and some of the actions of his superiors, in particular their failure to supply him with adequate reinforcements and quartermaster supplies. He urged universal impressment of all Indians capable of bearing arms.³⁴

The winter of 1863-64 was not to be as quiet as the previous ones. The Federals at Fort Blunt launched an expedition deep into Confederate-held territory. Under the command of Phillips, the Union force penetrated almost to Middle Boggy, deep in the Choctaw Nation. Like his Confederate opponent, Phillips was anxious to bring the situation in Indian Territory to a successful climax. To help in the achievement of this goal Phillips executed his February expedition.³⁵

An advance party under the command of Major Moses B. C. Wright, Second Indian Home Guard Regiment, opened the campaign into Indian Territory. He moved to Rhea's Mill, located across the border in Arkansas, on January 29, 1864. Wright was to gather flour and forage for the main body which was to follow. Under his personal leadership, Phillips left Fort Blunt with 1,500 men, the balance of the command, and moved southwest. This was early on the morning of February 1.

³⁴Ibid., pp. 858, 432.

³⁵Thoburn and Wright, Oklahoma: A History of the State and Its People, I, p. 354; Hood, "Twilight of the Confederacy in Indian Territory," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XLI, pp. 432-433; Wyant, "Colonel William A. Phillips and the Civil War in Indian Territory," p. 61; Muriel H. Wright, "Old Boggy Depot," Chronicles of Oklahoma, V (March, 1927), pp. 4-6.

Going into the Creek and Seminole nations, then turning south on the Texas Road, he penetrated the defenses of the Choctaw Nation. The long Federal column--the First and Third Indian Home Guard regiments and a battalion of the Fourteenth Kansas Cavalry Regiment--made its way to their first camp south of the Arkansas River. All of these troops were well-mounted and armed with the newest Sharp's rifles.³⁶

In a circular dated January 30, Phillips instructed his men to aim and shoot carefully, picking their targets. He informed them that only cowards would lag behind and only stragglers would be killed. Calling on them to unleash their vengeance on the authors of the suffering in Indian Territory, he asked them to make their footsteps severe. It was implied that prisoners were not wanted. To ensure that no straggling or unnecessary destruction would take place, Phillips required a roll call three times a day. Only commissioned officers could kill meat-bearing animals while on the expedition. If this order were violated, the perpetrator would be brought to account immediately and the amount of money equal to the value of the animal would be deducted from his pay.

Going with the First and Third Indian Home Guard regiments and the Fourteenth Kansas Cavalry Regiment was a section of howitzers commanded by Captain Solomon Kaufman.

³⁶Thoburn, A Standard History of Oklahoma, I, p. 315; Hood, "Twilight of the Confederacy in Indian Territory," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XLI, p. 432; Hathaway, "Brigadier General Stand Watie, Confederate Guerrilla," p. 69. Foreman, A History of Oklahoma, pp. 125, 126.

Colonel Thomas Moonlight and the remainder of the Fourteenth Kansas Cavalry Regiment were to join Phillips enroute or near Boggy Depot. Anxious to penetrate as far as possible into Indian Territory before any resistance could be organized against him, Phillips imposed heavy marching on his column. Using segments of the Fourteenth Kansas Cavalry Regiment to sweep his front clear of Confederates, he moved toward North Fork River.

By February 5, Phillips was encamped on the North Fork River in the Creek Nation. From this camp he dispatched small units to clear Confederates out of the Little River and upper Canadian valleys. Moving to the South Canadian River, Phillips left a small detachment of the Fourteenth Kansas Cavalry Regiment at North Fork to guide Colonel Moonlight and the expected reinforcements.

Scouts reported that in the skirmishes on the Upper Canadian River and Little River bottom lands, the units dispatched by Phillips had beaten the Confederates encountered, and had left over one hundred dead as a warning to any Confederates remaining in the area. Phillips reported that the Confederates were retreating in haste toward the Red River and Fort Washita, and that Cooper had moved his headquarters from Fort Towson to Fort Washita. Sending the First Indian Home Guard Regiment on ahead to Boggy Depot, Phillips and

the main body remained at the South Canadian River one more day waiting for Moonlight.³⁷

With no word on the reinforcements, Phillips and the main column moved to Boggy Depot February 9. On February 13 a scout under Major Charles Willetts skirmished at Middle Boggy with a small force of Confederate Indian troops. Willetts was in command of a regiment of the Fourteenth Kansas Cavalry, an advance party put forward of the main column to prevent its being ambushed. Willetts came up on a rear element of a party of Confederate cavalry and infantry. He immediately attacked and routed the Confederates, who fled into the surrounding brush. Forty-seven Confederate dead were left on the field with no injuries in the Union party. It was on this scout that revenge was taken on the Confederates. Paying heed to the January circular that no prisoners be taken, the Confederate wounded were left on the field with their throats slashed from ear to ear.

From the battleground at the Middle Boggy, Phillips moved his command twenty-one miles further south. On South Boggy he established Camp Kagi. With no hope for the future

³⁷Wyant, "Colonel William A. Phillips and the Civil War in Indian Territory," pp. 57-58; Hood, "Twilight of the Confederacy in Indian Territory," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XLI, p. 432; Thoburn and Wright, Oklahoma: A History of the State and Its People, I, p. 354; Phillips to Command, January 30, 1864, Thayer to Steele, February 22, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 1, pp. 108, General Order, Headquarters of First Brigade, Army of the Frontier, January 21, 1864, Thompson to Gallaher, February 5, 1864, Phillips to Thayer, February 8, 1864, ibid., Pt. 2, pp. 191-192; 249, 272; W. B. Morrison, "Fort Towson," Chronicles of Oklahoma, VIII (June, 1930), p. 227.

reinforcements, Phillips stripped himself of all unnecessary baggage and prepared to march south to the outskirts of Fort Washita and make contact with the Confederate troops reported there. He sent Colonel Stephen H. Wattles back to Little River with all the captured oxen and wagons. Retaining only the serviceable mounted men of the three companies of the Fourteenth Kansas Cavalry Regiment and the regiments of the First and Third Indian Home Guard regiments, he moved to Fort Washita. He had a total force of 450 men and one howitzer; the rest were in retreat to Little River. Phillips hoped to strike one more blow at the enemy before withdrawing, but he decided not to risk defeat and lose the moral effect of the victories won to date.³⁸

After destroying all organized resistance in the area, Phillips put forward the hand of diplomacy to the Confederate Indians. He sent to the Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Seminole chiefs an offer of peace as set forth in Lincoln's Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction of December 8, 1863. Phillips told each Indian leader that the government he represented wanted to give the Indians peace, mercy and pardon. He did not want to be cruel, but all that threatened the "glorious American Republic" must be destroyed. Phillips

³⁸Phillips to Curtis, February 16, 1864, and February 24, 1864; Thayer to Steele, February 22, 1864; Wright to Gallaher, February 27, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 1, pp. 106-111, 108, 112-113; Phillips to Curtis, February 14, 1864, Circular, Headquarters of First Brigade, Army of the Frontier, January 30, 1864, Maxey to Kirby-Smith, February 26, 1864, *ibid.*, Pt. 2, pp. 329-330, 109, 994.

instructed them to make peace and decide quickly because their days of grace would end soon. All of these letters and proclamations were drawn up in the respective Indian tongues and distributed throughout Indian Territory south of the Arkansas River.

Pointing his column north, he retraced his steps back to Fort Blunt, picking Colonel Wattles up on the way. Phillips expressed satisfaction with his expedition, for it achieved most of its objectives. Though not able to enter Texas as he had planned, he had succeeded in penetrating 165 miles into Confederate territory, and in spreading death and destruction over 400 square miles of hostile country. Although only four of his command were slightly wounded, he left 250 dead Confederates in Indian Territory. The Confederates claimed that the raid had not succeeded in any of its objectives and that the Federal invaders had fled the territory to avoid contact with the Confederate force marching in their direction. Maxey reported that the raid had made the Indians more resolute in their hatred for the Federal troops stationed in Indian Territory.³⁹ He blamed his failure to defeat the Federals on the lack of arms in his command. He

³⁹Phillips to Curtis, February 29, 1864, Phillips to Curtis, February 14, 1864, Maxey to Kirby-Smith, February 26, 1864, Phillips to Curtis, February 24, 1864, *ibid.*, pp. 467-468, 329-330, 994-996, 109-111; Thoburn and Wright, Oklahoma: A History of the State and Its People, I, p. 354; Phillips to Colbert, February 15, 1864, Phillips to Jumper, February 15, 1864, Phillips to Choctaw Council, February 15, 1864; Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 1, pp. 109-110, 111, 110; Wyant, "Colonel William A. Phillips and the Civil War in Indian Territory," pp. 58-59.

had a 250 man reserve at Bonham, Texas, under Quantrill; but since none were armed, they were useless to him in trying to repel the Federal invaders.⁴⁰

At the time of the Phillips expedition, a Confederate Indian council composed of Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Seminole representatives met at Armstrong Academy, in present-day Bryan County, on February 26, 1864. The council had been called to discuss the Plains Indians who had been raiding in the area and causing much destruction. The discussion quickly evolved into the Indians' position in the war. General Maxey attended the meeting in order to meet the Indian allies of his new assignment. On request he gave an eloquent speech promising victory in the coming year and apologizing for the Confederacy's not meeting all of their treaty obligations to the Indians. General Cooper, the old Choctaw agent, worked behind the scenes of the council and was largely responsible for the continuing support of that nation.

However, a timely message from President Davis was a helpful factor in keeping the tribe loyal to the Confederacy. President Davis assured the Confederate Indians that their welfare was uppermost in his mind and every consideration would be given to their requests as well as to any complaint they might have. He guaranteed that the request of the Indian allies concerning the making of Indian Territory a separate military district would be honored, and General

⁴⁰Maxey to Kirby-Smith, February 26, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 2, pp. 994-997.

Cooper, as their choice for commander, would be appointed. Davis told the Confederate allies that arrangements were being made at that moment for the forwarding of a number of desperately-needed arms to the Indian units. In reassuring the Indian soldiers, he said that "the soldiers and people of the...[Indian] Nations in treaty and amity with us are regarded by this Government with the same tender care and solicitude as are the soldiers and people of all the Confederate States." Calling for a united effort, the Confederate President said, "Our cause is one, and our hearts are united. ...with the providence of God to guide and to shield us, victory will perch on our banners and bless us with peace, independence, and prosperity."⁴¹

Though the President's message did placate fears of the Indian allies, some were not convinced. Another council was called to meet on March 16, 1864, further north at Skullyville to prevent Southern pressure on the delegates. Cooper used all the diplomacy he possessed in an effort to win a favorable decision at this meeting, but he failed. A small group of Choctaws attempted to extend peace feelers to Colonel Phillips, but the Federal commander refused to agree,

⁴¹Davis to Folsom, February 22, 1864, *ibid.*, Pt. 3, pp. 824-825; Maxey to Anderson, February 7, 1864; Maxey to Kirby-Smith, November 12, 1864; Maxey to his wife, November 6, 1864, Samuel Bell Maxey Papers, Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art, Tulsa, Oklahoma; Special Orders Number 171, Adjutant and Inspector General's Office, July 21, 1864, Official Records, i, XLI, Pt. 2, p. 1019.

asserting that the group did not represent the entire nation because the Choctaw nation was still de facto rebel.⁴²

Phillips launched into a program of improving discipline and acquiring supplies when he returned from his February expedition. He explained in detail his lack of adequate transportation facilities. He informed his superior that he had stopped hauling pork and salted bacon because the weight was too heavy and bulky for his limited supply of wagons. Instead, he would substitute light condensed food such as sugar, coffee, and molasses. Meat would have to be acquired locally. Phillips urged the use of oxen over mules because of the ability of the ox to subsist entirely on grass, whereas the mule could not. Phillips urged the Federal government to buy the oxen from loyal Indians so they could use the money to support their families.⁴³

Phillips described in detail his plan for improving discipline in the Indian units of his command. The Federal commander urged his superior to allow him to have at least

⁴²Hood, "Twilight of the Confederacy in Indian Territory," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XLI, pp. 433-434; Wyant, "Colonel William A. Phillips and the Civil War in Indian Territory," pp. 59-60, 62-63; Thoburn and Wright, Oklahoma: A History of the State and Its People, I, p. 358; U. S. Department of the Interior, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Year 1864 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1865), p. 328; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 342-344; Phillips to Curtis, April 5, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 3, p. 53; Edwin C. McReynolds, Oklahoma: A History of the Sooner State (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1954), p. 221.

⁴³Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 375, 379; Wyant, "Colonel William A. Phillips and the Civil War in Indian Territory," pp. 65-66; Phillips to Curtis, March 7, 1864, Curtis to Phillips, March 9, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 2, pp. 524-525, 537-539.

two white officers in each company and a requisite number of white orderly sergeants to keep up the paper work. Indians were totally inefficient in trying to cope with the paper work required by army regulations. To increase the performance of his units and enlarge their usefulness, he urged the remounting of his Third Indian Home Guard Regiment at government expense. To prevent further strife caused by the overlapping of authority with two district commanders, Curtis and Blunt, Phillips proposed that his command be made independent and responsible only to General Curtis, who Phillips believed had a deeper understanding of the Indians and their problems.⁴⁴

Phillips next exposed his true contempt for Blunt: he stated that he should not be left under the command of a superior that was openly trying to abolish his command and had on several occasions been judged insane by his fellow officers. Such charges did not hide Phillips' real objection to serving under General Blunt. Blunt was a political general who had received his promotions in part by political means, whereas Colonel Phillips had earned all of his on the battlefield and was angry when his chances for advancement were stopped for political reasons.⁴⁵

⁴⁴Phillips to Curtis, March 7, 1864, *ibid.*, pp. 525-527; Oates, Confederate Cavalry West of the River, p. 74, 77, 75.

⁴⁵Phillips to Curtis, March 13, 1864, Curtis to Phillips, March 23, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 2, pp. 590-591, 711-712; Wyant, "Colonel William A. Phillips and the Civil War in Indian Territory," p.67; Annie Heloise Abel, The American Indian Under Reconstruction (Cleveland; The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1925), pp. 112-115.

Though Blunt did not think highly of Indian fighting ability, he did feel that if reorganized, the Indian Brigade could be of some usefulness to the Union. By mounting them on ponies and using the Indian units on scout duty, Blunt believed they would reach the ultimate efficiency capable of such units.⁴⁶

In the early part of April, 1864, an unusual quiet settled over Indian Territory. As a precaution, Blunt made his troop dispositions to the south more secure in event of a sudden attack. Taking advantage of the breathing spell, Blunt and Phillips gathered in more corn and forage, at the same time sending forward to headquarters more requests for transportation. Phillips had nothing to fear because the Confederate general, Maxey, had received orders to gather as many of his forces as possible and join General Stirling Price in Arkansas. Price was moving to oppose the maneuver of the Federal general, Frederick Steele.⁴⁷

The Union strategy of Steele consisted of three cooperative columns which would converge upon Shreveport, Louisiana,

⁴⁶Blunt to Curtis, March 27, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 2, pp. 754-755; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, p. 380.

⁴⁷Blunt to Curtis, March 30, 1864, Maxey to Anderson, March 20, 1864, Watie to Heiston, March 20, 1864, Cooper to Scott, March 21, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 2, pp. 791, 1070-1071, 1071-1072, 1073-1074; Maxey to Kirby-Smith, April 3, 1864, Maxey to Boggs, April 2 and April 7, 1864, Boggs to Maxey, April 12, 1864, ibid., Pt. 3, pp. 725, 728-729, 745-746, 760-761; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 344-345, 378; Hood, "Twilight of the Confederacy in Indian Territory," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XLI, p. 434.

located deep within Confederate territory. The three columns would meet in a move designed to capture that important supply depot. General Nathaniel Banks was the overall commander of the Union forces with Steele in command of Federal troops sent from Indian Territory. The Confederate Indian troops were under the direct command of Maxey. The Second Indian Brigade held the units of Colonel Tandy Walker, the First and Second Indian regiments. The First Brigade of Maxey's Division was made up entirely of Texas Troops.

The troops of Maxey took an active part in the engagement at Poison Spring, Arkansas, on April 18, 1864. Federal General Steele, located at Camden, Arkansas, was short of forage and had sent a train of over 200 wagons to gather hay and fodder at nearby Prairie D'Ane.⁴⁸ Securing a position between the Federal train and Camden, the Confederates under Maxey blocked the road and waited.

Taking position on the extreme left of the Confederate line were Colonel Walker and his Choctaw brigade: the First Regiment under Lieutenant Colonel James Riley, a 300 man unit; and the Second Regiment under Colonel S. N. Folsom, a

⁴⁸Curtis to Blunt, April 17, 1864, Maxey to Kirby-Smith, April 3, 1864, Kirby-Smith to Price, April 7, 1864, Boggs to Maxey, April 12, 1864, Anderson to Price, April 12, 1864, Scott to McCulloch, April 12, 1864, Magruder to Boggs, April 20, 1864, Sanborn to Greene, April 25, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 3, pp. 199-200, 728-729, 744, 760-761, 761, 774, 779, 288; Banks to Sherman, February 19, 1864, ibid., Pt. 2, p. 368; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 345-347.

380 man force.⁴⁹ The Choctaw brigade was delayed in getting into place because of the changes being made in the dispositions of the other troops about him. Immediately on aligning his Indian soldiers, Walker ordered them forward against the Federal right. Halting briefly at the edge of an old field, Walker realigned his command and then hurled his entire brigade at the Union troops positioned in a heavily wooded ravine to their immediate front.⁵⁰ The Federals were driven from the ravine and forced to seek a new position behind the forage wagons. Colonel Walker's brigade charged them again and forced the Union troops to flee in the direction of Camden. Walker was fearful that his hungry, half-clothed Indians would break off the pursuit in order to plunder the commissary wagons of the Union train, but he was able to

⁴⁹ Ibid., pp. 346-352; Price to Boggs, May, 1864, Organization of the Confederate Forces in Arkansas, April 20, 1864, Maxey to Belton, April 23, 1864, DeMorse to Ochiltree, April 21, 1864, Walker to Ochiltree, April 19, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 1, pp. 779-784, 784-786, 841-845, 846-847, 849; Anderson to Price, April 12, 1864, Cunningham to Price, April 14, 1864, Price to Kirby-Smith, April 14, 1864, Cunningham to Price, April 15, 1864, Abstract from returns of the Department of Arkansas, Steele, U. S. Army, commanding, for the month of April, 1864, *ibid.*, Pt. 3, pp. 761, 766, 767, 370.

⁵⁰ Evans, ed., Confederate Military History, XI, p. 269; *Ibid.*, X, pp. 248-250; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 359-373; Price to Boggs, May, 1864, Maxey to Belton, April 23, 1864, General Order No. 38, Headquarters District of Indian Territory, May 9, 1864, DeMorse to Ochiltree, April 21, 1864, Walker to Ochiltree, April 19, 1864, Organization of the Confederate forces in Arkansas, Kirby-Smith, commanding, April 20, 1864, Maxey to Belton, April 23, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 1, pp. 779-784, 841-844, 844-845, 846-848, 849, 784-785, 841-845.

press them on without effort. The Choctaws were caught up in the excitement of battle and victory and could not think of anything but destroying the retreating Federal force. The Choctaw brigade was later commended for its heroic actions during the battle, in particular its capture of a battery of four Union cannon. Walker had four men killed, seven wounded, and none missing.

The substantial fruits of the Confederate victory at Poison Spring was the four-gun battery of Union artillery, and about 170 wagons and teams, all heavily loaded. Thirty wagons had become disabled during the battle and were left burning on the field. The Federal loss in killed and wounded was about 700 men. The Confederate casualties numbered thirty killed, eighty-eight wounded and ten missing. The Union forces engaged totaled about 1,770 men, while the Confederate number was 1,800 men.⁵¹

The engagement at Poison Springs indicated to Maxey how much resistance a smaller force of Federal troops could display. On returning to his own district after the cessation of activities in Arkansas and the successful blocking of General Steele, Maxey knew that he would be facing these same troops and probably more. Planning a campaign to

⁵¹Evans, ed., Confederate Military History, X, pp. 250-251. Maxey to Belton, April 23, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 1, pp. 842, 844.

capture Fort Smith, the Confederate general realized that he would have to move with extreme caution.⁵²

Returning to Indian Territory, Maxey undertook active campaigning. Colonel Phillips realized the importance of the Arkansas River as a buffer between the two hostile forces and sought to keep it under close surveillance by putting strong guard posts at all principal fords. Particularly important was the stretch of river between Fort Blunt and Fort Smith. With the help of his Indian scouts and relatives of individuals in his command, Phillips was able to pinpoint most of the partisan activity that occurred in his district and could warn his neighboring districts of Kansas and Missouri if danger threatened.

In the first week of April, Confederate Colonel Adair and a force of 500 men received orders to prepare for a move north. Adair had one hundred Cherokees and some Creeks, Chickasaws, and Seminoles who were grouped into two large regiments. General Cooper believed that the sending of Adair north of the Arkansas River would result in the weakening of Watie's force. Watie was then located near Boggy Depot, keeping watch for any Federal activity at Fort Smith. Cooper was convinced by his staff that Adair and his command could be back from the raid by May 1. General Henry E. McCulloch,

⁵²Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, p. 393; Special Order No. 1, Headquarters, Army of Arkansas, April 28, 1864, Maxey to Boggs, May 11, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 3, pp. 845-846, 819-820; Ralph R. Rea, Sterling Price: The Lee of the West, (Little Rock: Pioneer Press, 1959), pp. 99-107.

the Confederate commander of upper Texas, requested that Quantrill be taken along. Cooper sent for Quantrill, planning to send him west of Fort Blunt to push the Plains Indians into Kansas, where they would stir up trouble and havoc.⁵³

Colonel Adair launched his raid on April 17, 1864. Posted near Fort Blunt, he sent scouts to pinpoint all of the Union forces in the immediate vicinity. Since Quantrill was reported to have passed by Adair's camp on the night of April 17, Adair then sent a party of Seminoles to find him and try to work out an agreement with that guerrilla leader. Adair had a force of 325 fighting men, and Quantrill had only about 150 men. When the party returned from its search without having made contact, Adair commenced his raid without him.

Quantrill tried to cross the Arkansas River above Fort Blunt. He skirmished with the guard there and forced them to retreat. Upon breaking contact with the guerrilla forces, the sentries hurried to Fort Blunt to report to Colonel Phillips. Phillips sent out a strong mounted force that moved to renew contact with the Confederates. Finding them a few miles above where they had crossed the river, the Federal cavalry charged and forced them back across the Arkansas River.

⁵³Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 381-382; Thoburn and Wright, Oklahoma: A History of the State and Its People, I, pp. 359-360.

Adair, in the meantime, had dropped further down the Arkansas and given Fort Blunt a wide berth. The Confederate colonel was detected when he attempted to cross the Illinois River near Tahlequah. That ford barred, Adair turned east and proceeded to raid the Union district near the Indian Territory and Arkansas boundary.

Colonel Phillips sent two regiments of the Indian Home Guard to intercept Adair, but he did not feel that his force would be effective because they were infantry and the Confederates were all mounted. Keeping a constant vigil on all the fords, the Federal commander sent messages of warning to his neighboring districts telling them to watch for signs of increased partisan activity. While Adair raided in eastern Indian Territory and western Arkansas, Quantrill moved into southwest Missouri. He operated in the area for about a month, robbing, stealing, and killing all prisoners that fell into his hands. By May 7 Quantrill had started on the return trip to Bonham, Texas, and his base camp located near there. Colonel Adair had returned to his command near Boggy Depot three days previous. With these two guerrillas and their bands returned below the Arkansas River, the Federal districts of Arkansas and Missouri were able to report all was quiet.⁵⁴

⁵⁴Cooper to Maxey, April 2, 1864, Adair to Watie, April 17, 1864, Gallaher to Kaufman, April 23, 1864, Sanborn to Jordon, April 23, 1864, Sanborn to Greene, April 25, 1864, Curtis to Halleck, April 25, 1864, Curtis to Townsend, April 25, 1864, Curtis to McKean, April 25, 1864, McKean to Curtis, April 25, 1864, Hampton to Blair, April 25, 1864, Curtis to

One of the most vexing problems faced by Phillips at Fort Blunt was his inability to get action on the request to mount his command. His men provided their own mounts when they were organized as units, but as their horses gave out, the Federal government failed to replace them. With the help of General Curtis, Phillips continued to plague higher headquarters with requests for remounts. He even recommended the purchase of Indian ponies instead of regular cavalry mounts as being more suitable for his use. Because of renewed Confederate activity in his area in the spring of 1864, Phillips again broached General Henry W. Halleck, Chief of Staff, on the subject of remounts. Not receiving adequate action there, Phillips wrote to General U. S. Grant, who by this time was general of the army, and secured his approval. Needing 1,000 mounts immediately, Phillips had to commandeer many and try to purchase the rest from the Osage tribe. Colonel Phillips never succeeded in getting his entire command mounted on ponies or horses.⁵⁵

Rosecrans, May 4, 1864, Sanborn to Greene, May 7, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 3, pp. 746-747, 776-777, 279, 273, 288, 288, 289, 289, 290, 290, 301, 302, 303, 312, 313, 328, 328-329, 440-441, 443, 502; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 381-382; Thoburn and Wright, Oklahoma: A History of the State and Its People, I, p. 360.

⁵⁵Wyant, "Colonel William A. Phillips and the Civil War in Indian Territory," p. 69; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 381-382; Curtis to Halleck, April 26, 1864, Halleck to Grant, April 27, 1864, Grant to Halleck, April 27, 1864, Phillips to Curtis, May 10, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 3, pp. 302, 312, 313, 540; Phillips to Halleck, June 8, 1864, *ibid.*, Pt. 4, pp. 266-267; Phillips to Steele, July 11, 1864, *ibid.*, XLI, Pt. 2, pp. 123-124.

Colonel Phillips was the most able administrator in Indian Territory. Fighting every odd, he secured an area that heretofore was a Confederate stronghold. By his sense of justice, he earned the respect and loyalty of his Indian troops. Only a minimal amount of supplies were available to him and his command. His efficient administration and regional campaigns against the Confederates were completely successful. He received much criticism from his superiors, however, was the victim of plots, and had his bids for promotion stopped at every turn. It became evident to him that General Lane of Kansas was the leader of these plots. Lane feared the successes of Phillips. If Phillips was too successful, it might make his protege, General Blunt, look bad; and Blunt was easier to control than Phillips.⁵⁶

Of the plots against Phillips, two in particular were almost successful. One was aimed at him in an indirect manner, and the other was his direct removal from command. With his capture of Fort Blunt and participation in the campaigns which lead to the fall of Fort Smith, Lane instigated the move to remove the Indian Brigade from active service. His mouthpiece was General Blunt, who urged the disbanding of the brigade on the ground of being worthless. This was spoiled

⁵⁶Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 430, 380, 381; Abel, The American Indian Under Reconstruction, pp. 38, 112-115; Curtis to Phillips, February 11, 1864, Curtis to Stanton, February 28, 1864, Curtis to Blunt, March 8, 1864, Phillips to Curtis, March 7, 1864, Curtis to Phillips, March 9, 1864, Phillips to Curtis, March 13, 1864, Curtis to Phillips, March 23, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 2, pp. 301-302, 462, 533-534, 524-525, 537-539, 590-591, 711-712.

by an inspection tour of the commanding general, Curtis. Seeing the high state of efficiency kept by the organization with the equipment available, he quickly squelched any attempt to remove the brigade from active service. General Curtis became a supporter of the Indian Brigade on that tour and was to take up its causes several times.⁵⁷

The second attempt to discredit and remove Phillips was successful. As commander of Indian Territory, he had under his supervision some of the finest grazing land west of the Mississippi. It was around this land and the thousands of cattle that grazed on it that the second plot was spawned. In prewar years, Indian Territory abounded in cattle and other meat animals. Many of the Indians raised cattle for a living, and several individuals had large herds. The war and the flexible lines of battle that extended into Indian Territory had long removed the original owners; groups of cattle wandered over the area claimed by whoever could catch them. The temptation was too great in many cases for army contractors and private speculators to resist. By 1864, bands of men had formed in Kansas and swept into Indian Territory, picking it clean of cattle and making no compensations to the owners.

⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. 378-380; Curtis to Phillips, March 9, 1864, Phillips to Curtis, March 13, 1864, Curtis to Phillips, March 23, 1864, Pas-Co-Va, Seminole Chief, to Phillips, March 19, 1864, Blunt to Curtis, March 27, 1864, Blunt to Curtis, March 30, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 2, pp. 531-539, 590-591, 711-712, 663-664, 754-755, 789-790; Abel, The American Indian Under Reconstruction, pp. 116-118.

Army contractors were obligated to pay for cattle taken from a loyal Indian, but most of these contractors simply took the cattle, caring not if the owner was loyal or rebel. With his high sense of duty, Phillips could not close his eyes to this dishonesty. Complaining in vain to neighboring military departments, Phillips asked for active assistance in righting the corruption. Many staff officers in headquarters had personal interest in the granting of army contracts and prevented any action by their headquarters. The rest were too involved in their own departmental affairs or did not care if the Indians were having their cattle stolen.⁵⁸ Using the forces and the authority he had at his disposal, Phillips tried to apprehend those herds which he believed had been taken illegally. But not having an adequate cavalry force, his attempts were futile. Lack of official cooperation was evident when Phillips tried to prove that many of the cattle removed illegally from Indian Territory were taken to Fort Scott. With no witnesses, he could do nothing. By investigation it was learned that many of the cattle were owned by the contracting firm of McDonald and Fuller of Fort Smith, Arkansas. This firm was endorsed

⁵⁸Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 430-431; Wyant, "Colonel William A. Phillips and the Civil War in Indian Territory," pp. 69-70; Thoburn and Wright, Oklahoma: A History of the State and Its People, I, p. 305; Curtis to Cox, June 6, 1864, Official Records, I, XXXIV, Pt. 4, pp. 250-252; Phillips to Thayer, July 10, 1864, Anderson to Phillips, July 19, 1864, *ibid.*, XLI, Pt. 2, pp. 107-108, 265; Abel, The American Indian Under Reconstruction, pp. 85-87.

by Blunt, and this endorsement convinced Phillips that McDonald and Fuller were the main perpetrators of cattle stealing in Indian Territory. Phillips urged that their agent, Henry McKee, be expelled from the territory and his company have their license cancelled.⁵⁹

Expecting some support from his Kansas superiors, Phillips was surprised when he received orders on July 30, 1864, to turn over his command and report to Fort Smith for reassignment. In retaliation, he preferred formal charges against the firm and a pseudo investigation was launched to please him. He grew so disgruntled at the turn of events that he offered his resignation to General Curtis, who refused to accept it.⁶⁰ After a delay of a month, Phillips was assigned courts-martial duty at Fort Smith.⁶¹

During the period of Phillips' removal, Colonel Wattles was put in charge of the Indian Brigade. Not an efficient soldier, Wattles could not handle the problems which even daily routine presented. Fort Blunt and its military personnel quickly fell into a bad state of disrepair and unpreparedness. This state of affairs was brought to light by General F. J. Herron, the Inspector General, while on a duty tour of

⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 70-71; Anderson to Phillips, July 19, 1864, Official Records, i, XLI, Pt. 2, p. 265.

⁶⁰Wyant, "Colonel William A. Phillips and the Civil War in Indian Territory," pp. 71-72; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, p. 430; Abel, The American Indian Under Reconstruction, pp. 97, 89; Special Order No. 117, July 30, 1864, Official Records, i, XLI, Pt. 2, p. 476.

⁶¹Thoburn, A Standard History of Oklahoma, I, p. 319.

the Department of Arkansas and Indian Territory. Appalled at the condition of Fort Blunt, he made an official report stating that the 1,800 military personnel and the 6,000 civilian refugees had been on short rations for over three months. Naming the firm of McDonald and Fuller as the contractor responsible, Herron reminded his superior that it was they who had Phillips removed. Herron claimed that it was this firm and their representatives that were doing the wrongs in Indian Territory. Herron recommended that Phillips be returned without delay, and he expanded his recommendation by saying Phillips was the best officer for the Indian Brigade and had always managed its affairs with efficiency and honesty.⁶²

On December 29, 1864, Phillips was officially reinstated in command and returned to Fort Blunt. He was pleased with his return to command, but he was disappointed at his failure to conclude a showdown with McDonald and Fuller, for, as he stated, the stealing would continue as long as they were associated with the Federal government.

The main reason for the sudden reinstatement of Phillips to his Indian command was the widespread corruption that prevailed in the Indian Territory and Fort Smith area. Phillips' return was part of an overall housecleaning on the order of the department commander, General E. R. S. Canby, who later removed both General Steele and General John M. Thayer,

⁶²Ibid., p. 72; Herron to Christensen, November 18, 1864, Official Records, i, XLI, Pt. 4, pp. 605-606.

replacing them with more honest and competent officers. Herron's report ensured that Phillips would be the choice as the replacement of Colonel Wattles.⁶³ Phillips may have been disappointed with his failure to get the firm of McDonald and Fuller removed from Indian Territory, but on his return to the Fort Blunt command he set about curtailing most of the overt cattle stealing.

In the year intervening since the fall of Fort Smith, Phillips had done very well for himself. Inefficiently supplied and manned, he had not only secured the Fort Blunt area, but had taken offensive action several times. When other theaters of the war called for a temporary depleting of his meager forces, he found it necessary to spread his men even thinner. His efficiency and honesty in command became known over most of the area west of the Mississippi River and earned him the respect of several officers. But because of his lack of interest in politics and graft, his chance for advancement was constantly blocked by Lane, who feared he might gain too much popularity and attention, making General Blunt appear bad.

The Confederate situation in 1864 went from bad to worse. Immediately after their defeat at Fort Smith and the subsequent retreat below the Arkansas, the Confederate high command spent months in reorganization, having the faint

⁶³Phillips to Herron, January 16, 1865, *ibid.*, XLVIII, Pt. 1, pp. 542-543. Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 452-453.

hope that they could drive the Federals out of Indian Territory and regain the lost area. The futility of the situation was evidenced by the resignation of General Steele and the petty internal bickerings present in the appointment of his successor, General Maxey.

Successful in repelling an invasion attempt in the neighboring state of Arkansas, Maxey returned to Indian Territory and immediately planned to launch an offensive campaign against Fort Blunt and Fort Smith. The lack of necessary resources caused this plan to be put aside. Maxey realized that the Confederacy would have to continue its policy of guerrilla warfare until the situation began to improve in the other theaters of war. Under the able leadership of Watie, the Confederates would remain a formidable force in the year ahead, when his ability as a guerrilla leader would be evident to all. In Watie rested the hope of the Confederacy in Indian Territory.

CHAPTER III

CONFEDERATE GUERRILLA OPERATIONS INTENSIFY

The summer of 1864 brought a glimmer of hope to the Confederate forces in Indian Territory. The March raid of Adair and Quantrill had been quite successful; it had harrassed the the Federals and put fear into the Indian populace in the area. But General Maxey knew the seriousness of the situation in Indian Territory. Although he was short of every type of equipment necessary in conducting active campaign operations, he was determined to remain on the offensive and increase the number of scouts and raids into Federal-held areas. The Confederate commander had a lot of trust in Watie, his Indian Brigade commander.¹ This confidence in Watie was demonstrated by the Indian Colonel's promotion to brigadier general upon Maxey's recommendation. For the duration of 1864, Maxey depended on him more than any other Confederate officer. But even though Maxey did have one man

¹Thoburn and Wright, Oklahoma: A History of the State and Its People, I, p. 360; Ezra J. Warner, Generals in Grey (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1959), pp. 327-328; Mable W. Anderson, "Excerpts From the Life of General Stand Watie," The Southern Magazine, III (1936-1937), pp. 7-8, 46; LeRoy H. Fischer, "Impact of the Civil War in Oklahoma: Death and Destruction," Oklahoma State Alumni Magazine, V (September, 1964), p. 12; Thoburn, A Standard History of Oklahoma, I, p. 324, §. 18; Maxey to Boggs, June 20, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 4, p. 686.

with exemplary military ability, the odds were against him and his command.

One problem faced by both Federal and Confederate military administrators was the care and protection of the Indian refugees. The effect of the Civil War on non-combatants and families was devastating. The refugees were at the mercy of the fortunes of war, forced to move again and again as the battle lines shifted and encroached on their homesteads.²

The policy of the Confederacy toward the Indian tribes in regard to refugees was one of assuming responsibility for their care and protection. On March 16, 1861, the Confederate States Government had created a Bureau of Indian Affairs and appointed a commissioner to see to its proper functioning.³ The Confederate government had made valiant efforts from early in 1862 to 1863 to fulfill its obligations to the signatory tribes. Because of military setbacks and disorganization in the Indian tribes as to who had the authority to receive money that was forthcoming, most of the annuity payments had never reached their owners and what money had been

²Dean Banks, "Civil War Refugees from Indian Territory, in the North, 1861-1864," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XLI (Autumn, 1963), p. 286; Angie Debo, "Southern Refugees of the Cherokee Nation," Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XXXV (April, 1932), p. 255; U. S. Department of the Interior, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Year 1864 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1865), p. 30.

³Wardell, A Political History of the Cherokee Nation 1838-1907, pp. 142-143; Dale, "The Cherokees in the Confederacy," Journal of Southern History, XIII, pp. 164-165; Dale, "Arkansas and the Cherokees," Arkansas Historical Quarterly, VIII, pp. 106-107; Debo, "Southern Refugees of the Cherokee Nation," Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XXXV, p. 256.

paid to the Five Civilized Tribes by the Confederacy was almost worthless because of depreciaton.⁴

When the Federal forces began sporadic raiding below the Arkansas River, the Southern families fled their homesteads and took refuge in the Creek Nation and the northern counties of the Choctaw Nation. The refugees were fed by the army commissariat, and as the number of refugees grew, General Maxey set up an extra-legal organization to take care of them. The Southern Cherokee government helped Maxey by calling a convention which undertook the task of caring for the refugees. It appointed J. L. Martin as its administrator. Martin set to work immediately, gathering food supplies, establishing refugee camps in hygienic locations and soliciting cooperation from the Confederate military post in the area.⁵ The lack of money was the hardest obstacle that Martin tried to overcome. The Cherokee Nation was trying to help, but its only source of income was the annuities due them from the Confederate government. Watie, as principle chief of the Cherokees, with the disposal of Ross, wrote to S. S. Scott, Confederate Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and urged him to pay the long overdue annuities. He ended his

⁴Ibid.

⁵Scott to Seddon, December 1, 1864, Official Records, i, XLI, Pt. 4, pp. 1086-1087; Watie to Cherokee National Council, ibid., Pt. 2, p. 1047.

plea with a question: would he have to tell his people of their actual plight--that of hopelessness?⁶

To better care for Indian interest, Elias C. Boudinot was relieved of his position as a major in the Indian Brigade and sent to Richmond as a representative for the Cherokee Nation. In Richmond, Boudinot immediately set to work securing loans for his destitute brothers. It was not until January, 1864, that the Confederate Congress appropriated a sizeable amount of money for the care of the Indians in Indian Territory, and that sum was only a pittance in comparison to what was needed.⁷ The supplies grew so scarce that in the winter of 1864, Watie and parts of his command escorted a large number of refugee families to northern Texas. The weather was bad all the way to Texas, but not a life was lost due to Watie's careful planning. Refugee camps were established in Bonham, Sherman, and other northern Texas towns. Still other and larger refugee camps were settled in the river bottom area of the Kiamichi, Blue, Boggy, and Washita rivers in the southern parts of the Choctaw and Chickasaw nations. With the movement of a large part of the Southern refugees to these more secure regions, the refugees were easier to take care of than before the Texas move. They

⁶Debo, "Southern Refugees of the Cherokee Nation," Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XXXV, pp. 257-258; Wardell, A Political History of the Cherokee Nation 1838-1907, p. 160; Watie to Scott, August 8, 1863, Official Records, i, XXII, Pt. 2, pp. 1104-1105.

⁷Debo, "Southern Refugees of the Cherokee Nation," Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XXXV, pp. 258-259.

now could draw grain rations from the wheat fields of northern Texas. With the money appropriated by the Confederate Congress arriving, Martin and Lucien Bell were sent east of the Mississippi to purchase large quantities of cotton and wool cards. Bell and Martin were to obtain these priceless cards, but met with very little success.⁸ The Southern forces in Indian Territory were still trying to cope with the refugee problem when the war ended in the East.

The Indians that chose to remain loyal to the North were forced to undergo a series of migrations entailing suffering and death. These refugees were shuttled about as so many sticks of wood. Most of the Indians loyal to the Federal government fled to Kansas on the outbreak of fighting. The first large group moving to Kansas was composed of Creeks and a small number of Seminoles. A neighboring reservation offered part of its area for government use in resettling the destitute Indians, and the Indian agents accepted without consulting their charges.⁹ Having been moved for the third

⁸Dale, "The Cherokees in the Confederacy," Journal of Southern History, XIII, pp. 182-183; McReynolds, Oklahoma: A History of the Sooner State, p. 222.

⁹Banks, "Civil War Refugees from Indian Territory, in the North, 1861-1864," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XLI, pp. 286-287; Abel, The American Indian Under Reconstruction, pp. 35-36, 45-46; Abel, The American Indian as Participant in the Civil War, pp. 86-88; Trickett, "The Civil War in the Indian Territory," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XIX, p. 68; U. S. Department of the Interior, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Year 1862, p. 145; Cooper to Benjamin, January 20, 1862, Official Records, i, VIII, Pt. 1, pp. 4-5; Thoburn and Wright, Oklahoma: A History of the State and Its People, pp. 327-328; Cutler to Coffin, September 30, 1862, Campbell to Barnes, February 5, 1862, Coffin to Dole,

and last time while in Kansas, the Federal Indian refugees set up camp. Settled on a reservation with adequate transportation facilities, the Indians could not understand why they were still on short and inferior rations. When winter once more swept over Kansas, the suffering and starvation was again prevalent in the refugee camp. Having no other covering available, these people resorted to using rejected military equipment for shelter.¹⁰

The Union victories in the summer of 1863 in Indian Territory presented the Union authorities, particularly the Federal Indian agents, with an opportunity to move their charges back to their former homes.¹¹ With a gathering of over 300 teams and accompanied by a military escort, the refugees happily departed for Indian Territory on May 2, 1864. Only a small body of Seminoles were left behind, and this only until a smallpox epidemic among them had spent itself. Over 5,000 individuals, mostly women, children and the

February 13, 1862, Collamore to Dole, April 21, 1862, U. S. Department of the Interior, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Year 1862, pp. 139, 151-152, 145, 156.

¹⁰Abel, The American Indian as Participant in the Civil War, pp. 35-36; Banks, "Civil War Refugees from Indian Territory, in the North, 1861-1864," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XLI, p. 291-293; Collamore to Dole, April 21, 1862, Coffin to Dole, November 10, 1862, U. S. Department of the Interior, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Year 1862, pp. 156-157, 169.

¹¹U. S. Department of the Interior, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Year 1862, p. 130, A. V. Coffin to W. G. Coffin, August 25, 1864, ibid., 1864, p. 307; Banks, "Civil War Refugees from Indian Territory, in the North, 1861-1864," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XLI, pp. 293-295; Halleck to Steele, May 25, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 4, p. 30.

infirm, made the treck back to their war-ravaged lands in Indian Territory. Because Confederate forces still were in control over the land owned by most of the refugees, General Thayer ordered that they be temporarily located around Fort Blunt.¹² With the order requiring the refugees to stay at Fort Blunt, the purpose of the migration was defeated. Now it would be more expensive than ever to feed and clothe the refugee Indians. Fort Blunt was far from any convenient supply line.¹³ The refugee assembled near Fort Blunt would be a point of problems and embarrassment to the Union authorities, civil and military, for the duration of the war.

It was on the same day the Union refugees arrived at Fort Blunt, June 15, 1864, that the Confederate guerrilla Watie executed one of his most brilliant exploits. He surprised and captured a Federal steamboat that was churning its way up the Arkansas River to re-supply Fort Blunt. Since early 1861, when Fort Smith had fallen to the Union, the Federals had used stern-wheelers to supply local areas and to bring up supplies from Little Rock, Arkansas. As early as February, 1864, General Curtis had planned to use the Arkansas River as a supply route. The advantage of the river

¹²U. S. Department of the Interior, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Year 1864, p. 30.

¹³Coffin to Dole, September 24, 1864, Harlan to Coffin, September 30, 1864, Coleman to Coffin, September 1, 1864, Snow to Coffin, September 15, 1864, U. S. Department of the Interior, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Year 1864, pp. 303-304, 309, 317-318; Banks, "Civil War Refugees from Indian Territory, in the North, 1861-1864," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XLI, pp. 297-298.

route was obvious. It would mean a quicker supply route and give Fort Blunt release from dependence on the Texas Road.¹⁴ If it were possible to use the Arkansas River as a supply route, enough rations could be stockpiled to allow Fort Blunt to last for a month under siege-like conditions. However, not everyone was in favor of using the Arkansas River as a supply route. Colonel Phillips stated a preference of ox drawn vehicles to Curtis. He believed that the river could not be depended upon; its flood season, when alone it was navigable by larger river craft, was too short and would not allow enough time to reap its benefits.¹⁵

In June the rise in the Arkansas River was measured at enough to float shallow draft vessels. Preparations were immediately made to send a stern-wheeler up the Arkansas River to Fort Blunt. Though river steamers had been making the run between Little Rock and Fort Smith for a long time and were a familiar occurrence, a steamer going to Fort Blunt would be purely experimental because it would need to cross hostile territory. The J. R. Williams, a steamer used at

¹⁴Wilham T. Windham, "The Problem of Supply in the Trans-Mississippi Confederacy," Journal of Southern History, XXVII (May, 1961), pp. 153-154; U. S. Department of the Interior, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Year 1864, p. 32; Foreman, A History of Oklahoma, p. 128; Thayer to Curtis, June 11, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 4, pp. 317-318.

¹⁵Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 400-401; Curtis to Insley, February 29, 1864, Phillips to Curtis, March 7, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 2, pp. 468-525.

Fort Smith as a troop ferry, was selected to make the trip.¹⁶ The craft was loaded with commissary and quartermaster goods valued at \$120,000. The merchandise included thousands of yards of cloth, many pounds of cotton yarn, blankets, shawls, skirts, harnesses, boots of varying types and sizes, 1,000 barrels of flour, fifteen tons of bacon shoulders, and thousands of yards of linen---a priceless cargo for the personnel of Fort Blunt.¹⁷

A mistake made by the Fort Smith authorities was the assignment of its escort, which was too small to fight off any serious attempt on the part of Confederate guerrillas to seize the J. R. Williams. The proposed trip of the J. R. Williams was certainly no secret. Fort Smith and the surrounding area were full of Southern sympathizers who would not hesitate to relay such valuable information to interested parties at Fort Towson.¹⁸ The escort for the J. R. Williams was one officer and twenty-five enlisted men, hardly adequate protection for such a valuable prize. Lieutenant Horace A. B. Cook of Company K of the Twelfth Kansas Volunteer Infantry

¹⁶Maxey to Kirby-Smith, January 15, 1864, Samuel Bell Maxey Papers, Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art, Tulsa, Oklahoma; Phillips to Curtis, March 7, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 2, pp. 524-525.

¹⁷James D. Morrison, "Capture of J. R. Williams," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XLII (Summer, 1964), pp. 107-108; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, p. 401; Thayer to Steele, May 23, 1864, Thayer to Rosecrans, May 26, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 4, pp. 11, 50.

¹⁸Civil War Claims, Foreman Papers, Indian Archives Division, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Regiment was the officer in charge. Accompanying Cook was Lieutenant George W. Huston, of the Fourteenth Kansas Cavalry Regiment, who was charged with the responsibility of getting the J. R. Williams properly unloaded and seeing to it that she brought back a needed load of lime and salt.

With no Union cavalry force to reconnoiter the shore on either side of the Arkansas River, Colonel Watie had no problem in setting up an ambush. He selected Pleasant Bluff as the point of attack. Located five miles below the mouth of the Canadian River, it was an excellent spot. The Arkansas River curved at this point to the south side of a meander belt, bringing it almost against the southern shore.¹⁹

Colonel Watie took with him three pieces of field artillery commanded by Lieutenant Henry Forrester. The guns were placed 100 yards apart on the bluff overlooking the river. Being concealed by brush, these guns could not be detected by the Federal escort until they opened fire. When the J. R. Williams was reported near, Watie ordered his men to cover. Steaming to the center of the ambush, the center gun of the hidden artillery opened up and proceeded to ravage the J. R. Williams. Under the shock of surprise, the crew was helpless to do anything but return a sporadic fire of musketry. The Confederate salvos damaged the J. R. Williams to the point of helplessness, hitting the smoke stack, pilot house,

¹⁹Thoburn, A Standard History of Oklahoma, I, pp. 326-327; Thoburn and Wright, Oklahoma: A History of the State and Its People, I, pp. 361-362; Morrison, "Capture of J. R. Williams," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XLII, p. 107.

and finally the boiler, spewing steam over the decks. Since the vessel had become unmanageable and appeared to be sinking or about to explode, the pilot grounded her on the north bank of the Arkansas River opposite the Confederates. Lieutenant Cook ordered his men to shore. Reaching land, they took cover behind sand bars and returned the musket fire of the Confederates. Cook hoped to keep the Southern force away from the J. R. Williams until reinforcements could arrive. To his surprise he saw Lieutenant Huston and the captain of the J. R. Williams going over to the south shore in a yawl. This action gave the Confederate force a means of reaching the J. R. Williams. With no chance of saving the boat, Cook started his men toward Fort Smith.²⁰

The retreat of Cook and his small command allowed Watie and his men to cross over to the north side of the Arkansas River using the captured yawl. They secured the J. R. Williams, and attaching ropes to her, they pulled the loaded craft to the south side of the river, where it was grounded on a sand bar close to shore.

The Creek and Seminole portions of the Watie command soon left carrying as much booty as their horses could stand. A Cherokee Confederate related that he and sixty of his comrades found on the steamer an enormous supply of tinware, a commodity unusually scarce in the area. They loaded their

²⁰ Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 400-401; 403-404; Durbin to Heiston, June 14, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 4, p. 687.

mounts, and the little company set out with the horse of every man in the party concealed by wash tubs, stew kettles, coffee pots, wash pans, tin plates, cups, and dippers. Crossing a strip of prairie, they were set upon by a strong force of Union cavalry, which charged them from a patch of woods on their flanks. The surprised Confederate party fled to the shelter of the forest on the opposite side of the prairie. In their haste to get away, the Confederate Cherokees started to throw the tinware away to lighten their load. They reached the safety of the forest, but they left a broad strip of prairie strewn with various types of tinware.²¹

Desertion in elements of Watie's command at this time left him in a precarious position. He had a valuable prize, but he did not have enough men left to defend it if attacked. Although a force under Colonel Adair was across the Arkansas River on the north side, all the available fords were impassible due to a recent rise in the river. The reinforcements Watie was fearing were not long in coming. A party of the Cook command which had become separated from the main body made its way to Mackey's Salt Works, about ten miles distant,²² where Colonel John Ritchie, commander of the Second

²¹Cooper to Scott, June 17, 1864, Watie to Cooper, June 17, 1864, Watie to Cooper, June 27, 1864, *ibid.*, Pt. 1, pp. 1011-1012, 1012, 1013; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 403-406; Morrison, "Capture of J. R. Williams," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XLII, pp. 107-108.

²²Thoburn and Wright, Oklahoma: A History of the State and Its People, I, pp. 361-362; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, p. 405; Dale, "The Cherokees in the Confederacy," Journal of Southern History, pp. 179-180.

Union Indian Regiment, was located with a force of 800 men. Ritchie sent 200 men to the site of the ambush. On their arrival they found the Confederates sacking the grounded steamer. Still within musket range, the command of Watie was brought under fire by the Indian troops of Ritchie. Watie, following previous orders, set the steamer afire to keep it from falling into enemy hands. Both parties were unable to advance: Watie could not move the supplies he had piled on the sand bar, and Ritchie could not cross the river and drive Watie off without heavy loss. Then because of a sudden rise in the Arkansas River, most of the captured supplies were lost; the river carried off most of the stockpile, and for days barrels were observed floating past Fort Smith.

By the evening of June 16, Watie had been informed that a large force of Union troops, with artillery, was coming up from the direction of Fort Smith. This was the Second Kansas Colored Infantry Regiment and a portion of the Eleventh United States Colored Infantry Regiment, about 700 men, under the command of Colonel S. J. Crawford. Arriving in the Pleasant Bluff vicinity, Crawford located the Confederate force a short distance from the river. Sending out skirmishers, he moved to make contact with the Confederate force to ascertain their numbers.²³

²³Watie to Cooper, June 27, 1864, Watie to Cooper, June 17, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 1, pp. 1013, 1012; Hathaway, "Brigadier General Stand Watie, Confederate Guerrilla," p. 74.

Colonel Watie, in the meantime, had received a regiment-sized force of Chickasaws under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Thomas C. Reynolds. Watie met this Chickasaw unit twelve miles southwest of the Arkansas River. The Indian colonel quickly detached 150 men of their cavalry force from the main body and directed their commanding officer, Major J. K. P. Campbell, to proceed to the Iron Bridge on the San Bois River, two and one-half miles from present-day Keota. Traveling throughout the night, Major Campbell arrived at the Iron Bridge just after dawn. Scouts were set out, and Campbell set his men to work building entrenchments along the river bank beside the bridge. Colonel Crawford and his Federal column were reported by the Confederate scouts as being to Campbell's front and moving toward them.

Crawford did not know how many Confederates were entrenched at the bridge and so proceeded with utmost caution. His troops were put into a battle formation of double lines of infantry with the artillery and accompanying escort in the rear. So aligned, the Federal command moved forward toward the bridge. When the Confederates opened fire on the advancing Union lines, Colonel Crawford ordered the fire returned and sent for the section of field artillery then positioned in the Federal rear. The center of the blue line broke open momentarily as the artillery caissons raced forward to its position in front of the Union formation. Once in place, the Federal howitzers pounded the Confederate trenches. After a few rounds of shot and cannister, the Confederates broke

ranks and fled to the rear for their horses. The exhausted condition of the Federal infantry prevented any prolonged pursuit of the retreating Southerners. Colonel Crawford knew that infantry could not effectively pursue cavalry.

Colonel Watie, informed of the attack at the Iron Bridge, burned most of the supplies he had been able to take off the J. R. Williams. Returning to his camp at Limestone Prairie, he reorganized his regiments and settled down to a routine of scout duty. It was at Limestone Prairie that Watie received his promotion to brigadier general, dated retroactive to May 10, 1864. In the same order, Watie was to assume command of the Indian Brigade. Since he had received responsibility for the brigade long ago, the order officially brought no change.²⁴

The morale boosting effect of the J. R. Williams episode was quickly evident among the Indian units, for on June 27 the Cherokee regiments re-affirmed their loyalty to the Confederate cause and unanimously elected to re-enlist for the duration of the war. The Choctaw regiment under Colonel Walker had done the same on June 23 at Camp Green in the Choctaw Nation. General Maxey had these re-enlistment resolutions printed and circulated to his command as examples of true loyalty.²⁵

²⁴Cooper to Steele, June 17, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 1, p. 1012; Thayer to Steele, June 22, 1864, Maxey to Boggs, June 20, 1864, ibid., Pt. 4, pp. 504, 686; Special Orders Number 171, Adjutant and Inspector General's Office, July 21, 1864, ibid., XLI, Pt. 2, p. 1019.

²⁵Watie to Cooper, June 27, 1864, ibid., Pt. 1, p. 1013; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 407-408.

The re-enlistment of Watie's command was ample evidence of its confidence in its commander. Watie, aware of the trust, was careful to protect their interests whenever necessary. Such a time came in July, 1864. The Indian troops had not been paid in months; their arms were old and in many cases defective and unsafe for use. Families of the Confederate Indians were destitute and starving on the Red River. Watie contacted General Kirby-Smith, not in complaint, but to offer suggestions to relieve the situation. Watie told Kirby-Smith of the trust he held in him as the commander of the Trans-Mississippi Department and offered a means to increase the fighting potential of Confederate Indian Territory. He urged the adoption of universal conscription in Indian Territory. He spoke on this to the National Committee and Council meeting of the Confederate Indian allies on July 11, 1864, at Fort Towson, deep in the Choctaw Nation.²⁶

The sinking of the Federal J. R. Williams gave the Southern cause a breath of renewed spirit. From June to the last of August, 1864, Confederate scout activity became quite active. Two incidents were important: the raid on Massard Prairie by General Gano and the capture of remounts at Gunter's Prairie in a raid led by General Watie.

General Thayer, the Federal commander of Fort Smith, had established an outpost five miles south of Fort Smith at Massard Prairie. This outpost was manned by four companies

²⁶Walker to Maxey, June 25, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 4, pp. 694-695.

of the Sixth Kansas Cavalry Regiment, with Major David Mefford in charge. He had been instructed to scout and report the finding every two days.²⁷

Southwest of Fort Smith, at an encampment on James Creek, Choctaw Nation, General Cooper received reports that a force of Federal cavalry was operating in the vicinity of Massard Prairie. When he discovered that another Federal force was stationed several miles above Massard Prairie at a place called Caldwell's, he called on General Gano to attack and clear them out. On July 26, 1864, Gano ordered that a 500 man force from his brigade, along with segments of the Second Indian Brigade under Colonel Folsom and a battalion under Lieutenant Colonel J. W. Wells, be made ready for immediate use. The entire expedition had 1,500 men, all well-mounted and in fighting trim. Included in the attack plan was a trap. Lieutenant Colonel Jack McCurtain was directed to take a position at Devil's Backbone Mountain, south of Fort Smith between that place and Cooper on James Creek. McCurtain was to allow any Federal pursuer of Gano's to pass his position and then strike them in the rear, while Gano would turn and hit them from the front.

The rendezvous was to take place on the Poteau River on the evening of July 26. Colonel Folsom moved out in advance of the main body. He was to attack the outpost at Caldwell's

²⁷Watie to National Committee, July 11, 1864, *ibid.*, XLI, Pt. 1, pp. 1046-1048; Hathaway, "Brigadier General Stand Watie, Confederate Guerrilla," p. 74.

and he wanted to reach there at dawn.²⁸ Upon the arrival of the different detachments, the discovery that the force was larger than expected necessitated a change in plan. General Gano in person would lead the main body in the attack on Massard Prairie.

At 6:00 a.m. on July 27 Gano launched his attack. Moving in two columns along parallel roads, the columns of Wells and Watie rode down the Federal pickets and headed for the main camp. Captain Mefford heard the picket's fire and ordered the nearby grazing cavalry herd brought in and secured. Before the herd could be secured and a proper defense line set up, the Confederates outflanked Mefford and proceeded to encircle his camp. Mefford had formed his men between the approaching Confederates and his horses.

At the same time, First Lieutenant Jacob Moorehead of Mefford's Sixth Kansas Cavalry Regiment moved his men forward to a position on the right of the Massard Prairie camp. The remainder of the command moved into line on Lieutenant Moorehead's left. The Confederate assault was temporarily halted by the brisk fire of Moorehead's men. The lull in the fighting allowed Major Mefford time to reconsolidate his perimeter. When the Confederates succeeded in taking the Federal command's horses, Major Mefford began to fall back toward the prairie, across which lay the safe entrenchments of Fort Smith. Company B of Moorehead's command held the

²⁸Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, p. 424; Cooper to Scott, August 10, 1864, Official Records, i, XLI, Pt. 1, p. 31.

extreme right of the new Federal line. Companies E and H were on the left, with Company D on Moorehead's immediate left holding the center portion of the position. Massard Prairie was located to their rear. Three cavalry charges were made on the Federal right, but it held each time. The left, with companies E and H, were outflanked and forced out of their positions and onto the prairie. On seeing the retreat, Lieutenant Moorehead moved immediately to join his superior officer. The Confederates of Watie's command pressed the advantage and captured several of Moorehead's men as the Federals tried to escape into the timber surrounding the camps and the prairie.

To reach the safety of the Federal fort, Captain Mefford and his men had to fight their way across barren Massard Prairie. For a half-mile they fought the Confederates off in good order, but out on the open prairie, Mefford was soon surrounded by the larger Confederate command. Surrounded and outnumbered, the Federal commander had no alternative but to surrender his command or see it uselessly wiped out. Gathering up the captured prisoners and their mounts, Gano turned his column south and hurried to safety across the Arkansas River. The prisoners were made to run quite a distance to prevent their release by any Federal column coming to their rescue. General Thayer, the Fort Smith commander, sent out a relief column, but it did not arrive in time to participate in the engagement or hinder the Confederate retreat. He reported that his lack of sufficient cavalry prevented him

from stopping the retreating Confederates.²⁹ The Federal loss in the action at Massard Prairie was eleven men killed, twenty wounded, and 127 captured, including their commander, Major Mefford. General Gano lost only nine men killed and twenty-six wounded.³⁰

The Confederates remained active, and Watie was sent back across the Arkansas River on July 28. With 200 men he attacked and dispersed a party of Federal infantry putting up hay in large ricks on Blackburn's Prairie. The hay was burned and the mowing machine disabled beyond use. On his return across the Arkansas River, Watie helped refugee families move into Confederate territory.

To ascertain the strength of the Union force at Fort Smith, another crossing of the Arkansas River was planned. On July 29, 1864, Colonel McCurtain was directed to hold his battalion in readiness at Double Springs and prepare to march with General Gano on July 30. Brigadier General Watie was ordered to bring all of his available effective men and move to the vicinity of Skullyville. Also ordered to Skullyville Prairie were the Choctaw Brigade under Colonel Folsom, Well's battalion, and a section of Howell's battery.

²⁹Thayer to Steele, July 30, 1864, Cooper to Scott, August 10, 1864, Moorehead to Judson, July 29, 1864, *ibid.*, pp. 31, 23-24, 25.

³⁰Hathaway, "Brigadier General Stand Watie, Confederate Guerrilla," pp. 74-75; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 424-427; Thayer to Steele, July 30, 1864, Moorehead to Judson, July 29, 1864, Official Records, i, XLI, Pt. 1, pp. 23-24, 25.

When the Confederate column reached Poteau Bottom, opposite Fort Smith, Gano, commanding segments of McCurtain's battalion, was detached and proceeded to Massard Prairie, where Gano was to make a diversion. The main column under the personal command of Cooper and Watie moved to Fort Smith using the main road, sometimes called the Fort Smith Road. Watie was sent forward with a party to push in the Federal pickets. Other units, the First Creek Regiment, Well's battalion, and Howell's battery, were sent to cover the road leading into Fort Smith from the north. Watie sent Colonel James M. Bell with the First Cherokee Regiment to the Fort Smith Road leading into Fort Smith. Colonel Adair and his regiment, the Second Cherokee, were dispatched to the Line Road, located to the left of the Fort Smith Road. Watie, using his usual dash and gallantry, routed the pickets from their camps, chasing them right up to their entrenchments outside of Fort Smith. Then he returned to the deserted Union camp, where he and his men helped themselves to the plentiful dinner that had been prepared for the Union pickets.³¹

After the initial surprise had worn off, the Federal garrison at Fort Smith began to put up resistance. Skirmishing ensued on the Fort Smith Road. The advance of a large Union force under the command of Colonel William R. Judson of the Third Brigade on the Fort Smith Road necessitated the concentration of the Confederate forces to meet

³¹Cooper to Scott, August 10, 1864, *ibid.*, pp. 32-33; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 427-428.

them. General Gano was ordered to move from Massard Prairie to Watie's position in front of Fort Smith; also part of Folsom's command was shifted to that position from his assignment as a reserve force.

Taking position on a hill near the Confederate line, General Cooper sent Captain John T. Humphrey and his battery in advance of the Confederate position to within 600 yards of the Federal line. General Gano detached part of his Texas brigade and stationed them on the ends of the Confederate line as flankers. Companies of the First and Second Cherokee Regiments were dismounted and moved within supporting distance of Gano's flankers. The aggressiveness of the flank parties caused the Union troops to move to a position on a nearby ridge. While the Federals were maneuvering to their new position on the ridge, Captain Humphrey moved forward and put his artillery astride the main road facing the Federal line. In that position Humphrey's battery proceeded to maul the Union cavalry stationed there. While Humphrey was forward, the Federals brought up the battery of Captain J. W. Rabb. Outnumbered by the Federal artillery, Humphrey proceeded to limber up his cannon in preparation for a movement to the rear.

For some time the fire passed harmlessly over the heads of the Confederate gun crews. As the Confederate battery was limbering up to go to the rear, a shell exploded in the middle of one section. Three horses were killed, another wounded, and a leg was taken from one of the gun crew.

Another shot took the head off a nearby infantryman from Gano's command. The dead horses were cut loose and the Confederate battery moved to the rear without further loss.³²

The approaching darkness made General Cooper more cautious. The surrounding timber was thick with scrub brush, hindering the movements of his cavalry. The Federal infantry, located on a nearby ridge, had out a strong force of skirmishers who prevented Cooper's scouts from determining their strength and numbers. The maze of roads that blanketed the area convinced Cooper that his position was becoming too precarious to maintain. Orders were given to fall back on the reserve force several miles to the southwest. General Gano was assigned as rear guard, and he was instructed to delay any Federal pursuit and destroy the captured Union picket camp. Gano put a wall of mounted skirmishers between the withdrawing Confederates and the probing Federal pickets. The Texas general's skirmishing activity was so effective that the Federal force under General Thayer retreated to Fort Smith. Thayer was under the illusion that the Confederates were still in position on his front. The remainder of Gano's rear guard moved to the picket camp. At the Union camp the ragged Confederates took everything of any usefulness and destroyed the rest. The supplies and commissary stores destroyed were valued at \$130,000 in Confederate money.

³²Cooper to Scott, August 10, 1864, Official Records, i, XLI, Pt. 1, pp. 34-35.

One near mishap marred the orderly withdrawal. A portion of the Cherokee regiments, previously dismounted in support of Gano's flankers on the Confederate left, had become separated in the heavy brush from the main body. Major E. J. Howland was dispatched to the left to make contact with the lost Cherokee element. When Major Howland located them, he served as a guide and led the Cherokees to the rendezvous across the Arkansas River. It was later learned that the Cherokees had retired in good order and crossed the Arkansas River below the main Confederate element.³³

General Cooper made camp at Cedar Prairie, nine miles southwest of Fort Smith. On August 1, 1864, he sent a small scouting party back to Fort Smith to watch for any Federal activity that might indicate a move in his direction. Then he mounted his command and put it on the road to Skullyville. Gano, Wells, and Howell were to join him at Buck Creek, located near the town of Skullyville.

Soon after Cooper left Cedar Prairie, he heard heavy cannonading from the direction of Fort Smith. It proved to be Confederate Captain Samuel H. Gunter and a few Cherokees with a battery of Howell's artillery. They were amusing themselves by shooting at the Federals across the Poteau River. When the Federals would answer, Captain Gunter would limber up and move quietly to a new position. Thereupon they would watch the Federals shell their supposed hiding place.

³³Ibid., p. 34.

When the Union artillerymen grew tired of bombarding that position and stopped, Gunter would open up from his new position. This would bring out the big guns again, and the game would be repeated, and so it went for most of the day. For most of August 1, the sound of this unique game could be heard rumbling as far away as twenty-five miles.³⁴

Captain Gunter reported to General Cooper, now at Buck Creek, that a party of Federals had crossed the Arkansas River. Cooper almost passed it off as a party of refugees trying to find a Union wagon train going to Fort Scott, but General Watie advised his commander that his pickets had heard the drum roll of infantry units in that area. To secure definite information on the Federal movements, Cooper sent Watie to the Poteau River bottom and Gano back to Massard Prairie. If in their reconnaissance it was found that the Federals were evacuating Fort Smith, Watie was to attack and hurry them along. By evening it was confirmed that the movement on the river was a caravan of Union civilians. With that General Cooper ordered his command to Fort Towson.

While resting at Buck Creek, Captain Gunter and five other men swam across the Arkansas River to make a personal reconnaissance of the Federal defense on the north side. While on the Federal side of the river, Gunter confirmed the recent movement as civilian and captured two Federals, one

³⁴Maxey to Boggs, August 6, 1864, Cooper to Scott, August 10, 1864, *ibid.*, pp. 29-30, 35.

of whom was wounded. They paroled the wounded prisoner and brought the other one back with them as they recrossed the Arkansas River.³⁵

General Cooper was satisfied with the performance of his Indian troops and praised many by name in his reports to his superiors. But when Watie wanted to attack Fort Smith and capture it, Cooper asserted that it would result in heavy losses of his forces. With excessive consideration for the physical comfort of his men and horses as an excuse, Cooper lamented his inability to do nothing further than drive the civilians within the confines of Fort Smith.³⁶

The Cooper demonstrations before Fort Smith ended military activity on the part of the Confederate forces until the last week in August of 1864. General Cooper reported that Colonel Cloud and his Second Kansas Cavalry Regiment had returned to Fort Smith. Cloud was believed to be there for the purpose of bolstering the garrison at Fort Smith and acting as a reserve for Fort Blunt.³⁷

One of the most difficult pieces of equipment to be obtained in the summer of 1864, for either side, was a horse. Horses were a necessary commodity if a military commander were to carry on offensive campaigning. On August 16, 1864,

³⁵Cooper to Scott, August 10, 1864, *ibid.*, p. 35.

³⁶*Ibid.*, p. 36.

³⁷Maxey to Kirby-Smith, August 18, 1864, *ibid.*, Pt. 2, p. 1072; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 422-423.

Captain W. H. Shannon from Cooper's Indian Division was sent across the Arkansas River into southwest Missouri to recruit an adequate supply of horses. While in Missouri, Shannon received word that a large Union refugee train was coming in his direction from Van Buren, Arkansas. Captain Shannon gathered up 100 men and moved to intercept. He made contact with the train on Lee's Creek, which was located on the eastern boundary of the lower Cherokee Nation. The Confederate captain used all of the men equipped with rifles as infantry and all of the men carrying pistols as cavalry. The infantry, with Shannon leading, charged through the advanced guard of the Federal train. Proceeding to the train, the Confederates advanced through the column, burning all government wagons. As the Confederate cavalry moved to the rear in order to let the infantry work, one of Shannon's men got excited and ordered the men to their horses. Shannon was left with only twelve men acting as infantry. Since this small force was too weak to advance further, Shannon ordered a retreat, returning to Wire Road by Lee's Creek. Captain Shannon killed ten Federals while losing none of his men.

Proceeding south on the Wire Road, Captain Shannon was informed by Confederate informers that a Federal mail party with several wagons had recently passed that point. The estimated number of the party was sixty, all cavalry. Shannon overtook them on August 25, 1864, six miles south of Lee's Creek. He divided his party into two squads of fifty men each. Taking one group, Shannon made a wide circle and

moved in front of the Federals. The balance continued trailing the party, and would hit from the rear when they heard firing. Securing a good position on the road to the Federal party's front, Shannon dismounted his men and blocked the Federal path. The Union troopers formed into line to fight the dismounted Confederates. Being larger than the Confederate party to their front, the Federals cursed them and yelled at Shannon that they had him right where they wanted him. Charging three times, the Federals were repulsed each time. The balance of the Confederate party then struck the Federal rear and played havoc with their ranks. Out of sixty, only seventeen escaped alive. The Confederates captured the mail and two wagons loaded with cigars, tobacco, and various types of arms and ammunition. From Lee's Creek, Shannon gathered what horses he had found in Missouri and returned to Camp Corser in the Choctaw Nation.³⁸

One day previous, on August 24, 1864, at Gunter's Prairie, located southwest of Fort Smith, General Watie struck a Federal haying party. Watie crossed the Arkansas River on the night of August 23 with his command of 500 men. At daybreak he launched a cavalry attack on a party of 420 Federals from Cloud's Second Kansas Cavalry Regiment and the Fourteenth Kansas Cavalry Regiment, who were putting up hay. Since the principal objective of the raid was to destroy the hay and capture or kill the stock, Watie did not maintain

³⁸Shannon to Cooper, August 26, 1864, Official Records, i, XLI, Pt. 2, pp. 1086-1087.

contact any longer than necessary. He killed twenty Federals, 150 horses and mules, and took away fourteen prisoners. He lost one man killed, while several of his men and horses were wounded.³⁹

The summer months of 1864 had brought the Confederates victory after victory. The refugees at Fort Blunt had been forced to encamp around its walls and by so doing had drained the Federal post of hard-to-obtain rations and commissary supplies. The sinking of the Federal stern-wheeler, the J. R. Williams, in the middle of June had increased the desperate plight of the Federal soldiers and refugees stationed at Fort Blunt.

General Maxey hoped that the increased demonstrations in front of Fort Smith would convince General Thayer, the Federal district commander, of the hopelessness of the Federal situation in Indian Territory. With this objective in mind, Maxey had rallied every effective unit in his district to increase the raids around Fort Smith. Maxey had correctly evaluated the personality of the Federal commander of Fort Smith as being timid. Maxey also had every intention of continuing his raids into Indian Territory north of the Arkansas River. The Confederate commander knew that the only way the Southern authorities could keep their Indian allies loyal and regain the lost territory to the north would be to harass the Federal supply lines and stockades until the Union forces were forced to move out of the area.

³⁹Maxey to Anderson, September 3, 1864, *ibid.*, Pt. 1, p. 279.

Maxey believed that the raids and demonstrations around Fort Smith by General Cooper, General Gano, and General Watie would force the Federal garrison to withdraw from Fort Blunt in order to strengthen Fort Smith. Cooper's sorties during August, 1864, were designed to bring about this long-desired evacuation of Fort Blunt and ultimately of Fort Smith. Maxey hoped that the Federals would retire in the direction of Little Rock, Arkansas, to the southeast. The post at Little Rock was considered by the Federals as more secure and General Thayer had been contemplating about moving to that location.

The entire month of August, 1864, was consumed by the Confederates probing the Federal defenses of Fort Smith looking for weaknesses, but none were found. The failure to find a lack of strength in the Federal post made Maxey anxious. He would have to move rapidly or increasing Federal numbers would overpower his numerically inferior forces. This condition that Maxey anticipated would soon bring about one of the Civil War's greatest military accomplishments.

CHAPTER IV

CONFEDERATE GUERRILLA OPERATIONS END

The highly successful demonstrations of Confederate raiding parties in the vicinity of Fort Smith during August, 1864, made General Maxey confident of the growing fighting trim of his Indian units. It also made him more approachable on the subject of giving his consent to a more daring sortie against the Federal forces north of the Arkansas River in September, 1864. There was even talk, for example, of expanding the concepts of the raid to include areas outside of Indian Territory, such as Kansas. For several months General Cooper and General Watie had been urging their commander to permit them to take a large mounted expedition north of the Arkansas River.¹

General Maxey, impressed with the recent accomplishments of his two subordinates, listened to their request and said he would relay the proposed plan to General Kirby-Smith with

¹Maxey to Cooper, June 28, 1864, Official Records, i, XXXIV, Pt. 4, pp. 697-698; Adair to Maxey, February 5, 1864, ibid., Pt. 2, pp. 945-946; Maxey to Kirby-Smith, August 18, 1864, ibid., XLI, Pt. 2, p. 1072; Hathaway, "Brigadier General Stand Watie, Confederate Guerrilla," p. 76; Marvin J. Hancock, "The Second Battle of Cabin Creek, 1864," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XXXIX (Winter, 1961-1962), p. 414.

his approval attached.² He sent the request to Trans-Mississippi Department headquarters at Shreveport, Louisiana, and was not long in receiving a favorable reply. The general was also informed of the proposed raid of General Price into Missouri.

General Cooper instructed Watie and Colonel Walker to send out runners to bring in all absentees and have them report to their respective regiments before September 20. The Indian troops knew something was in the making at headquarters and most reported immediately on receiving word. Though all of Watie's command was widely scattered, there was no problem calling in the troops for a proposed forward movement that would lead to a fight.

Earlier in July, General Price had presented a plan of invasion to General Kirby-Smith. If liberally supported by a large mounted force and comparable artillery, he could invade northern Arkansas and southern Missouri, capturing Federal-held St. Louis. General Kirby-Smith was very receptive to the proposed plan because St. Louis was a central depot for the Federal armies in the Department of the Mississippi. Those supplies could be used by Confederate forces in Kirby-Smith's department. Price gave a secondary objective, the gathering together of the large number of Southern sympathizers who populated the area. If forced to fall back before taking St. Louis, Price said he could destroy all

²Maxey to Boggs, September 5, 1864, Official Records, i, XLI, Pt. 3, p. 911; Maxey to Kirby-Smith, August 18, 1864, Boggs to Maxey, August 25, 1864, ibid., Pt. 2, pp. 1072, 1082.

Federal property that fell across his path on the return route. Price demonstrated his point that the time was right for such an expedition by sending Brigadier General Joseph O. Shelby and his brigade of Missourians into northeast Arkansas. Shelby's unhampered movement and the inability of Federal General Steele to bring him to battle won Kirby-Smith over in favor of Price's plan.

The arrival of Maxey's request to allow a similar expedition to go into Federally-occupied Indian Territory and then on into Kansas impressed Kirby-Smith as a good diversion. This would draw attention from Price and make his chance for success much better. The plan submitted by General Maxey was approved with modifications by General Kirby-Smith on August 25, 1864. Kirby-Smith ordered that the raid take place before October 1, so the two Confederate forces would be working in Federal territory at the same time.³

General Watie received word of the plan's approval on September 12. He was informed that he would get additional fresh troops from Texas. General Gano with the Fifth Texas Brigade was ordered to join and cooperate with Watie on the expedition.⁴ The next day, September 13, General Gano and

³Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 428-429, 434-435; Maxey to Boggs, September 5, 1864, Official Records, i, XLI, Pt. 3, p. 911; Maxey to Boggs, September 16, 1864, ibid., Pt. 1, p. 777; Norman P. Morrow, "Price's Missouri Expedition, 1864," (Unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, University of Texas, Austin, Texas, 1949), pp. 138-158.

⁴Watie to Heiston, October 3, 1864, Official Records, i, XLI, Pt. 1, p. 784; Organization of the Army of the Trans-Mississippi Department, Kirby-Smith, C. S. Army, commanding, September 30, 1864, ibid., i, Pt. 3, p. 967.

and General Watie met together for the first time at Camp Pike to work out the details of the expedition. General Gano by date of rank was senior and, as such, the commander of the expedition. General Watie displayed his patriotism to the Southern cause by not making an issue as to who was to be the expedition leader. The original plan had been conceived by Watie, and he had every right to command a venture he had originated. This selfless act of courtesy was an indication of the make-up of this Confederate soldier.⁵

During the conference, an agreement was reached that each general would command his own troops, but they would act together with perfect harmony to insure the success of the campaign. General Cooper instructed them to cross the Arkansas River, strike at a hay camp located at a William Alberty's, twenty miles above Fort Blunt on the Grand River, interrupt a wagon train that was rumored to be in the area and return by way of Mackey's Salt Works. They were to cross the Arkansas River at Webber's Falls. Cooper modified the plan still further by making this expedition separate from the proposed Kansas raid. Watie's itinerary was so arranged that he would be back in time to reorganize for his deeper penetration into Kansas.⁶ On the night of September 14, Gano

⁵Maxey to Boggs, October 7, 1864, Watie to Heiston, October 3, 1864, Maxey to Boggs, September 16, 1864, *ibid.*, Pt. 1, pp. 780, 785, 777; Hathaway, "Brigadier General Stand Watie, Confederate Guerrilla," p. 77; Thoburn, A Standard History of Oklahoma, I, pp. 324-325.

⁶Maxey to Boggs, September 16, 1864, Cooper to Scott, September 14, 1864, Official Records, i, XLI, Pt. 1, pp. 777, 781.

and Watie took their combined commands, 2,000 men with a six-gun battery, and encamped for the night at Prairie Springs, located near the Arkansas River to the northwest of Fort Blunt.

General Watie had a 800 man brigade. This unit was composed of the First Cherokee Regiment, Lieutenant Colonel C. N. Vann commanding 200 veterans; Second Cherokee Regiment, Major John Vann commanding and 150 men; the First Creek Regiment, 125 men with Lieutenant Colonel Samuel Chekote commanding; 200 men in the Second Creek Regiment led by Colonel T. Barnett; and 130 Seminoles of the First Seminole Battalion under Colonel Jumper. Gano had a reinforced brigade of 1,200 Texans.

Early on September 15, 1864, General Watie with his brigade as the advance party secured both banks of the Arkansas River at Redbanks' Ford, near the Creek Agency. General Gano moved up with the balance of the command and was disappointed to find the river swollen with recent rains. The expedition was stopped for six hours while the infantry waded, swam, and floated across the river. Several of the Indian and Texas troops were nearly drowned when they became mired in quicksand in the water near the northern banks. All of the artillery and ammunition was packed over by hand. The soldier would hold it above his head or tie it to his horse to keep it dry; both the Indian and Texas troops knew the value of artillery in a campaign of this type. Only one Federal Creek was sighted on that day, and he ran into the brush

as soon as he was fired on by an advance party. The Creek was so scared he left all of his equipment behind. Delayed so long by the river crossing, the Confederate column went into camp in the river bottom, two miles above Redbank's Ford and thirteen miles northwest of Fort Blunt.⁷

On September 16, the long Confederate column crossed the Verdigris River at Sand Town Ford. This ford was seven miles northwest of Fort Blunt and four miles southwest of Flat Rock. Proceeding northeast, the raiders made their way to their first objective: the hay station reported to be on the prairie near Flat Rock. After a patrol of scouts had been sent ahead, it was confirmed that a party of Federals lay to their immediate right front. Gano dispatched Colonel Vann of the First Cherokee Regiment and Colonel Edward J. Gurly and his command, the Thirtieth Texas Regiment, to go to the right, make a wide circle and attack the Federal rear. Thus any attempted escape of the Federal party to the woods on the Grand River would be blocked. Gano and Watie proceeded to the top of a nearby ridge. Using spy glasses, they watched the Federals making hay. After a short discussion the decision was made to advance closer and make the attack. The signal was given, and the long columns that were waiting

⁷Maxey to Boggs, September 14, 1864, Watie to Heiston, October 3, 1864, Gano to Cooper, September 29, 1864, *ibid.*, pp. 930, 785, 788-789.

at the bottom of the ridge slowly moved forward toward the haying camp.⁸

The Union haying operation at Flat Rock was commanded by Captain Edgar A. Barker. Captain Barker had two companies of his regiment, the Second Kansas Cavalry and four companies of the First Kansas Colored Infantry, a total force of only 125 men. Barker's scouts reported a large force of Confederates had crossed the Verdigris River and was advancing on his camp from the southwest. The first intelligence reported the Confederate party as numbering 200 men. With his command only slightly smaller, Captain Barker elected to fight. Recall was sounded by the bugler, and the soldiers out on the prairie hurried to camp. With his men assembled, Barker formed them in a ravine to the rear of his camp. Taking a small detachment of mounted men, the Federal captain moved forward to reconnoiter the number and designs of the Confederates advancing on his front. Captain Barker met Gano's command two miles southwest of his camp. Here he correctly estimated the Confederate host at being near 2,000, not the previously reported 200. The flat prairie also disclosed the

presence of artillery the U. S. forces had with them.

⁸Organization of the Army of the Trans-Mississippi Department, Kirby-Smith, C. S. Army, commanding, September 30, 1864, Gano to Cooper, September 29, 1864, Watie to Heiston, October 3, 1864, Johnson to Hoyt, September 25, 1864, *ibid.*, pp. 967, 788-789, 785, 775-776; Britton, The Union Indian in the Civil War, pp. 437-440; Hathaway, "Brigadier General Stand Watie, Confederate Guerrilla," pp. 77-78; Flat Rock is located on the prairie near the mouth of Flat Rock Creek on the west side of Grand River about five miles northeast of present-day Wagoner, in Wagoner County; Muriel H. Wright and LeRoy H. Fischer, "Civil War Sites in Oklahoma," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XLIV (Summer, 1966), p. 212.

six pieces of artillery the Confederates had with them. Barker made his reconnaissance and immediately fell back when approached by a Confederate advance party. He skirmished with this advance all the way back to the camp. Arriving at the ravine, to the rear of his camp, Barker dismounted his detachment and prepared to meet the Confederate attack.⁹ For the Negro troops with Captain Barker, it would be a fight to the death, and the Negro infantry would make the Confederates pay dearly for their lives. It was well known to the Federals that the Confederate forces did not take prisoners when the Negro soldier was involved.¹⁰

General Gano could see from his vantage point that the Confederate party sent to cut off the escape of the Federals was in position. Captain S. M. Stayhorn of the Thirtieth Texas Regiment was beginning to advance his skirmishers. Watie and his entire brigade minus the First Cherokee Regiment, which was with Colonel Vann at the rear of the Union camp, advanced to the left of the field. Gano dispatched Lieutenant Colonel William G. Welch with a column to the right. It was composed of Colonel Charles DeMorse and the Twenty-Ninth Texas Cavalry Regiment and Lieutenant Colonel

⁹Barker to Adjutant General, September 20, 1864, Official Records, i, XLI, Pt. 1, pp. 771-772; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, p. 438; Hathaway, "Brigadier General Stand Watie, Confederate Guerrilla," p. 78.

¹⁰For further information on the treatment of the Negro soldier by Confederates, see Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 359-373, 435-439 and Dudley T. Cornish, The Sable Arm; Negro Troops in the Union Army (New York: Longman, Green and Co., 1956), pp. 145-147.

Peter Hardeman of the Thirty-First Texas Cavalry Regiment. Welch advanced to a position about 200 yards to the right of Gano and halted. Gano and the remainder including the artillery, made up the center. Picket firing to the Federal rear indicated that Colonel Vann was advancing. Gano gave the order, and the V-shaped procession moved on the hay camp. The infantry with Gano advanced to within 200 yards of Captain Barker and opened fire. Watie and Welch with their cavalry forces charged the flanks of the Federal-held ravine, but were repulsed three times.¹¹

Captain Barker held his ground for a half-hour, but his position grew more untenable as the Confederates began to move in closer. With the Confederate troops positioned as they were, the Federal haying party was assailed from five directions at once. Barker knew it would be only a short time before he would be overwhelmed and wiped out to the last man. With Negroes in the Federal command, the Confederate force around him would not show much mercy to any person in the unit, white or black. He spotted a weak point on the Confederate left in Watie's section of the line. Barker decided to mount all those who had horses, break through if he could, and try to save a portion of the doomed command. Mounting sixty-five men, he charged the Confederate left.

¹¹Watie to Cooper, September 23, 1864, Gano to Cooper, September 29, 1864, Watie to Heiston, October 3, 1864, Barker to Adjutant General, September 20, 1864; Official Records, i, XLI, Pt. 1, pp. 784, 788-789, 785, 771-772; Hathaway, "Brigadier General Stand Watie, Confederate Guerilla," p. 78; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, p. 438.

Watie in command of that portion of the line ordered reinforcements in, and all but fifteen of the Federal cavalry were captured or killed. The colored soldiers and some white infantry left in the ravine rallied under Lieutenant Thomas B. Sutherland of the First Kansas Colored Infantry Regiment. For two more hours the Confederate charges were repulsed. When the ammunition supply became exhausted, Sutherland told his colored troops they would have to save themselves as best they could. Thirty-seven colored troops had been at the hay camp when the engagement started at noon; by that evening only four were still alive. These four colored soldiers had secreted themselves in the prairie grass or in the nearby pools of water which were a runoff of the Grand River. When darkness came, they crawled between the Confederate sentries and mounted patrols and made their way to Fort Blunt to relate their story. The Confederates moved about the camp looting and looking at their captured prize. The hay--over 3,000 tons--was burned in its ricks. Also taken in the fight were twenty-five horses, twelve army mules, and two six-team wagons with harness; destroyed was the hay and the mowing machinery. The equipment of McDonald and Fuller was destroyed along with all of Captain Barker's papers, receipts, and tally books. The Federal party at Flat Rock had been decimated. They lost forty killed, mostly Negroes, and sixty-six were wounded, missing in

action or captured. The Confederate loss was only three slightly wounded.¹²

The Confederate raiding party encamped on the Flat Rock battlefield for the night of September 16. The camp awakened before daylight the next morning and prepared to move out. At sunrise scouts reported that two Federal columns had been sighted. Both Federal parties would converge on Flat Rock by evening if their march routes were continued, one from the north and the other from the south. Major Michael Looscan, First Texas-Arizona Battalion, was sent southward with several troop units to meet the Union force coming from Fort Blunt. The remainder of the Confederate party proceeded northward to make contact with that force of Federal cavalry. General Watie sent Major Vann and his unit, the Second Cherokee Regiment, up the Fort Scott Road, four miles in advance of the main column. He was ordered to engage any Federals in his front and ascertain if the train was in the immediate vicinity. Having advanced a short distance up the road, his party was fired into by Federal pickets, Major Vann being narrowly missed. Thinking the train's escort was being engaged, Lieutenant Colonel Vann with his command, the First Cherokee Regiment, was sent to assist. The Federal party turned out to be a small reinforcement going to meet the

¹²Ibid.; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 439-440; Maxey to Boggs, October 7, 1864; Cooper to Scott, September 14 and September 24, 1864, Official Records, i, XLI, Pt. 1, pp. 780, 781, 782.

supply train. It moved northward during the night.¹³ Major Looscan engaged the Union patrol from the south and killed one of them. He drove the balance of the Federal party back to Fort Blunt. Gano's force which had moved further on, met the main body of the northern party and drove it off without a fight.

With the Federal patrols out of the way, Gano and Watie proceeded in the same direction in search of the Federal supply train. The Confederate party reached Rock Creek and did not find a sign of the passing of a train of any size. Because the Federal train might have taken a trail on the east side of the Grand River, several patrols were sent in that vicinity to search it out if there. The Confederates camped mid-way between the two possible roads, at Wolf Creek, and waited for the scouts to report in. All the patrols returned and reported that the train had not passed on either road.

Early on that same morning, September 17, an additional party was sent to burn a nearby hay station called Hickey's. The Confederates found it reinforced by Federal troops recently arrived from Fort Blunt, so the Confederate troopers had to send for assistance from the main column. A large force was immediately dispatched to Hickey's, and upon its arrival a heavy skirmish ensued between the Confederate raiders and Federal haying party. Recognizing that the

¹³Gano to Cooper, September 29, 1864, Watie to Heiston, October 3, 1864, *ibid.*, pp. 789, 786; Organization of the Army of the Trans-Mississippi Department, Kirby-Smith, C. S. Army, commanding, September 30, 1864, *ibid.*, Pt. 3, p. 967.

Federals were entrenched and prepared to put up stiff resistance, the Confederates broke contact. Too much time would have been required to try to overrun the Union hay station, and time had become important. The Confederate command had to locate the train quickly or pass it up altogether. It would not be long before Federal detachments from Fort Scott, Fort Smith, and Fort Blunt would be assembled to hunt them down.¹⁴

To prevent unnecessary movement of the large Confederate column, General Gano on September 18 took 400 men and two pieces of field artillery from Howell's Texas Battery and proceeded in the direction of Cabin Creek, located to the northeast of his camp at Wolf Creek. General Gano arrived at Cabin Creek about 2:00 p.m. He found roughly 300 men of the Second Indian Regiment garrisoning the log stockade located there.¹⁵ A messenger was immediately dispatched to bring up the balance of the command under Watie.

The Federal forces in Indian Territory knew that the large Confederate force reported in the area was out to break the all-important supply line between Fort Scott and Fort Blunt. Should the Texas Road be effectively blocked for any length of time, Fort Blunt would fall. Since the experiment

¹⁴Gano to Cooper, September 29, 1864, Watie to Heiston, October 3, 1864, *ibid.*, Pt. 1, pp. 789, 786.

¹⁵Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, p. 441; Gano to Cooper, September 29, 1864, Watie to Heiston, October 3, 1864, Official Records, i, XLI, Pt. 1, pp. 789, 786.

with the J. R. Williams had failed miserably, the only alternative was to keep the Texas Road functioning as a Federal supply line. General Thayer, commander of the District of the Border with headquarters at Fort Smith, had been receiving reports of an unusual amount of activity around Perryville. The Confederate movement toward Fort Blunt indicated to General Thayer that Colonel Wattles' command was in danger and not his. To prepare for the anticipated attack, Thayer ordered six companies of infantry and a cavalry force of 150 men to Fort Blunt. On September 14, Thayer bolstered the force even more by sending the Seventy-Ninth United States Colored Infantry Regiment under Colonel James M. Williams to reinforce Fort Blunt. Four days later the Twelfth Kansas Infantry Regiment under Colonel Charles W. Adams was added to the Fort Blunt garrison. Since Adams out ranked Wattles, the command was temporarily put into the hands of a more competent officer. The same order which transferred the Twelfth Kansas Infantry Regiment also instructed Wattles to send more men to meet the supply train that was due from Fort Scott.¹⁶

Major Henry Hopkins, Second Kansas Cavalry, the commander of the supply train that was then making its way to Fort Blunt, made every effort to prevent a surprise attack on his command. On September 12, Hopkins sent orders to all

¹⁶Thayer to Steele, September 8, 1864, Thayer to Wattles, September 14, 1864, Thayer to Wattles, September 18, 1864, *ibid.*, Pt. 3, pp. 105-106, 187-188, 238, 239.

commanding officers of the posts on the road between Fort Scott and Fort Blunt to thoroughly scout their areas of responsibility. Major Hopkins requested that these post commanders also send all the men to him they could spare. As he left Fort Scott, his escort numbered only 260 men. These troops were from the Third Brigade of the Frontier Division, under Colonel William R. Judson. The Third Brigade troops assigned to Major Hopkins were fifty cavalry and thirty infantry from the Second Kansas Cavalry Regiment; sixty mounted and seventy dismounted men of the Fourteenth Kansas Cavalry Regiment under the command of Captain H. P. Stevenson; ten mounted and forty infantry from the Sixth Kansas Cavalry Regiment under the command of Captain Henry P. Ledger. At Baxter Springs the escort was augmented by the arrival of one hundred Cherokee Indians from the Second Indian Regiment under the command of Captain Ta-la-lah, attached from the Third Indian Regiment on temporary duty. His executive officer was First Lieutenant Andrew J. Waterhouse of the Second Indian Regiment. Captain Ledger received a dispatch from Colonel Blair at Fort Scott that Price had crossed the Arkansas River at Dardanella, Arkansas, and was moving north. Along with that news, Ledger forwarded an urgent request for more troops to Colonel Wattles. The Federal captain knew that with Price across the Arkansas River, the rumors of Confederate raiders operating in his area were most probably true. September 17 found Hopkins located fifteen miles north of Cabin Creek. At that point he received word from Wattles

at Fort Blunt that a Confederate force of 1,500 men was moving in his direction. Colonel Wattles ordered Major Hopkins to move his train with all possible dispatch to the Cabin Creek stockade immediately.

The Federal train was immense for a military supply convoy. It consisted of 300 wagons; 205 were government supply wagons, four were ambulances, and ninety sutler wagons. To increase the speed of the train, it was put into double column. Traveling throughout the pre-dawn and early morning, the train covered the fifteen-mile distance in six hours, arriving at Cabin Creek by 9:00 on the morning of September 18.¹⁷ Lieutenant B. H. Whitlow of the Third Indian Regiment arrived shortly thereafter and reinforced Hopkins with 140 Cherokees. A force of 170 men from the Second Indian Regiment commanded by Lieutenant John C. Palmer was stationed at Cabin Creek. With the addition of these troops the whole Union force numbered 610 men: 150 mounted and the remaining 460 men acting as infantry.¹⁸

On that same afternoon, Major Hopkins took a patrol of twenty-five men and scouted the area south of the Cabin Creek stockade. Hopkins sighted the Confederates three miles from the stockade. They were posted in a hollow of a ravine,

¹⁷Report of Hopkins, September 22, 1864, Gano to Cooper, September 28, 1864, Watie to Heiston, October 3, 1864, *ibid.*, Pt. 1, pp. 766-767; 789-790, 786; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, p. 441.

¹⁸Jennison to Hampton, September 22, 1864, Report of Hopkins, September 22, 1864, Official Records, i, XLI, Pt. 1, pp. 772-773, 767.

and Major Hopkins could only guess at their numbers. It was about evening, so Hopkins returned to the Cabin Creek stockade to prepare for the coming Confederate assault. He doubled the forward pickets and formed the wagon train in a quarter circle outside the stockade.

In response to Gano's request, Watie arrived at a point three miles south of Cabin Creek just past midnight. After a conference there, the two Confederate generals decided to launch an attack immediately. Gano ordered Lieutenant Colonel Welch and the Twenty-Ninth Texas Cavalry Regiment to take the point. Companies were dispatched left and right of the advancing column to protect the Confederate flanks. The column was halted a half mile from the barricaded Federal train. Gano quickly drew his column into line of battle: Gano's brigade took the center and right portions of the line; Watie's brigade was to Gano's left; Colonel Welch was positioned on the extreme right with the Twenty-Ninth Texas Cavalry; next came Martin's Battalion of Texas cavalry with Major W. M. Mayrant commanding; on Mayrant's left was Captain Howell and his six batteries of artillery; and the Thirtieth and Thirty-First Texas Cavalry regiments were supporting Howell on his left and rear, with Major Looscan and Captain Stayhorn commanding these units.

General Watie and his Indian Brigade formed the left of the Confederate line. The Confederate guerrilla placed his units as follows: First and Second Cherokee regiments on the right and linked with the united commands of Looscan and

Stayhorn; Seminoles under Colonel Jumper were next to the Cherokee regiments, with the First and Second Creek regiments completing the left portion of the line.¹⁹

The brigades in their assault line were slowly advanced to an elevated position looking down on the Federal defensive works. There Major Hopkins got his first good look at the Confederate force arrayed before him, taking in his entire line and flanks, was a double line of Confederate cavalry and infantry. The first line was cavalry, and a few feet to the rear of the Confederate cavalry were the infantry companies, kneeling in ranks, waiting for the word to move forward in support of the cavalry. Hopkins quickly rearranged his lines, sending the wagons to the rear of the stockade near the edge of the bluffs located there. The Federal infantry were all moved to within the confines of the stockade. The movement of the wagons caused General Gano to order the Confederate line forward to a position within 500 yards of the Federal stockade.

At this point a Federal officer, Captain Patrick Cosgrove, came out of the darkness to hold a parley with the Confederates. After Captain Cosgrove had authenticated that they were Confederates, he cursed them and invited them forward. General Gano instructed his representative to query

¹⁹Hancock, "The Second Battle of Cabin Creek," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XXXIX, pp. 415-417; Report of Hopkins, September 22, 1864, Watie to Heiston, October 3, 1864, Gano to Cooper, September 29, 1864, Official Records, i, XLI, Pt. 1, pp. 767, 786, 789.

them and see if the Union commander would respect the flag of truce. General Gano was told to wait five minutes while Captain Cosgrove went to Major Hopkins to have the flag of truce approved. Cosgrove returned to the portion of the line where he had talked with the Confederates. Somehow the word was not received by Gano. The Confederate commander waited fifteen minutes, and hearing no word from the Federal Captain, prepared to attack. The movement of the Federal wagons into the stockade signaled the attack. Gano took the renewed movement within the Union lines as a negative answer to his truce request and ordered his entire line forward.²⁰

The entire Confederate front moved forward at a slow-measured pace. The darkness prevented any faster movement. The Federal defenders did not open fire until the Confederates were within 300 yards of their barricades. The Federals then opened fire all along the line, to which the Confederates immediately replied. Howell's batteries opened fire from the Confederate center, all six guns blasting forth with solid shot.

The teamsters and wagonmaster, all civilians under contract with the army, fled at the first volley of Confederate

²⁰Ibid.; Jennison to Hampton, September 22, 1864, Gano to Cooper, September 29, 1864, *ibid.*, pp. 778, 790; Hancock, "The Second Battle of Cabin Creek," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XXXIX, 417-418. The official reports are conflicting at this point, but it appears that the Federals received word from Major Hopkins that the flag of truce would be accepted. The reason for the requested flag of truce was not mentioned in the official correspondence of the Confederate commander, General Gano. The truth as to why the truce was desired died with the participants. Hancock, "The Second Battle of Cabin Creek," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XXXIX, p. 420.

musketry. They each took from one to two mules with them, slashing their mounts free of their harnesses wherever they found them. This deserting by the teamsters was disastrous to the wagon train. The gunfire drove some of the mules mad with fear, and in their efforts to escape the noise, the train became hopelessly entangled. Other teams pulled their cargoes over the hundred-foot bluff, which could not be seen in the darkness. The night also concealed the details of the Federal fortifications from the probing Confederates. Since Gano's objective of stopping the train had been accomplished, the bugler was ordered to sound recall, and the Confederate line fell back to its original position on the elevated prairie. After an hour's rest, the Confederate Indian units were called back to arms. Pickets had reported that Union troops were trying to untangle the teams and wagons in order to make an escape attempt when daylight arrived. Gano ordered another assault, and after an exchange of volleys, the Confederates returned to their original lines. The Federals remained concealed behind their fortifications and did not try to untangle the teams again.²¹

General Watie and his Indian Brigade did very well on the left of the battlefield. During the second assault Watie found a weak point on the Federal right. He pressed

²¹Hancock, "The Second Battle of Cabin Creek," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XXXIX, pp. 415-417; Report of Hopkins, September 22, 1864, Watie to Heiston, October 3, 1864, Gano to Cooper, September 29, 1864, Jennison to Hampton, September 22, 1864, Official Records, i, XLI, Pt. 1, pp. 767, 786, 789, 778.

forward his brigade and drove the Federals from their positions. The Federal train was parked in that portion of the camp, and when the Union soldiers fell back they left a large segment of the train in the hands of General Watie's brigade. To prevent its recapture, a heavy guard of Confederate infantry was put around its perimeter and the captured wagons were taken piecemeal to the Confederate rear and parked.

At daybreak Watie received reports of more Union activity to his front. Skirmishers reported that it sounded as if wagons were moving across Cabin Creek in the rear of the Federal camp. Colonel Vann was sent with the two Cherokee regiments with orders to skirt the Union camp and cut off any attempt to escape with any part of the remainder of the train. Shortly messengers brought word that no wagons were moving in this area but that eighteen prisoners had been taken while attempting to escape into the surrounding woods.

With the sun up, the true Federal position was revealed to the Confederate generals. The sunlight revealed a line of ten immense hay ricks. A log wall had been constructed behind that as a second line of defense. Gano decided to change his artillery positions so as to command the flank of the Federal fortifications. Immediately two pieces of Howell's battery were shifted to the left to cover the Federal right. Colonel Jumper's command was dismounted in order to support and protect this battery.

The Twenty-Ninth Texas Regiment was ordered to assault the Federal units located to their front. Colonel Jumper,

then supporting the two-gun battery of Howell, was also ordered to move forward and attack the Federals' right flank. With the Seminoles driving the Union troops 150 yards into their own fortifications, General Gano saw a chance to drive or capture the entire Federal force. He led segments of the unused Twenty-Ninth Texas Regiment into the thick of the fighting in an effort to overpower Federal resistance. After pushing the Federal line back another twenty-five yards, the Confederates were thrown off balance and repulsed by a gully filled with troops that had not yet participated in the fight. With a yell of defiance, they surged forward and stopped the Confederate advance. Gano, seeing that the attack had stalled, called for a withdrawal. Gano, having returned from the left flank attack, ordered Colonel Welch and the remainder of his command, the Thirty-First Texas Cavalry Regiment, to drive the opposite end of the line, the Federal right. Captain Stayhorn and Major Mayrant would assist him with their units. The Creeks and Seminoles, who had exhausted the ammunition, pulled out of line to let Colonel Welch and his troops take their place. Jumper hurried the Creek and Seminole units to the ordinance wagons in the rear to replenish their cartridge boxes.

Howell's battery, now located in the Confederate center, was firing on the Federal flanks. Shot and shell ripped down the line of Federals, pounding their resistance into

the ground.²² The return of the Creek and Seminole regiments with a fresh supply of ammunition crumpled the last of the Federal will to resist. The Federal line gave way, and the Union soldiers melted into the brush, running for their lives.

Although his chance to get the wagons to safety had been crushed by the envelopment of his right flank, Major Hopkins hoped to hold the stockade until the next morning. Major Foreman with six companies of infantry and two pieces of artillery was believed to be in the area and moving to reinforce the wagon train. Should they arrive by daybreak, they could hit the Confederates from the rear and destroy the besieged train, leaving the garrison at Fort Blunt helpless without supplies.

The onslaught of Colonel Welch and his reinforcement by the Creek and Seminole units prevented any Federal planning except that of escape. The remaining Federals ran for the safety of the brush. Most headed east in the direction of the Grand River and from there went either north to Fort Scott or south to Fort Blunt.

By 9:00 o'clock on the morning of September 18 the engagement at Cabin Creek was over. The Southern forces had

²²Gano to Cooper, September 29, 1864, *ibid.*, p. 790. General Gano was exceptional in the writing of his reports. His official correspondence read more like a novel than an official army report. His flair for dramatics proved useful to him after the war, when he became a Presbyterian minister and preached from the pulpit the rest of his days. Warner, Generals in Grey, p. 96.

complete control over the field. The Federals had left their dead and wounded in their haste to escape. Gano sent details to bury the dead and to secure the area from surprise attack. With this done, Watie and Gano gathered the wagon train together and prepared for an immediate return south. Watie's and Gano's brigades clothed themselves from the captured supplies. The booty of the Federal train was a virtual godsend. Most of the salvaged wagons contained clothing which the ragged Confederate troops could use. Though the uniforms were blue, they would fade quickly in the sun and turn a dull butternut color. Other wagons carried guns and ammunition. An abundant supply of liquor was found in several of the sutler wagons, and the jubilant Indian soldiers gleefully drank their find out of existence. The most valuable prize, next to the clothing, was \$8,000 worth of blankets. These would be useful for the coming winter. The Confederates had captured 130 wagons and 740 mules. Although over one hundred wagons had been burned, the remaining were valued at over \$1,500,000. The casualties had been slight for the number of men involved: the Confederate loss was no more than forty-five, killed, wounded, or missing. The total Federal casualties were not in excess of fifty-four.²³

²³Watie to Heiston, October 3, 1864, Watie to Cooper, September 23, 1864, Gano to Cooper, September 23, 1864, Gano to Cooper, September 29, 1864, Return of casualties in Gano's brigade, September 19, 1864, Hopkins to Thomas, September 25, 1864, Sykes to Charlot, September 25, 1864, Oliver to Bell, September 25, 1864, Hildebrand to Cooper, September 26, 1864,

General Gano put his newly-outfitted men into columns and moved out in a southwesterly direction. Gano knew that reinforcements were on their way or soon would be, and he hoped to avoid them if possible. He did not want to risk losing his priceless prize. The fight at Cabin Creek had terminated by 9:00 a.m., and General Gano was in column by 10:00 a.m.

An hour later scouts brought in reports that a Federal force was ahead at Pryor's Creek and was presently pressing the Confederate advance party. Gano ordered the entire command forward, except those guarding the captured wagons. Placing his men in line on a prairie, Gano held the Federal brigade at a distance. The two commands skirmished the rest of the morning and long into the afternoon. At 4:30 p.m. the shooting died down, and the Federals secured their artillery.

Colonel Williams, commander of the Federal brigade on Gano's front, did not want to force a general engagement. His men were exhausted and badly needed rest. They had marched eighty-two miles in less than two days, with full field equipment. A hard push by the Confederates to his front would overcome his men. He wanted to hold the

Maxey to Boggs, October 8, 1864, Official Records, i, XLI, Pt. 1, pp. 786-787, 784, 788, 790-791, 792, 770-771, 764-765, 778, 779, 780; Hathaway, "Brigadier General Stand Watie, Confederate Guerrilla," pp. 78-81.

Confederates in their position until reinforcements could arrive; then they could be dealt with.²⁴

At dark Gano ordered one of the wagons emptied. It was then driven over a rocky place nearby for two hours. This gave the Federal pickets the impression that the convoy of wagons was being parked. The actual train was at that moment moving southwest toward the Arkansas River. Gano ordered his troops into columns at dawn and they followed the train toward the Arkansas.

A short time later, the Federals sent skirmishers forward to renew contact with Gano and found the Confederate emplacements empty and the train gone. Colonel Williams' command was too exhausted to follow with any speed. For the next three days the Confederate raiders got little sleep in their race to the south side of the Arkansas River. Some managed to catch a little sleep in their saddles or while resting their wagon teams. The Indian soldiers were quite exalted over their captured prize and went about their tasks cheerfully. Traversing rough terrain, they had to dig out steep creek banks to enable the wagons to go across. Wagons had to be pushed up the steep grades which abounded in the area, and thick scrub brush had to be thinned to let the big wagons through.

²⁴Williams to Blair, September 20, 1864, Gano to Cooper, September 29, 1864, Watie to Heiston, October 3, 1864, Official Records, i, XLI, Pt. 1, pp. 765, 791, 787; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 444-445.

General Watie had sent several messengers on ahead to notify General Cooper of his success and return route. In response to his message, Cooper sent Colonel D. N. McIntosh and a force of 400 Creeks to meet the returning expedition and help bring it in. Upon finding that the Federals had given up the chase after crossing the Arkansas River near Tulsa Town, McIntosh took his command and proceeded to scout the area between the Creek Council Grounds and Fort Blunt. If any Federal units were to try to interrupt Watie, McIntosh could pursue and strike them from the flank or rear.

Having crossed the Arkansas River at Tulsa Town, Watie proceeded to Fishertown, southeast of present-day Eufaula, Pittsburg County. The Confederate raiders were met at Fishertown by General Cooper in person. He had moved up from Fort Towson immediately after Colonel McIntosh had departed from there.²⁵

The captured prize gave a much needed boost to the low morale of the Confederate troops in the Trans-Mississippi Department. It was also a bright spot in the Confederate operations. On January 19, 1865, a joint resolution of both houses of Congress was passed commending Gano and Watie on

²⁵Ibid.; Hancock, "Second Battle of Cabin Creek," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XXXIX, pp. 421-423; Gano to Cooper, September 29, 1864, Hilderbrand to Cooper, September 26, 1864, Cooper to Scott, September 24, 1864, Cooper to Scott, September 27, 1864, Cooper to Scott, October 1, 1864, Watie to Cooper, September 23, 1864, Watie to Heiston, October 3, 1864, Official Records, i, XLI, Pt. 1, pp. 790-791, 779, 782, 783, 783, 784, 787-788; Hathaway, "Brigadier General Stand Watie, Confederate Guerrilla," p. 80; Maxey to Boggs, September 30, 1864, Official Records, i, XLI, Pt. 1, p. 778.

their "daring and skill exhibited" in the capture of the Federal wagon train on September 19, 1864. The following year, on January 24, Davis signed the resolution. General Maxey and General Cooper published and had circulated to all units a proclamation that lauded the accomplishments of Watie and Gano. Maxey reminded the soldiers of his command that a great victory had been won, but that the Federal invaders were still cursing the country with their presence and a more united effort in the future would be necessary to remove the Federal force from Indian Territory.²⁶

The speed and adroitness of the Confederates in their Cabin Creek foray left the Federal forces at Fort Smith and Fort Blunt temporarily confused and frustrated. General Thayer began to see Confederates behind every bush. For the duration of September, 1864, Thayer was marching and counter-marching troops from Fort Blunt. He plagued his superiors with so many requests for troops and assistance they began to believe that he was about to be overwhelmed. On September 29, Thayer ordered the stoppage of all supply trains from Fort Scott to Fort Blunt. He explained that the Confederates

²⁶U. S. Congress, Senate Executive Documents Number 234, Fifty-Eighth Congress, Second Session, IV, pp. 429, 486, and VII, pp. 465, 495; General Order No. 26, Headquarters, Indian Division, September 30, 1864, General Order No. 61, Headquarters, District of Indian Territory, October 7, 1864, General Order No. 81, Headquarters, Trans-Mississippi District, October 12, 1864, Official Records, i, XLI, Pt. 1, pp. 792-793, 793-794, 794.

were massing to his front to attack and would try to stop any attempt to supply him.²⁷

On October 18, Thayer exhibited the extent of his panic. He instructed Colonel Wattles to be prepared at a moment's notice to evacuate Fort Blunt and repair to Fort Smith with his entire command, destroying the equipage that was unserviceable or could not be transported with him. It was not until the last week in October that General Thayer cancelled his orders for the removal of the troops from Fort Blunt and lifted his prohibition on supply trains from Fort Scott. Thayer seemed to have temporarily lost confidence in his command's ability to fight off the Confederates. This turn of events encouraged more than anything else the common talk of weakness, incompetence, and corruption in the Fort Blunt and Fort Smith area.²⁸

During late September and early October, the Confederates were preparing for winter quarters, not for a raid on

²⁷Thayer to Halleck, September 22, 1864, Thayer to Williams, September 22, 1864, Thayer to Adams, September 22, 1864, Adams to Curtis, September 22, 1864, Curtis to Blunt, September 22, 1864, Thayer to Halleck, September 24, 1864, Thayer to Steele, September 24, 1864, Curtis to Rosecrans, September 27, 1864, Thayer to Wattles, September 28, 1864, Sykes to Curtis, September 28, 1864, Thayer to Halleck, September 29, 1864, Thayer to Steele, October 4, 1864, Thayer to Halleck, October 13, 1864, Thayer to Lacey, October 15, 1864, *ibid.*, Pt. 3, pp. 300, 300, 301, 314, 314-315, 340, 341, 426, 639, 461, 475, 608-609, 831, 882-883.

²⁸Thayer to Wattles, October 18, 1864, Thayer to Wattles, October 19, 1864, Gallaher to Williams, October 20, 1864, Thayer to Wattles, October 20, 1864, Thayer to Wattles, October 24, 1864, Thayer to Wattles, October 27, 1864, *ibid.*, Pt. 4, pp. 74-75, 107-108, 130, 130-131, 218, 272; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 452-453.

Fort Smith or Fort Blunt. Though Watie's command had received new clothes, it was still lacking in many essentials: guns, ammunition, proper rations, and most important horses, which were impossible to obtain in Confederate Indian Territory. Watie and his First Indian Brigade moved to the North Fork Road on October 7. There Watie still tried to get permission for his proposed Kansas raid. But the question became stalled and deeply entangled over the question of "spoils." Watie had found that letting his Indian troops gather spoils as an incentive gave him better performance in return. Cooper sided with Watie, but did not go out on a limb over the question. The Kansas raid was eventually forgotten because of the Confederate inability to gather the men and material necessary for its success.²⁹

The remainder of 1864 was a period of relative quiet. General Maxey and General Thayer were both busy trying to prepare attacks or defend their assigned area. The only military activity took place in early November. General Price had a series of setbacks on his raid into Missouri so that by late October he was retreating toward Indian Territory. Price hoped to capture Fort Scott on the way, but the Union cavalry put too much pressure on him. On November 7, 1864, General Price crossed the Arkansas River into Confederate-held Indian Territory. He crossed at a point

²⁹Cooper to Bell, October 6, 1864, Maxey to Boggs, October 9, 1864, Official Records, i, XLI, Pt. 3, pp. 982-984, 990-991; Hathaway, "Brigadier General Stand Watie, Confederate Guerrilla," p. 84.

thirty-five miles west of Fort Smith and immediately headed for Boggy Depot and Perryville to get badly needed supplies. From there under escort of General Cooper, Price continued on to Bonham, Texas, and on December 2, 1864, ended his long march at Laynesport, Texas, a defeated man.³⁰

General Maxey was invited to attend and speak at the Choctaw Grand Council to be held on November 4 and 5, 1864, at Armstrong Academy. He arrived there early on Thursday, November 3. At the meeting, Colonel McIntosh and Colonel Adair acted as an escort for the Confederate commander. A resolution of the council requested General Maxey to speak to them, which he did at 10:00 a.m. on the second day of the meeting. In a three-hour address, he reviewed the highlights of his administration. He concluded by reading his report as Superintendent of Indian Affairs in which he covered the promises made by the Confederate government and pointed out how the government had tried to keep its word. His speech was received with "marked attention." From Armstrong Academy, Maxey went to Fort Washita, where he made an inspection of the post and garrison. He reported the situation at Fort Washita "in good condition."³¹

³⁰Morrow, "Price's Missouri Expedition, 1864," pp. 138-159; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, p. 452; Magruder to Maxey, November 15, 1864, Scott to Maclean, November 18, 1864, Maxey to Boggs, November 20, 1864, Official Records, i, XLI, Pt. 4, pp. 1050-1051, 1063, 1067.

³¹Maxey to his wife, November 6, 1864, Maxey to Kirby-Smith, November 12, 1864, Samuel Bell Maxey Papers, Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art, Tulsa, Oklahoma; Magruder to Wharton, November 8, 1864,

Though the situation was good in several of the Confederate posts, defeat was inevitable. The whole Confederacy was doomed. The Confederate government had lost the ability to adequately supply her troops in the East, and she could do nothing at all for an area west of the Mississippi River considered by general headquarters as a mere sideshow.

Colonel Phillips was suddenly returned to his command on December 29, 1864. Since he was pleased to be assigned to a field command again, he did not press General Thayer for his reasons. To General Herron, however, Phillips expressed disappointment that he was not able to press his suit against McDonald and Fuller. The general situation of the Fort Smith and Fort Blunt area, plus the unwanted pressure exerted by Phillips, undoubtedly played a large part in his reappointment. The recommendation of General Herron was a timely piece of correspondence that assured Phillips his field command again. Returning to Fort Blunt, Phillips was appalled at the low state of the command and the wanton corruption that prevailed. Phillips asked advice from his superior as to what assignment should be given Wattles, one of his former regimental commanders. Phillips immediately set about correcting the irregularities: quartermaster records were audited, and corrections made; a blackmailing ring, led by the post commander, was broken up and the members arrested.

Maxey to Kirby-Smith, November 8, 1864, Kirby-Smith to Delegates from the Grand Council, December 17, 1864, Official Records, i, XLI, Pt. 4, pp. 1034, 1035-1037, 1115.

In addition, Phillips deplored the way that the infamous Fort Smith contractors of McDonald and Fuller were cheating the Indians. McDonald and Fuller agents would buy a whole crop at a low price, and the Indians would get only a portion of what they deserved. That and other schemes of corruption which had emerged during Wattles' tenure as post commander were righted by Phillips during the next four weeks.

Phillips also began to pester his superior for more mounts. To defeat the Confederate forces in detail, more horses would have to be obtained. Cavalry was necessary to maintain contact with the Confederate forces south of the Arkansas River.³²

During February the Union and Confederate forces reorganized their commands. Thayer and Steele were replaced; Thayer was reduced to a command at Saint Charles, Arkansas, and Steele was transferred completely out of the Department of Arkansas. On the Confederate side, General Maxey by his request was transferred to a district in Texas. The new Federal officers were new to the area; General J. J. Reynolds took command of the Department, and General Cyrus Bussey moved to Fort Smith as its commandant. Confederate General Cooper succeeded Maxey and with this promotion

³²Phillips to Herron, January 16, 1865, *ibid.*, XLVIII, Pt. 1, pp. 542-543; Wyant, "Colonel William A. Phillips and the Civil War in Indian Territory," pp. 72-75; General Order No. 4, January 14, 1865, Official Records, i, XLVIII, Pt. 1, pp. 516-519; Abel, The American Indian Under Reconstruction, pp. 90-92; Britton, The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War, pp. 453-454; Thoburn and Wright, Oklahoma: A History of the State and Its People, I, pp. 357-358.

achieved his long-sought goal as Indian Territory District commander. These changes were for naught because from that point until the end of the war there was no significant military activity. The opposing forces kept scouts out, but no engagements were reported.³³ Watie replaced Cooper as division commander of Indian troops. On taking command, Watie moved his Indian division to Boggy Depot, where it remained until the men were mustered out after the war.³⁴

One last treaty between the Plains Indians and the Confederate Indians was signed on May 25, 1865, at Camp Napoleon, located on the Washita River near present-day Verden, Oklahoma. In that alliance, agreed to and signed by the Plains Indians and the Five Civilized Tribes, an Indian confederacy was formed, to be controlled by the contracting tribes. Confederate representatives had been sent by General Cooper, but no attempt was made to directly negotiate a treaty with the Plains Indians. Since the Five Civilized Tribes were already bound by treaties to the Confederacy, this agreement between these Indian tribes served the Confederate States as an indirect treaty with the troublesome

³³Maxey to Schultz, February 17, 1865, General Order No. 411, Headquarters, Trans-Mississippi Department, February 14, 1865, Samuel Bell Maxey Papers, Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art, Tulsa, Oklahoma; Hood, "The Twilight of the Confederacy in Indian Territory," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XLI, pp. 439-440; General Order No. 7, Headquarters District of Indian Territory, February 24, 1865, Official Records, i, XLIII, Pt. 1, p. 1403.

³⁴Special Order No. 40, Headquarters, Trans-Mississippi Department, February 14, 1865, *ibid.*, p. 1387.

Plains Indians, although it just obligated the Confederacy to no specific terms. The terms of the alliance called for perpetual peace between the Five Civilized Tribes and the Plains Indians. It was agreed that internal fighting between tribes would cease and any disagreements which might arise would be arbitrated. The Confederacy was pleased at the outcome of the meeting because on several occasions these Plains Indians had caused more trouble in Indian Territory than Federal troops. The motto of the new Indian confederacy was "An Indian shall not spill an Indian's blood."³⁵

Immediately upon taking command in March, 1865, Cooper had begun to prepare his troops for a rumored Federal attack. The long-talked-about Kansas raid was still in the air, but it would remain nothing more than talk. On May 16, 1865, Cooper began to get reports on conditions of the war in the East. He refused, however, to put any credence in the stories and continued his preparations. When the rumors persisted, Cooper ordered his command to stand by their colors and await further developments. He discouraged contact with the Federal forces, but issued orders not to allow Federals to enter Confederate territory.³⁶

³⁵Thoburn and Wright, Oklahoma: A History of the State and Its People, I, pp. 364-365; Anna Lewis, "Camp Napoleon," Chronicles of Oklahoma, IX (December, 1931), pp. 359-364; Cooper to Anderson, May 15, 1865, Kirby-Smith to Cooper, April 8, 1865, Official Records, i, XLVIII, Pt. 2, pp. 1306, 1270.

³⁶Cooper to Anderson, May 15, 1865, Cooper to Throckmorton, May 16, 1865, Cooper to Adair, May 16, 1865, Cooper to Anderson, May 17, 1865, Cooper to McCulloch, May 18, 1865, Cooper to Watie, May 22, 1865, *ibid.*, pp. 1305-1306, 1307, 1307-1308, 1312, 1312-1313, 1318; Lewis, "Camp Napoleon," Chronicles of Oklahoma, IX, pp. 360-364.

General Cooper advised several of the Confederate Indian leaders to call a meeting of the Grand Council of the United Indian Nations to be held on June 10, 1865, at Chahta Tamaha. At this meeting the Indians were of one accord; they saw themselves as independent nations and reserved the right to surrender to the Federal authorities as such. General Cooper, pursuant with the May 26 surrender by General Kirby-Smith, surrendered only the white troops in Indian Territory.

General Herron, then commanding the Northern Division of Louisiana, ordered a meeting with the Indian representatives at Doaksville, in the Choctaw Nation. Lieutenant Colonel Asa C. Matthews and Adjutant William H. Vance arrived there about June 18 and prepared to receive the surrender of the Indian tribes. The Choctaws were the first tribe to surrender; they did so on June 19, 1865. At the same place four days later, General Watie surrendered the Cherokee forces under his command. With him came elements of the Creek and Seminole units and the Osage Battalion.

The surrender terms presented to Watie were about the same as those signed by the other Confederate commanders in the Trans-Mississippi Department. Watie agreed to immediately cease all acts of hostility against the Federal forces in Indian Territory. The Federal authorities agreed to assume the responsibility of protecting the persons and property of the late Confederate soldiers. This peace document was to remain in effect until the Grand Council convened at Armstrong Academy in the Choctaw Nation on September 1, 1865.

After the decisions of the Grand Council were accepted and ratified by the Federal government, the resulting peace terms acquired permanency and superceded the temporary conditions signed by Watie on June 23.

Though other units did surrender after June 23, 1865, Watie was the last Confederate officer of general grade to lay down his arms. It was not until July 14, 1865, that the last Confederate Indian units laid down their arms and accepted surrender terms similar to those handed to Watie and his troop units. These were the Chickasaw troops and the Caddo Battalion. With the end of the fighting by the Chickasaw and Caddo units, the Civil War ended in Indian Territory, and as General Cooper said, "The country is quiet, and no danger in traveling alone."³⁷

September, 1864, had brought high hopes of increased military activity for the Confederates in Indian Territory. The Confederate raiders Gano and Watie had brightened the

³⁷Cooper to Walker, May 23, 1865, Cooper to Anderson, May 25, 1865, Cooper to Scott, June 26, 1865, Treaty stipulations signed by Stand Watie, June 23, 1865, Official Records, i, XLVIII, Pt. 2, pp. 1318, 1319, 1324, 1100-1101; Thoburn and Wright, Oklahoma: A History of the State and Its People, I, pp. 366-367; Harlow, Oklahoma Its Origins and Development: A History, p. 152; Wright, "General Douglas H. Cooper, C.S.A.," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XXXII, pp. 178-179; Dale, "The Cherokees in the Confederacy," Journal of Southern History, XIII, pp. 184-185; Cunningham, General Stand Watie's Confederate Indians, pp. 196-198; Minnie Elizabeth Thomas Bailey, "Reconstruction in Indian Territory, 1865-1877," (Unpublished Doctor of Education Dissertation, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, 1967), pp. 36-37; J. B. Davis, "Slavery in the Cherokee Nation," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XI (December, 1933), pp. 1070-1071; Angie Debo, The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1934), pp. 84-85.

outlook for the Trans-Mississippi Department by their daring expedition to Cabin Creek. Watie had then plagued his superiors with renewed requests for a raid further north into Kansas. The Confederate forces in the East, however, had already started deserting by regiments, and some areas were already under complete domination of Federal authorities. The end was not far away for Indian Territory. By April, 1865, the course of direction was clearly indicated to General Cooper, the new district commander. He realized fully that his meager force was too weak to put up stiff resistance, and so ordered all units to stay alert but not to take offensive action. He was waiting for his turn to surrender.

The end came to the Trans-Mississippi as it did to the East, quietly and with solemnity. The Confederates moved to nearby Federal posts and were paroled. From there the Indian soldier returned to his home, hoping to take up his life where he had left it four years before. The Civil War was over in Indian Territory.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

During the twenty-two month period from the capitulation of Fort Smith in September, 1863, to the close of the Civil War in Indian Territory, Confederate power in that area steadily declined. Sporadic as the Federal invasion attempts had been previous to the fall of Fort Smith, they had succeeded in their objective: the clearing out of Confederate forces north of the Arkansas River. The bewildered Confederate forces, Indian and white, then looked to their commanders for leadership. But the Confederate high command in Indian Territory was lacking in insight, imagination, and aggressiveness. General Watie was at the time the only officer that could have delayed defeat by leadership ability, but he was in a subordinate position which left him with no opportunity to display the initiative that would later win him legendary fame. The loss of the north side of the easily defensible Arkansas River was disastrous to Confederate strategy. The only natural bastion left to the Southern forces was the Red River, and the Confederacy was too deficient in necessary men and money, and construction material necessary to build a defensible line.

The Federal army opposing the Confederate units did not suffer from scanty military supplies. Though the Union supply line along the Texas Road was continuously harassed, the quartermaster and sutler trains continued to move to the forward Federal posts of Fort Blunt and Fort Smith.

The Federal forces did, however, suffer in adequate leadership. Staff bungling cost the Union armies opportunity after opportunity to invade south of the Arkansas River and destroy the meager Confederate forces stationed there. The two most glaring mistakes in Union strategy were the July, 1863, invasion of General Blunt and the February, 1864, sortie by Colonel Phillips through southern Indian Territory.

General Blunt, although fully competent and proportionately balanced with an adequate amount of offensive aggressiveness, lacked in one area necessary for final victory. He was considered a political general and did not have the confidence of his superiors. The first on the list of those not trusting Blunt was his arch-enemy and department commander, General Schofield. Schofield, a regular army officer, did not like Blunt or his sponsor, Senator Lane. Using Blunt's recurring malady of malaria as an excuse, General Schofield was later instrumental in having Blunt removed from command. Blunt, in spite of his abilities, was maligned to the point that he brought his grievances to the attention of President Lincoln. The harmful aspects of this malevolence on Schofield's part was far more disastrous than harming Blunt. This lack of trust and confidence from the Union

high command kept Blunt from receiving the necessary men and material he needed to push his campaign to victory. Only by manipulating orders did the Federal general gather enough supplies for active campaigning. Successful in every respect and rightly deserving of promotion, Blunt was removed from his command by General Thayer for a petty defeat that lacked the importance of an engagement. The East, it would seem, was not the only area where generals played politics.

Colonel Phillips was another officer who unselfishly gave of his abilities for a cause he believed in and who in return received criticism, removal, and humiliation. In February, 1864, Confederate forces were weak and scattered throughout the Choctaw Nation, which allowed a perfect opportunity for the Federals to deliver a telling blow to the Southern units across the Arkansas River. However, Phillips' plan for a large-scale invasion of Confederate territory was criticized by his superiors. He was not criticized or disliked by his Federal superiors because of politics; he was the victim, however, of plots and efforts toward removal because he was too honest, too efficient, and too victorious. Phillips' invasion of southern Indian Territory was reduced to a sortie because of the failure of Blunt, the department commander, to support him with even a minimal amount of supplies necessary to carry on offensive campaigning. Phillips' request for men had been honored most of the time, but needed cavalry reinforcements on this occasion were not forthcoming. Infantry, unsupported by cavalry, could not hope to

accomplish much in the rugged terrain below the Arkansas River.

The Confederate forces were also plagued by the political game. General Steele, heaped with abuse by his ambitious subordinate, General Cooper, resigned in disgust and humiliation. General Maxey, Steele's successor and a better general, became the victim of the same abuse. Cooper believed he deserved the position of Indian Territory commander and did not hesitate when the situation called for back-stabbing. Maxey labored under the yoke of harassing, rebellious officers as well as a lack of men and material enough to hold his area of responsibility. Being of the same mind as Federal General Blunt, Maxey believed that the only hope for Confederate victory lay in launching an immediate offensive campaign. Realizing that his command was physically unable to accomplish this, Maxey used the troops in his department for harassing raids. Maxey constantly tried to muster men and supplies for an invasion north of the Arkansas, but he was stopped again and again by lack of adequate support. To the Confederate high command in Richmond, Virginia, Indian Territory never took on any more importance than that of a buffer for their flanks and protection for foodstuff-producing Texas. The whole Trans-Mississippi area suffered deprivations since it was at the bottom of the Confederate priority list for supplies and equipage.

As in any war, the innocent as well as the guilty suffered from the effects of military activity. The refugees,

whether loyal to the Union or adhering to the Confederate cause, suffered as much if not more than the soldiers participating in the fighting. From the beginning the Union refugees from Indian Territory had a difficult time. Expecting food and shelter upon reaching sanctuary in the Federal state of Kansas, these exhausted and beleaguered people found only impatience, hate, and inadequate food, clothing, and shelter. Moved around at the whim of the Bureau of Indian Affairs authorities, the refugee ranks were quickly thinned by death. These Federal refugees met and were exposed to frustration in false promises, grief from death, and disappointment at every turn. Even on their return to Indian Territory in June, 1864, nothing but frustration awaited them. Recent raids by Confederates required their indefinite containment around the Fort Blunt stockade. Not until the end of the war would peace return these Indian refugees to their homes and farms.

The Union refugees were not alone in their plight. Refugees that took the cause of the Confederacy suffered as much if not more than their Northern counterparts. These people were also forced from their homes and driven to unfamiliar, and in some cases, hostile regions in Texas. The added burden of not even having available a minimal amount of commissary supplies made the Confederate refugees suffer immense privations. Since suffering, death and social upheaval were experienced by Union and Confederate refugees

alike, it is difficult to conclude which group of refugees suffered the most.

Many of the needs of the Indian refugees were taken care of by individual soldiers who had relatives or friends among the refugees. The military units of both the Union and Confederate armies in Indian Territory were reduced because of desertions due to soldiers seeking out their refugee families. Colonel Phillips was forced to keep his Federal Indians as close to their homes as possible or else they would have deserted en masse in their efforts to care for their families. Over half of Watie's Indians deserted after the capture of the Federal stern-wheeler J. R. Williams in June, 1864, when these men, loaded with loot, rushed home to give their priceless cargo to starving families and friends. The dispatch with which the Confederates captured and whisked to safety the Federal wagon train at Cabin Creek, in September, 1864, was motivated by the desperate need of these soldiers and their families.

The Confederates in Indian Territory used their victories such as at Cabin Creek to sell their efforts. Maxey and Cooper, either together or singly, attended all Indian General Council meetings in order to properly present their military accomplishments. These two generals achieved so much success in their efforts that they received official sanction and acceptance of their Confederate administration, both civilian and military. In spite of some military success, the Confederates were forced out of Fort Blunt and then

Fort Smith, and were contained for the duration of the war below the Arkansas River. Although the accession of General Maxey in December, 1863, put an aggressive commander in charge of Confederate forces in Indian Territory, he did not have enough war material to launch into a full-scale campaign. Early in 1864, as a substitute procedure, Maxey swung into full-scale guerrilla operations. His goal was to harass the Federal forces until the Confederate Indian brigade could be brought up to fighting trim. Watie, McIntosh, Walker, and Adair were, at that time, Maxey's most prominent subordinate commanders. They all were well respected by their men and by Maxey. Because of the inability of Confederate authorities at Shreveport and Richmond to provide vital supplies, hit-and-run techniques were the only effective resistance open to the Confederates in Indian Territory. Fabian tactics would therefore prevail.

By 1864, it was evident to many of the higher echelon in Indian Territory that the Confederacy had lost the war. With only a little hope and the faith of the Indian soldiers left, the Southern military leaders in Indian Territory urged their soldiers on in the chance that the Federals might make a fatal blunder.

It was in that same year that Watie matured into the foremost of the Confederate cavalry guerrillas. His exploits cannot be likened to John Bell Hood or James Longstreet because Watie held a subordinate command. His point of excellence and ability was his guerrilla instinct and ability.

He was peerless in quick, slashing forays, and attacks on communication systems at the Federal rear were a specialty. The guerrilla commander is not to be judged by the amount of territory he can take and hold; he should be evaluated by the extent to which he disrupts the enemy. Therein lay Watie's greatness. Although he sometimes operated with a command of 800 men or more as at Cabin Creek, he operated at peak guerrilla efficiency with a command of 500 men or less. Watie's command did not look or operate anything like a regular army unit. His band in many cases was small, loosely organized, lacking even in rudimentary discipline, poorly equipped, armed with a variety of weapons, completely independent, and of utmost importance, highly mobile. In several contacts with the Federal forces, Watie's men were numerically inferior to that of the Federals, yet performed with unique efficiency and telling results.

By the middle of 1864, Watie had become the only hope for the Confederates in Indian Territory. General Maxey heeded without hesitation Watie's request for a raid into Kansas, but the over-cautious Cooper modified it to encompass territory only to the Kansas border. Cooper's timidity and total lack of incentive cost the Cherokee general a more substantial victory than the one he accomplished at Cabin Creek in September, 1864. With General Price in Missouri at the same time, Watie probably would have drawn many Federal troops out of Indian Territory. The Confederate units south of Arkansas River would then have been strong enough

to attack the understrengthened garrisons of Fort Blunt and Fort Smith. Thayer would most likely have abandoned the entire district after the Federal wagon train fell to the Confederates, and Watie could have captured or destroyed Baxter Springs and Fort Scott as originally planned before modification by Cooper. This case of a subordinate being more competent than a superior officer was not confined entirely, of course, to the ranks of Confederate officers in Indian Territory. A Phillips-Thayer comparison could be drawn along the same vein for the Federal forces.

The guerrilla tactics used by the Confederates prolonged the conflict in Indian Territory two months longer than the war lasted in the East. In general, the Confederates in Indian Territory ended the war as they fought it: with pride and with honor. Even after the war was over east of the Mississippi River, Cooper was planning a counter-offensive. The Confederates had the ability and will to fight, but lacked the necessary supplies. But by the end of the war in Indian Territory, most of the materials used by Southern fighters were of Northern manufacture, captured or salvaged in combat.

As a whole, both sides mistreated and misunderstood the Indian soldier. While in command, General Blunt tried to have the Indian units removed from active campaigning. Confederate General Steele and General Maxey disliked the Indian soldier's fighting ability. Yet, General Watie, a full-blooded Cherokee, and his Indian brigade did what the white

troops had failed to do--harass the Federals until they were ready to pull out of Indian Territory.

The dislike for the Indian tribesmen as soldiers was due mainly to the Union and Confederate officers' failure to let the red man fight as he desired. His natural instinct was to fight in guerrilla style. The Indians' ability in combat was proven by Watie's successes on the battlefield. If the Federal and Confederate Indians had been allowed to fight the war in their own way, the results would undoubtedly have been different in more than one engagement.

As it was, the Confederate Indian troops were forced from a position of dominance in Indian Territory. Their families were uprooted from their homes and these soldiers were despised and distrusted by the Confederate officers over them; yet these troops fought on admirably as guerrillas for the Confederate cause. Time and time again they were poorly led, inadequately equipped, and mistreated, but they fought on with unflinching devotion. This dedication, shown for a cause they had chosen as their own and for the leaders they respected, resulted in their being the last soldiers in the Civil War to surrender.

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Bailey, Minnie Elizabeth Thomas, "Reconstruction in Indian Territory, 1865-1877." Unpublished Doctor of Education Dissertation, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, 1967.

This dissertation is an extensive survey of Reconstruction period problems related to the Five Civilized Tribes in Indian Territory. Chapter I was useful as an accurate reference for this thesis.

Barksdale, Ethelbert C., "Semi-Regular and Irregular Warfare in the Civil War." Unpublished Doctor of Philosophy Dissertation, University of Texas, Austin, Texas, 1941.

This well-researched dissertation is a narrative of the guerrilla and partisan activities of the Civil War. The usefulness of this study lay in the large amount of documented material on William C. Quantrill and his activities in Missouri, Kansas, Arkansas, and Indian Territory. It is thorough and moderately interesting.

Foreman, Grant. Grant Foreman Papers, Civil War Letters and Claims, Cherokee File, Indian Archives Division, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

This collection is an extensive compilation of correspondence from prominent Indian military and civilian leaders. It was a source of general information, but of limited value. It did supply some pieces of information on specific occurrences, but nothing extensive.

Foreman, Grant. Grant Foreman Papers, Civil War Cherokee Collection, Indian Archives Division, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

This is an invaluable typescript aid for any scholarly piece of research done on Indian Territory for the period of the Civil War. Arranged by tribes, then arranged alphabetically within the tribe, this research tool is very useful. It provided two pieces of information found nowhere else.

Francis, Charles Richard. "Confederate Ascendancy in Indian Territory 1860-1861." Unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, 1963.

This thesis was used to give the writer a sound orientation into the pre-1863 period. It is well organized and is moderately interesting. His coverage of the Confederate-Cherokee treaties is clear and easily understood.

Hathaway, Worten Manson. "Brigadier General Stand Watie, Confederate Guerrilla," Unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, 1966.

This thesis is a very useful source for information on Watie. It lacks in detail in some of Watie's late 1864 exploits, but this does not detract from its value. Much use was made of Hathaway's chronology for binding together many sketchy items that would have otherwise gone unnoticed.

Maxey, Samuel Bell. Papers of Samuel Bell Maxey, Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

This collection of Maxey's papers was useful in supplying several items of importance not found in the Official Records. Most of the letters are still in their original handwritten form, but some have been transcribed to typed pages. An excellent source for learning more of this Confederate general while commander of Indian Territory.

Morrow, Norman P. "Price's Missouri Expedition, 1864." Unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, University of Texas, Austin, Texas, 1949.

Morrow's thesis was useful in providing information and chronology of Price's route and ensuing retreat through Indian Territory. It is informative, but lacks color.

Neal, Barney King, Jr. "Federal Ascendancy in Indian Territory, 1862-1863." Unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, 1966.

This thesis was invaluable in its content for the 1862-1863 period. It is well-written and thoroughly documented. Neal's minute coverage of the topic produced an interesting chronology that made it an enjoyable tool for this thesis.

Oates, Stephen B. "Confederate Cavalry in the Trans-Mississippi." Unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, University of Texas, Austin, Texas, 1960.

This thesis was useful in gaining background knowledge on the tactics, origins, systems of procurement,

and process of remounting cavalry units in the Confederate Trans-Mississippi area. Though not cited in footnotes, it was invaluable for the general and specific information it contains. This thesis is well-documented and written in an interesting style.

Wyant, Sharon Dixon. "Colonel William A. Phillips and the Civil War in Indian Territory." Unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, 1967.

This thesis was useful in giving insight into the military activities of Phillips, the commander of Fort Blunt. He is portrayed as an honest, hard-fighting colonel among a group of corrupt or insane general officers. Although Wyant's research is very sketchy in several of the military activities of Colonel Phillips, it was used extensively to correlate information found in less reliable sources.

Government Documents

Journal of the Congress of the Confederate States of America, 1861-1865. 7 vols., included in United States Senate Documents No. 234, 58th Congress, 2nd Session. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904.

This primary source was found to be helpful in pinning down the date of Jefferson Davis' congratulatory resolution to General Watie and General Gano. It is a printed collection of the entire proceedings of the Confederate Congress.

United States Department of the Interior. Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Year 1862. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1863.

United States Department of the Interior. Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Year 1864. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1865.

These volumes contain valuable information on the health and welfare conditions of the Indian tribes during the years, 1862 and 1864. They were a very useful and reliable source of information.

United States Department of War. Atlas to Accompany the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. 3 vols., Washington: Government Printing Office, 1891-1895.

This primary source was used to compile segments of the map used in this thesis. It contains several locations of important towns and riverfords found nowhere else. This atlas is essential for the preparation of Civil War maps.

United States Department of War. War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. 70 vols. (128 books in the United States Serial Set), Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901.

These volumes contain most of the orders, correspondence, and reports of the Union and Confederate armies during the Civil War. Instead of being dull reading, this source was the most informative and entertaining used. It provided over eighty per cent of the information used to compile this military study. It needs to be brought up to date with all the discoveries since its printing, but that does not deter from the value or negate the usefulness of the set.

Articles

Abel, Annie H. "The Indians in the Civil War," American Historical Review, XV (January, 1910), 281-296.

This article was written as a survey of the participation of the Five Civilized Tribes in the Civil War. Mrs. Abel later expanded this topic into an authoritative book. Well-documented and adequately written, this was a useful piece of research. It was used extensively for background material in the first portion of this thesis.

Anderson, Mabel Washbourne. "Excerpts from the Life of General Stand Watie," The Southern Magazine, III (Winter, 1936-1937), 7-8, 46.

This brief, synopsis-type article was only used to cross reference with the other articles written about Watie. It is outdated, and this limited its usefulness.

_____. "General Stand Watie," Chronicles of Oklahoma, X (December, 1932), 540-548.

This brief article on General Watie was used to compile and correlate information about this Confederate guerrilla and his colorful activities in Indian Territory during the Civil War. There are much better works available.

Banks, Dean. "Civil-War Refugees from Indian Territory, in the North, 1861-1864," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XLI (Autumn, 1963), 286-298.

This study was of importance for the first section of Chapter III. Banks limited his discussion to the Indians who remained loyal to the Union. He related their hopes, fears, continued disappointment, and constant migrations. Bank's narrative and findings are a clear indication of a well-written piece of scholarly

research. His style is flowing and easy to read. The article was informative and interesting.

Blunt, James G. "General Blunt's Account of His Civil War Experiences," Kansas Historical Quarterly, I (May, 1932), 211-265.

Autobiographical in nature, this controversial article was not published until 1932. Blunt makes many unsubstantiated accusations in it. It is a graphic account of the general's civil war campaigns. The article was useful in supplying Blunt's side of the internal strife in the Union high command. The article is of some value, but a researcher should weight its creditability carefully.

Britton, Wiley. "A Day with Colonel W. F. Cloud," Chronicles of Oklahoma, V (September, 1927), 311-321.

This article by the prolific Britton is a survey of the more lighthearted moments of this fighting Union colonel. Britton uses no documentation, but it is clearly evident that the material is true and accurate in substance. It was used by the writer to give background on Colonel Cloud. Though a better officer than some generals, Cloud was never promoted above full colonel.

_____. "Some Reminiscences of the Cherokee People," Chronicles of Oklahoma, V (June, 1927), 180-184.

This short article by Britton describes his contact and reminiscences with the Cherokee people. It contains useful data on the Cherokee regiments and their activity in the Civil War in Indian Territory. It is a brief, but readable article. In the usual Britton style, there is no documentation.

Cubage, Annie Rosser. "Engagement at Cabin Creek, Indian Territory," Chronicles of Oklahoma, X (March, 1932), 44-51.

This is an article written on the first (1863) engagement at Cabin Creek. It was used to document and supply information on this portion of the Civil War in Indian Territory. The narrative is interesting and matter-of-fact.

Dale, Edward E. "Arkansas and the Cherokees," Arkansas Historical Quarterly, VIII (Spring, 1949), 104-114.

This article by Dale relates the participation of the Confederate and Union Cherokees in military activities taking place in Arkansas. This research was used in compiling sources for the first half of this military thesis.

_____. "The Cherokees in the Confederacy," Journal of Southern History, XIII (May, 1947), 160-185.

This article is a detailed coverage of Cherokee participation in the Civil War in Indian Territory. It relates not only military detail, but material on their culture, political administration, and civilian refugee problems are also covered in this research study. It is well-documented and interestingly written.

_____. "Some Letters of General Stand Watie," Chronicles of Oklahoma, I (January, 1921), 30-59.

This work is a carefully compiled series of letters pertinent to the life of Watie while in the service of the Confederacy. Letters from his wife, friends, and subordinates are illuminating in giving little known details of Watie's feeling toward many issues and problems. This select compilation was useful in several instances in shedding light on how Watie coped with many unusual and vexing situations.

Davis, J. B. "Slavery in the Cherokee Nation," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XI (December, 1933), 1056-1072.

This article is an extensive survey of the history of slavery in the Cherokee Nation. The time span covers from the late eighteenth century to slavery's dissolution in 1865. This work had several interesting and documented items useful in preparing this thesis.

Debo, Angie. "Southern Refugees of the Cherokee Nation," Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XXXV (April, 1932), 255-266.

This article is a narrative on the trials and situations of the refugee Indians, particularly the Cherokees, who broke with the Federal Union and followed the Confederacy. The author relates their unswerving faith in withstanding death and starvation. This study was used extensively in supplying sources and survey material on the Southern refugee.

Fischer, LeRoy H. "The Impact of the Civil War in Oklahoma: Death and Destruction," Oklahoma State Alumni Magazine, V (September, 1964), 10-12.

This article is an excellent synopsis of the Civil War in Indian Territory. Its findings on the Phillips' expedition were invaluable and prevented the possibility of misinterpretation.

Freeman, Charles R. "The Battle of Honey Springs," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XIII (June, 1935), 154-168.

This article was useful at one time, but needs to be revised, rewritten, and brought up to date. Basically, the author copied the reports from the Official Records and added his opinions here and there. This article was useful in several instances, but the battle reports are available in full in the Official Records.

Foreman, Carolyn Thomas. "Colonel Jesse Henry Leavenworth," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XIII (March, 1935), 14-29.

This piece of research was of only limited value in writing this thesis. It supplied two pieces of information that helped the writer establish a proper sequence of events for Union troop movements.

Foreman, Grant. "The Centennial of Fort Gibson," Chronicles of Oklahoma, II (June, 1924), 119-128.

This article was useful in supplying a brief and well-documented history of Fort Gibson. Particularly useful was its descriptions of the fort's location in relation to surrounding landmarks and a minute description of the defenses and buildings of the fort as it was during the Civil War.

_____. "Fort Davis," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XVII (June, 1939), 147-150.

Foreman has written this synopsis telling of the brief existence of this important fortification. Fort Davis existed only three years, but it played an important role in the Confederate activities in the Civil War in Indian Territory. The writer found much useful information about the location and physical make-up of the fort in this article. It is well-documented and accurate.

Hancock, Marvin J. "The Second Battle of Cabin Creek, 1864," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XXXIX (Winter, 1961-62), 414-426.

This article was used to establish the sequence of events for the Cabin Creek action. It is a well-written, readable piece of research, and the documentation is very good. Hancock's work was also useful in compiling specific information on the troop positions of the Union and Confederate forces at the engagement.

Head, J. D. "Albert Pike," The Southern Magazine, II (Winter, 1935-1936), 16-19, 47.

This short article was useful in that it presented a well-organized critique of the life of Pike. There is no documentation, but it is still accurate. The writer used Head's article in compiling some of the references to Pike in Chapter I.

Holladay, Florence E. "The Powers of the Commander of the Confederate Trans-Mississippi Department," Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XXI (January, 1918), 279-298, 333-359.

This article is in two parts. Only the first segment was useful in compiling this military history. The author of these articles has done an excellent job. Her work is documented, accurate, informative, and very interesting to read. Her description of the boundaries

of the Trans-Mississippi Department is quite accurate. The biographical sketches of the sub-district commanders are well-written and useful.

Hood, Fred. "Twilight of the Confederacy in the Indian Territory," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XLI (Winter, 1963-64), 425-441.

This survey article is a well-written and adequately documented piece of research. It covers the time span of this thesis and was used by the writer as a general introduction to the topic under consideration.

Lewis, Anna. "Camp Napoleon," Chronicles of Oklahoma, IX (December, 1931), 359-364.

This article is a graphic survey of the history of this fortification. She puts emphasis on the usefulness of the fort as the 1865 meeting place between the Confederate Indians and the war-like Plains Indians. This work was particularly useful in supplying information on the negotiations that occurred there.

Moore, Cherrie Adair. "William Penn Adair," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XXIX (Spring, 1951), 32-41.

Written by a relative of Adair, this article is a brief biography. It contains much useful information on Adair's Civil War activities in Indian Territory. The most important item was Adair's capture by Federal troops in 1865, just prior to the end of the war.

Morrison, James D. "Capture of J. R. Williams," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XLIII (Summer, 1964), 105-108.

This article was originally a commemoration address on the capture of the stern-wheeler, the J. R. Williams. It was useful in supplying pertinent information on the sequences of events. It has several inaccuracies, and should be used with care.

Morrison, W. B. "Fort Towson," Chronicles of Oklahoma, VIII (June, 1930), 226-32.

This article is a picturesque and well-documented survey of the existence of Fort Towson, Choctaw Nation. The section on Confederate activity at Fort Towson and the surrender there in 1865 of several Indian units was useful in compiling segments of this thesis.

_____. "Fort Washita," Chronicles of Oklahoma, V (June, 1927), 256-258.

This accurate piece of research is a survey of the origin, progress, and present condition of Fort Washita. Well-written, organized in proper sequence, it was a useful article in supplying important information of the part that Fort Washita played in the Civil War in Indian Territory.

Morton, Ohland. "The Confederate States Government and the Five Civilized Tribes," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XXXI (Autumn, 1953), 299-322.

This article was used in tracing sources and supplying the sequence of events for the treaty negotiations between the Confederate representatives and the Five Civilized Tribes. It was accurate and interesting.

Meserve, John Bartlett. "Chief Lewis Downing and Chief Charles Thompson," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XVI (March, 1939), 318-319.

The information in this article on Chief Downing was pertinent to several references on the Choctaw units and their activity in Indian Territory. This study is an interesting and well-organized piece of research.

_____. "Chief Opothleyahola," Chronicles of Oklahoma, IX (December, 1931), 440-453.

This article was used to supply and correlate the activities of this Creek chief. It proved to be useful only in constructing the first chapter of this thesis.

Oates, Stephen B. "Recruiting Confederate Cavalry in Texas," Southwestern Historical Quarterly, LXVI (April, 1961), 463-477.

This article by Oates is a brief synopsis of the techniques used by the Confederates in Texas and the Trans-Mississippi Department. Most of its information is taken from his 1960 Master of Arts thesis, but there are several pieces of data not in his thesis. This article is useful for research on cavalry participation in the Civil War.

Thoburn, Joseph B. "The Cherokee Question," Chronicles of Oklahoma, II (June, 1924), 141-242.

This long and exhaustive piece of research is helpful for furnishing letters and pieces of correspondence sent between Confederate and Union Indian leaders in the state of Arkansas and Indian Territory. The writer found it particularly useful in supplying information and documentation on John Ross's correspondence during 1861.

Trickett, Dean. "The Civil War in the Indian Territory," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XVII (September, 1939), 315-327.

_____. "The Civil War in the Indian Territory," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XVIII (June, 1940), 142-153.

This series is a well-documented study of the Civil War period. The information found in these articles was used in writing portions of Chapter I of this thesis. Trickett's survey of the Civil War is useful for any piece of research on Indian Territory. It is also helpful for further research sources.

Windham, William T. "The Problem of Supply in the Trans-Mississippi Confederacy," Journal of Southern History, XXVII (May, 1961), 149-168.

This piece of research is a detailed study of the many problems faced by the Confederacy in supplying their forces in the Trans-Mississippi with the material necessary for active military campaigning. Of great importance in this article was the description of the extent of supply shortages in this Confederate department. Windham also included a discussion of the different routes used by the Southern logistic officers. A well-documented study, it provided much important insight into the necessity of keeping the Texas Road, running North and South through Indian Territory, open for supply trains. This is an article worth reading for any research dealing with logistics in the Civil War.

Wright, Muriel H. "Additional Notes on Perryville, Choctaw Nation," Chronicles of Oklahoma, VIII (June, 1930), 146-148.

This article is an accurate description of the town of Perryville. Accompanying her article is a diagram, with all the structures present in the Civil War drawn on it. This is a useful piece of research, adding much to the orientation necessary in describing the fighting that took place in the vicinity.

_____, and LeRoy H. Fischer. "Civil War Sites in Oklahoma," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XLIV (Summer, 1966), 158-215.

This recent piece of research was of value to the author in locating many of the battle sites and campsites cited in this thesis. This article adds much new information on the location and history of Civil War sites in Oklahoma.

_____. "General Douglas H. Cooper, C.S.A.," Chronicles of Oklahoma, XXXII (Summer, 1954), 142-184.

This well-written chronology of Douglas H. Cooper is another excellent contribution by Muriel Wright. This study tells of the military activity of the Southern general. Other aspects of his life during the Civil War were dealt with, but his military efforts were the prime concern of this article. The documentation and insights are commendable.

_____. "Old Boggy Depot," Chronicles of Oklahoma, V (March, 1927), 4-17.

This article is a graphic description and history of Boggy Depot. The writer found the description quite useful in locating the town on the map drawn for this thesis. This is a well-written and adequately documented article.

Books

Abel, Annie Heloise. The American Indian as Participant in the Civil War. Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1919.

_____. The American Indian Under Reconstruction. Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1925.

These books represent two of the three volumes of the most comprehensive and outstanding coverage of the Five Civilized Tribes to date. They provided much valuable and well-documented information used in composing this thesis. The volume not used was Abel's first, The American Indian as Slaveholder and Secessionist.

Basler, Roy P., ed. The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln. 9 vols. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1953-55.

These volumes were useful in pointing out the concern that Lincoln had for the problems of Indian Territory and the welfare of personnel stationed there. It was particularly useful for information on Lincoln's Amnesty Proclamation and for letters bringing out his skillful handling of irate military officers from Indian Territory.

Boatner, Mark M., III. The Civil War Dictionary. New York: David McKay Company, 1959.

This single volume was used to furnish information on dates of battles, casualties, and units that had their designations changed during the war. It is well-written, but sketchy.

Britton, Wiley. The Civil War on the Border. 2 vols., New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1890-1904.

Britton's two-volume work is a coverage of the Civil War in the Trans-Mississippi area. It is biased in favor of the Union. The author served as a soldier in Indian Territory and obtained much of his material first-hand. Though this work is not documented, it had much research put into its composition. Much of its information is correlated with the Official Records.

_____. Memoirs of the Rebellion on the Border, 1863. Chicago: Cushing, Thomas, & Co., 1882.

This is Britton's first book-length effort. It is quite similar in content to his The Civil War on the Border, but is organized differently. Taking 1863, the author relates in detail the events in which the Union forces were involved. He discusses areas outside of Indian Territory as well as in Indian Territory. It was a very useful work for acquiring a good balance on background for the year of 1863.

The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War. Kansas City, Missouri: Franklin Hudson Publishing Co., 1922.

This book by Britton is a single-volume work. It is not documented but is fairly accurate in its sequence of events. Britton's bias shows through, but not enough to detract from the usefulness of the book. His story of the Union Indian Brigade encompasses parts of the war in neighboring states. This volume was a very useful source for transitional material.

Brownlee, Richard S. Grey Ghosts of the Confederacy. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1958.

The book treats the guerrilla warfare in the Trans-Mississippi area. Mention is also made of John Mosby in the East, but most of the work deals with the West. Cavalry operations and how they were utilized by the guerrilla leaders is one of the major topics of the book. Brownlee's findings and conclusions are interesting and provocative to read. He brings out the Union and Confederate efforts to reach the modern concepts of war.

Burch, John P. Charles W. Quantrill: A True History of His Guerrilla Warfare on the Missouri and Kansas Border During the Civil War of 1861 to 1865. Vega, Texas: no publisher, 1923.

This is an account of Quantrill as told by one of his men, Captain Harrison Leon, and written up by John Burch. It is not very useful historically because of excessive bias. Quantrill is portrayed as a martyr to the civilian populace. The Union and Confederate authorities are exposed as pestering interlopers that constantly were interfering with his marauding.

Castel, Albert. A Frontier State at War: Kansas, 1861-1865. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1958.

Castel's book is somewhat of an expose of Kansas politics during the Civil War. Thoroughly researched and well-written, it is a useful source for factual information on Union blundering and plots against Blunt and Phillips. He brings out with great clarity the use of granting army contracts for personal gain by military authorities.

Connelley, William E. Quantrill and the Border Wars. Cedar Rapids: The Torch Press, 1910.

This book is a biography of Quantrill's Civil War years set against a backdrop of the conflict on the western border, including numerous forays into Indian Territory. This work was used to get basic information for Quantrill's raid on Baxter Springs, Kansas. It contains much useful information on his personality and habits.

Cornish, Dudley Taylor. The Sable Arm: Negro Troops in the Union Army, 1861-1865. New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1956.

This fascinating work by Cornish is a history of the origins, development, and uses of the Negro soldier in the Union Army during the Civil War. It is informative, interesting, and historically accurate.

Cunningham, Frank. General Stand Watie's Confederate Indians. San Antonio: The Naylor Company, 1959.

Cunningham's book is colorful, well-written, interesting, and delightful to read, but lacks totally in any evident scholarship. It is biased, plays up Watie as a cavalier, and the Confederate cause as a crusade. It has no documentation, and must be used with care.

Dale, Edward Everett, and Gaston Litton, eds. Cherokee Cavaliers. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1939.

This volume contains most of the important written correspondence of the Watie-Boudinot family. It was helpful in gaining insight into the feelings of Watie. It is a source that is a necessity for research on the Cherokees during the Civil War period.

Debo, Angie. The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1934.

This book is the most comprehensive coverage on the history of the Choctaw Nation. Its emphasis is the political, economic, and cultural aspects of this group of Indians. The author's coverage of the Choctaw Nation in the Civil War is accurate and brief, yet readable. It proved to be a very useful source in writing the closing portions of this thesis.

Downey, Fairfax. Indian Wars of the U. S. Army 1776-1865. New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1963.

This book is a chronological and analytical study of the army and its participation in military operations west of the Mississippi. The section on the Civil War was made interesting by the author's unique approach. This study was useful in reconstructing Plains Indian activity. This is a source not to be overlooked by a researcher in western military history.

Duncan, Robert Lipscomb. Reluctant General: The Life and Times of Albert Pike. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1961.

This is one of the best books available on Pike. The author comes to the persecuted general's defense by slanting the writing in his favor. He tries to rationalize Pike's refusal to take the field in 1862 by citing evidence that he had good intentions. This bias does not hamper the usefulness of this work. It was very helpful in Chapter I, giving insight into Pike's character and post-war activities.

Dyer, Frederick H. A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion. 2 vols., Des Moines: Dyer Publishing Company, 1908.

This work is a well-researched computation of all battles, engagements, actions, and skirmishes in the Civil War. It was used to cross check the correctness of the chronology of battles in this thesis. Volume II was used extensively.

Evans, Clement A., ed. Confederate Military History. 12 vols., Atlanta: Confederate Publishing Company, 1899.

Volumes X and XI were used in this thesis. Evans' work is a topical chronology of the history of Confederate activities in the Civil War. The section on Arkansas and Indian Territory are well written and were quite useful in supplying needed information for the background of the operations in Arkansas.

Foreman, Carolyn Thomas. Park Hill. Muskogee: The Star Printery, Inc., 1948.

This booklet is the history of Park Hill, Indian Territory, and the surrounding vicinity. The description of Park Hill's location was useful in relating military activity around Tahlequah and John Ross's home. It is very accurate and well-written.

Foreman, Grant. Fort Gibson. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1936.

This booklet is a brief history of the development and use of Fort Gibson. The study was used to correctly place Fort Davis and in relating the characteristics of the fort's interior. This is a small but valuable piece of work.

_____. A History of Oklahoma. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1945.

This well-written and readable history of the Sooner state gave the writer much background information.

Fox, William F. Regimental Losses in the American Civil War, 1861-1865. Albany: Albany Publishing Co., 1889.

This extensive research work was used to check the activity and casualties of the colored troop units stationed in Indian Territory.

Harlow, Victor E. Oklahoma Its Origins and Development: A History. Oklahoma City: Harlow Publishing Corporation, 1949.

This survey history of Oklahoma is one of the better works on the subject. His treatment of the Civil War period is skillfully organized, and is useful for background reference.

Johnson, Robert Underwood, and Clarence Clough Buel, eds. Battles and Leaders of the Civil War. 4 vols., Grant and Lee edition, New York: The Century Company, 1888.

This series is a compilation of articles submitted by contemporaries and participants. It is biased in that each author of an article puts forth his opinions and views. This does not detract from its overall usefulness, and it contains many informative and useful articles.

Johnson, Allen, and Dumas Malone, eds. Dictionary of American Biography. 20 vols., New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928-1936.

This series of collected biographies of American personalities was invaluable as a source for background material on important personnel of this thesis. These short biographies are written by authorities on each subject and are well-documented. They were used extensively to check correct spelling and accuracy.

McReynolds, Edwin C. Oklahoma: A History of the Sooner State. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1954.

This is another collegiate history of Oklahoma. This book was used to substantiate information found in other Oklahoma histories. It was useful in providing information not given in Thoburn and Wright's Oklahoma: A History of the State and Its People. This volume should not be bypassed by the researcher.

_____. The Seminoles. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1957.

This book on the Seminoles is the most authoritative work on the subject. Interesting to read and easy to comprehend and follow, this source was of great help in tracing the activity of the Seminole units and of their chief, John Jumper.

Monaghan, Jay. Civil War on the Western Border 1854-1865. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1955.

This work lacks adequate documentation. The usefulness of this study is hampered by the journalistic style and his use of too-frequent opinions. This book should be used with caution.

Morris, John W., and Edwin C. McReynolds. Historical Atlas of Oklahoma. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965.

This accurate reference atlas was used to construct the major part of the map in this thesis. It is well researched, its plates are easy to understand, and are clear. All drawings were constructed to deal with important topics and time periods in Oklahoma history. This atlas should be consulted for maps or drawings covering the history of Oklahoma.

Oates, Stephen B. Confederate Cavalry West of the River. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1961.

This book is an adaptation of Oates' Master of Arts thesis. Though the book is quite similar to his thesis, this similarity does not detract or diminish its usefulness. The writer found several items of information that were found nowhere else in his works. This book is well-documented and fairly interesting.

Rea, Ralph R. Sterling Price, the Lee of the West. Little Rock: Pioneer Press, 1959.

This book was used to give adequate background material for segments of the work referring to the Price raid of 1864 and other operations in western Arkansas. It is an interesting and moderately accurate work.

Thoburn, Joseph B. A Standard History of Oklahoma. 5 vols., Chicago: The American Historical Society, 1916.

This multi-volumed set is one of the better histories of the state of Oklahoma. The first volume of this work was used extensively in laying a firm foundation of background information. It has been updated to some extent by Thoburn and Wright, Oklahoma: A History of the State and Its People, published in four volumes in 1929.

Thoburn, Joseph B., and Muriel H. Wright. Oklahoma: A History of the State and Its People. 4 vols., New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1929.

This standard, multi-volumed history of Oklahoma is the best available today. Though published in 1929, the sections on the Civil War are as accurate and informative as any available. This reference was used extensively to give the writer adequate background and balanced scope for the entire Civil War period in Indian Territory. This book is essential for anyone writing on the Civil War in Indian Territory.

Wardell, Morris L. A Political History of the Cherokee Nation 1838-1907. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1938.

This piece of writing is the most authoritative source for the Cherokee Nation's internal politics. It contains little information dealing with military events, but is invaluable for information on the political activity of the Cherokees during the Civil War. This is one of the better tribal studies by an expert on the subject.

Warner, Ezra J. Generals in Grey. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1959.

This work is a laborously compiled series of capsule sketches of all Confederate general grade officers. It was used in providing the writer with an accurate list of general officers in the Trans-Mississippi area. The biographical material on each entry is well-written.

and helpful in gaining insight into the personalities of these Confederate commanders.

Woodward, Grace Steele. The Cherokees. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963.

This accurate study emphasizes Cherokee social and political institutions, and was used to give background for the Confederate-Cherokee treaties of 1861.

VITA

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Master of Arts

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