MEMORIALIZATION OF FORGOTTEN STEPS:
NATIVE AMERICAN PARTICIPATION IN THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

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To the absolute light of my life and world, Orion Zarek. I love you so much more than to the moon and back. You are forever my inspiration, little love bug.

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ABSTRACT

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Of all the actors in the American Civil War, marginalized groups have been vastly underrepresented on the commemorative landscape. Cherokee soldiers were among the minorities who contributed to both the Union and the Confederacy, and up to the present time, there has not been a completed study which surveys the extent of that participation and how it is interpreted to the public. It is important to present history as a complete narrative, and a detailed list of these significant sites can only benefit that endeavor. Spatial technologies also provide new tools to employ within public history, allowing increased access of the story to a wider audience. This thesis will therefore act as a preliminary survey and filling a gap in nineteenth century historiography by incorporating memorials, historical markers, and other interpretive materials on the commemorative landscape into an interactive geographic information system.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

INTRODUCTION

> The United States Government is able to protect its friends, and punish its Enemies, all Cherokees and members of other Nations and Tribes are invited and expected to assist in maintaining their original nationalities as guaranteed them by their Treaties with the U States Government . . . All those who are now or have been in arms against the Government of the United States will be freely forgiven if they at once forsake their disloyal practices and purposes, and immediately use their utmost endeavors to assist in restoring peace and harmony.[1]
>
> -William F. Cloud to Cherokee Nation, August 3, 1862

The American Civil War significantly shaped United States history during the nineteenth century, with lasting impacts which can still be felt today. The brutal war over the institution of African American slavery touched many parts of the globe, as evidenced by the involvement of both European and Native American nations.[2] The focus of this thesis is on the latter – Native American nations in the United States, specifically the Cherokee, and whether their side of the story is adequately represented in public interpretation. The role of Native Americans in the Civil War has gained considerable academic interest among twenty-first century scholars, as a number of Native American groups fought alongside both Union and Confederate forces.[3] The

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[1] William F. Cloud to Cherokee Nation, August 3, 1862, Abraham Lincoln Papers: Series 1. General Correspondence. 1833 to 1916, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., https://www.loc.gov/item/mal1743500/ (accessed June 16, 2019).

[2] Howard Jones, *Blue and Gray Diplomacy: A History of Union and Confederate Foreign Relations* (Chapel Hill, NC: University Of North Carolina Press, 2016), 4.

[3] See, for examples, Julie L. Reed, *Serving the Nation: Cherokee Sovereignty and Social Welfare, 1800-1907* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2016); David A. Nichols, *Lincoln and the Indians: Civil War Policy and Politics* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2012); Bradley R. Clampitt, eds.,

south was eager to persuade the Native nations to join them because they were "cognizant that the Indian Territory lying west of Arkansas, north of Texas, and south of Kansas could provide the South with sustenance for troops, bases for raids, and a highway to Texas."[4] Such a position was crucial to the Confederacy, and much of that story is still unknown to the general public. This thesis therefore contributes to existing scholarship by developing a concise list of sites in which the Cherokee people participated during this gruesome conflict, and by assessing whether the Cherokee contribution is adequately acknowledged.

The Cherokee Nation existed under the leadership of Chief John Ross during a large portion of the nineteenth century (see Figure 1). John Ross struggled against the United States during Andrew Jackson's administration when the government plotted against the Cherokee people while they were still in the Southeast. He tried to maintain peace among his people when negotiations in Washington did not yield a positive outcome. Despite his efforts, the Indian Removal Act of 1830 set the stage for what later became the forced removal of five tribes in the southeastern portion of the United States, including the Creeks, Choctaws, Chickasaws, Seminoles, and Cherokees.[5]

The Civil War and Reconstruction in Indian Territory (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2015); Mary J. Warde, *When the Wolf Came: The Civil War and Indian Territory* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2012).

[4] Richard Halliburton, *Red over Black: Black Slavery among the Cherokee Indians* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1977), 122.

[5] *An Act to Provide for an Exchange of Lands with the Indians Residing in Any of the States or Territories, and for their Removal West of the River Mississippi,* 21st Congress, 1st sess., 1830, 411-412,

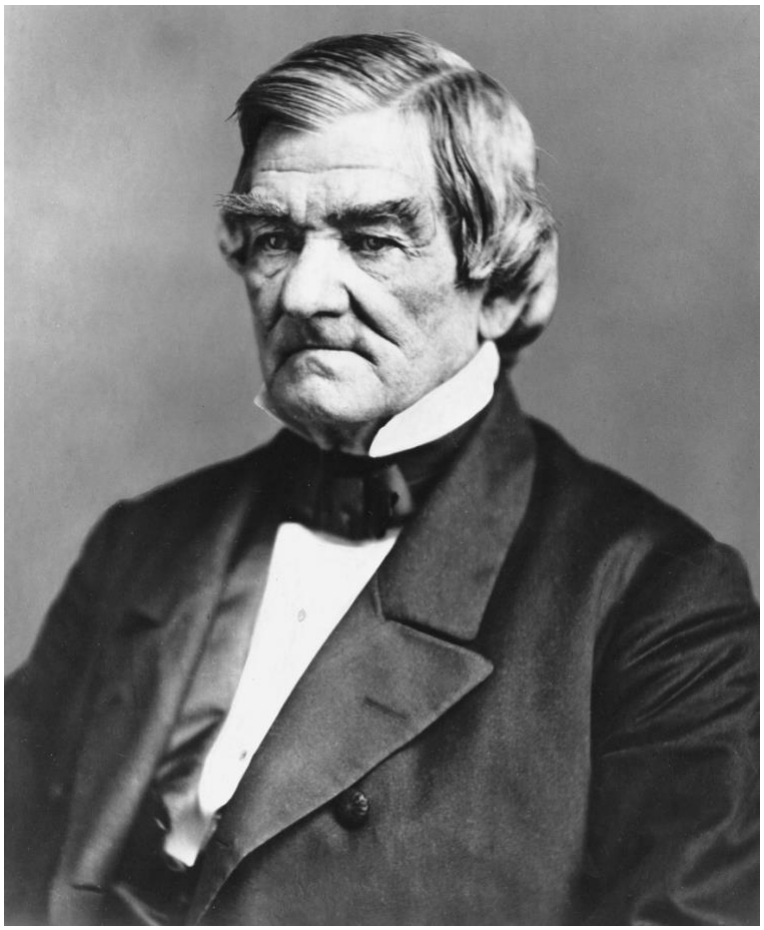

Figure 1: Chief John Ross in 1858. Photo courtesy of the Bureau of American Ethnology.

Under Ross's leadership, the Cherokee Nation in Indian Territory kept much of its southern traditions, including the ownership of enslaved people. Tribal leaders, such as Ross, hoped that efforts at acculturation were a way to prove to the United States government that a peaceful coexistence with the Cherokee Nation could be a seamless and even profitable endeavor.[6]

https://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=llsl&fileName=004/llsl004.db&recNum=458 (accessed February 13, 2019).

[6] "Abolition in the Indian Territory - John Ross," *The New York Times*, January 29, 1856.

The Cherokee story of the Civil War is important for many reasons since "no other Native American community was more disastrously affected by the Civil War than the Cherokee Nation of Indian Territory."[7] Divisions within the tribe that dated, at least, to the period of forced removal intensified the already disastrous impact of the war.

Figure 2: Stand Watie. National Archives and Records Administration, National Archives Identifier 529026.

Those bitter divides in the tribe resulted primarily between two political figures, John Ross and Stand Watie, a leader of the Treaty Party who escaped the fatal attack on the Ridge family and wanted to take control of the tribe for himself (see Figure 2). Truly,

[7] Laurence M. Hauptman, *Between Two Fires: American Indians in the Civil War* (New York: Free Press Paperbacks, 1995), 42.

"from 1861 to 1865, the Cherokee Nation, which totaled around 21,000 members in Indian Territory, faced a civil war within the Civil War."[8] As Celia E. Naylor points out:

> Before the onset of the Civil War, national and international arguments concerning slavery and Christianity had already fueled the debates over slavery between various constituents within the Cherokee Nation itself. The moral, religious, and political beliefs of European American missionaries on slavery proved to be especially problematic in Indian Territory.[9]

The Cherokee people were forced to choose which leader to stand behind and whether they would continue to support the institution of slavery, all while preparing to go to war for or against the same nation that removed them from their original homes.

The war affected all aspects of Cherokee life, much like it did with the rest of the country. Communities were devastated with both loss of life and degradation of land after battles or raids raged through the regions in which they lived. A shortage of basic supplies and food even led many Cherokees to become refugees in neighboring communities.[10] Native American groups reeled with these concerns amidst declining populations and increasing tension with the federal government, especially those who signed treaties with the Confederate States. Thousands of Native Americans fought both for and against a country that had ostracized them for decades.

Whether Native men fought for the Union or Confederacy, the American Civil War was foreign to the sovereign status of most tribal units, although the fighting crept

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[8] Ibid., 42.

[9] Celia E. Naylor, *African Cherokees in Indian Territory: From Chattel to Citizens* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 126.

[10] Kenny Arthur Franks, *Stand Watie and the Agony of the Cherokee Nation* (Memphis, TN: Memphis State University Press, 1979), 141.

into the backyards of most communities during the 1860s. Ideologies may have been similar between some of the larger Native American groups and the Confederacy, in terms of upholding the existence of slavery, but that was not the only reason that they sided with the newly established southern government. Additionally, "when the federal government withdrew troops from Indian Territory and sporadically paid its annuities, it left tribes militarily and economically vulnerable."[11] Federal withdrawal made the decision to sign a treaty with the Confederacy all the more attractive to a nation that was already internally struggling.

This thesis will detail the motivations and history of the Cherokee in both the East and West during the Civil War using existing scholarship. This scholarly perspective will then be used as a transition into the heart of the study: a survey of Civil War commemorative landscapes with a Cherokee component. It will further examine the exclusion of Native Americans from commemoration at the sites where they participated in the conflict, relative to the historical data that is available and associated with their participation.

At present, there is no existing database or list of sites where the Cherokee in both the East and West fought, even though some 14% of the population of the Cherokee Nation alone participated in the war.[12] But is this widely interpreted at public Civil War sites? Are Native Americans proportionally represented at the sites in which

[11] Reed, 93.

[12] Hauptman, 42.

they participated through historical iconography? Do the time periods in which these monuments were erected tell us anything about the motives of the groups who fought for their existence? These questions are important to address in order to be able to present a more complete narrative of the bloodiest conflict that the United States has ever experienced.[13]

For the purposes of this thesis, public interpretation on the commemorative landscape will include exhibits, historic marker programs, museums, national or state parks, and other historic sites. This physical evidence will then be analyzed in order to determine whether Native American, specifically Cherokee, participation in the American Civil War has been adequately presented. That information represents a preliminary survey of the commemorative landscape surrounding Native American participation in the Civil War, in comparison to the engagements that were associated with different tribal groups.

Some monuments and commemorative sites that were erected after the Civil War were also deliberately designed and erected as propaganda in a racially tense time in the early twentieth century known as the Jim Crow era, excluding most minority groups in the process of celebrating white supremacy.[14] Since that time, historical markers have focused on more personal narratives within larger events, and Cherokee

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[13] Margaret Humphreys, *Marrow of Tragedy: The Health Crisis of the American Civil War* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017), 19.

[14] Kirk Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth-Century America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018), 162-208.

contributions may not be adequately represented, still. Therefore, this thesis will question any omissions and will also offer a start for a larger associated database.

Chapter one serves as a literature review and introduces key motivations behind Civil War participation for both the western Cherokee Nation in Indian Territory and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians in Appalachia. These motivations will be summarized by looking at both primary sources and combing available literature on the topic. By looking at the Civil War through a Cherokee lens, their involvement will be contextualized through secondary literature and primary sources, such as newspapers, letters, and photographs. Chapter two presents the preliminary landscape survey data by briefly outlining each engagement and documenting whether commemorative evidence exists at each site. This section also explores the state of historic preservation at some of the sites. The author visited many of the associated sites and identified existing photographs of the places which have yet to be visited firsthand. Many of those photos are included in the second chapter for visual reference. The images used also match those which will be incorporated into the interactive StoryMap, hosted by Esri, a company that specializes in hosting and developing mapping software. Chapter three explores the advantages of studying history on a geographic information system (GIS), which is the tangible product of this research. GIS is a spatial technology that "links locations and their attributes so that they can be displayed in maps and analyzed."[15] It has been increasingly used in the humanities in order to present information in a unique

[15] Anne Kelly Knowles, *Past Time, Past Place: GIS for History* (Redlands, CA: ESRI Press, 2004), xiv.

and interactive way. “Spaces are not simply the setting for historical action but are a significant product and determinant of change. They are not passive settings but the medium for the development of culture.”[16] This chapter will further explore the benefits of using such a technology within a historical topic by analyzing associated secondary literature. A resource such as a GIS map or StoryMap could lend itself to future public history projects, and also offer a baseline for educational lesson plans as well.

This study is a preliminary document in the overall rich history of Cherokee participation in the American Civil War and represents twenty-one sites with those components. More research needs to be completed in regard to the other tribal groups who fought alongside the Cherokee. However, the work presented here does offer a foundation for that larger project and addresses a void in the historiography of public history within the Civil War.

[16] David J. Bodenhamer, John Corrigan, and Trevor M. Harris, *The Spatial Humanities: GIS and the Future of Humanities Scholarship* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2010), 16.

CHAPTER I

AN IMPETUS FOR FIGHTING: CHEROKEES IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

> Since the last meeting of the National Council, events have occurred that will occupy a prominent place in the history of the world. The United States have been dissolved and two Governments now exist . . . Our Geographical position and domestic institutions allied us to the South.[1]
>
> -John Ross to the Cherokee National Council, October 9, 1861

The nineteenth century in United States history is fraught with stories of unimaginable hardship and demanding choices. The nation was a fledging power in a domestic sense, and the United States government was not the only sovereign force on in North America. Indeed, various Native Americans tribes were fighting to be acknowledged as the rightful inhabitants of their ancestral homelands across the continent. The Cherokee people in the southeastern United States resisted federal efforts for removal to the west even as voices grew within the dominant white culture to annihilate Native culture. Most Cherokees were forced to leave the southeastern United States via the Trail of Tears, although the Eastern band remained in the North Carolina mountains.

The Cherokees, though divided between two regions, came together on the issue of Southern secession. They, too, were part of the slaveholding culture, siding with the Confederate cause in opposition to their common foe, the United States. The period

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[1] Chief John Ross to Cherokee National Council, October 9, 1861, John Ross Papers, Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, OK, https://collections.gilcrease.org/object/40261324b-b5.

of fifty years, from 1828 to 1878, was thus full of conflict, transitions, and loss for the entire country. The earlier forced removal of the five tribes in the southeast predated the American Civil War by little more than two decades, and the ramifications on those people and the involved states were felt for years afterward.

The Civil War strained relations between the western and eastern groups of Cherokees, a tension that remained through Reconstruction. Once the war ended, the two groups with a shared ancestry did not even meet for a joint council until 1984.[2] The heaviest burden landed on the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians who were reeling with the destruction of their lands and families after the end of the war while also fighting for federal recognition, staving off starvation, and piecing their culture back together after multiple disasters stripped away any previous social constructs.

Slavery among the Cherokee existed prior to the arrival of Europeans, but it was largely limited to prisoners of war from other tribes. The larger institution of African slavery was introduced to the Cherokee through intermarriage with white men who owned or bought slaves after marrying Native women.[3] White traders depended on the practice, and Cherokee communities assimilated to slavery just as they had taken up Christianity and the English language.[4] Cherokee leaders believed it was vital to appear "civilized" to state and federal authorities, in hopes of retaining their homes as white

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[2] "2 Cherokee Nations Hold First Joint Council," *New York Times*, April 7, 1984.

[3] Richard Halliburton, Jr., "Origins of Black Slavery Among the Cherokees," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 52, no. 4 (December 1974): 484

[4] Theda Perdue, "Cherokee Planters, Black Slaves, and African Colonization," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 60, no. 3 (September 1982): 323-24.

settlers moved into their lands. Historians have identified Kah-nug-da-cla-geb, or Major Ridge, as the first Cherokee plantation owner who utilized involuntary labor in the form of black enslaved populations.[5] While fellow Cherokees murdered Major Ridge in 1839 for his part in signing the Treaty of New Echota of 1835, he enjoyed a prominent position within the Cherokee Nation before the Trail of Tears as a successful plantation owner and political leader. His plantation in Georgia encompassed over two hundred acres of land that was worked by fifteen to thirty enslaved persons.[6] Some of the history surrounding slavery on the Major Ridge plantation is now presented at the Chieftains Museum, Ridge's home, in present-day Rome, Georgia, through wayside panels and other interpretive signage (see Figures 3 & 4). The property is a National Historic Landmark and is a certified site on the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail.

Another example of a Cherokee elite involved in the institution of forced labor was James Vann. He operated a trading post and established the plantation that his son Joseph later graced with a two-story brick plantation house,[7] which is now a State Historic Site in Georgia.[8] Joseph Vann held some one hundred enslaved people on the property at the height of the operation, adding to the wealth that his father had left him when he had died in 1809. Joseph Vann thus straddled the line between distinction

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[5] Halliburton, 490-91.

[6] Tiya Miles, *Ties That Bind: The Story of an Afro-Cherokee Family in Slavery and Freedom* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2015), 23.

[8] Tiya Miles, "Showplace of the Cherokee Nation: Race and the Making of a Southern House Museum," *The Public Historian* 33, no. 4 (November 2011): 14.

Figure 3: Facade of the Major Ridge Plantation house, facing northwest, Colonial Revival details and two wings date to the 1920s. Author's photo collection.

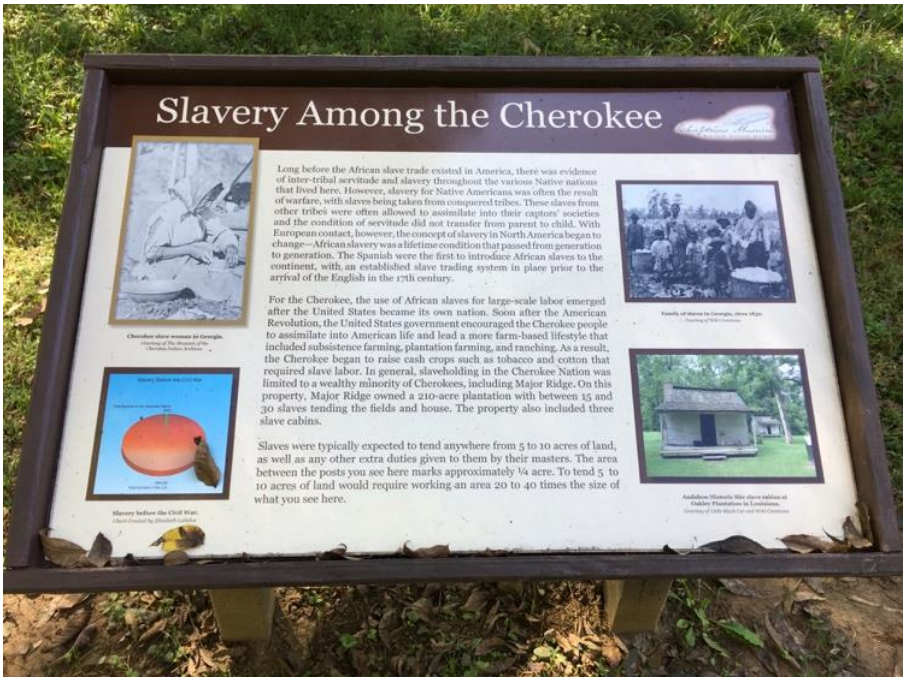

Figure 4: Wayside interpretive panel on slavery, located at the Chieftains Museum in Rome, Georgia. Author's photo collection.

within the Cherokee Nation and the United States, much like his father and other prominent Cherokee men had done in the early nineteenth century.

Yet another notable instance of Cherokee slaveholding involved John Ross. He was the principal chief of the Cherokee people at the time of removal and the later Civil War. He also was a prominent slaver in both the East and West. The institution of slavery existed alongside the dealings that the Ridge family, John Walker, and John Ross all had with profitable river ferries before forced removal.

The use of slavery among the Cherokee was reserved for those who could afford it, much like the rest of the South on the eve of the Civil War. In 1825 when the Cherokee took a census of their nation and "estimated their population at 16,060 individuals, a 30 per cent increase since the previous census of 1809. Their nation included 215 whites and 1,277 African slaves owned by Cherokees."[9]

After removal to Indian Territory, the practice of enslaving Africans within the Cherokee Nation intensified.[10] The enslaved people who were brought to Oklahoma were used to literally rebuild the Cherokee Nation. "On the eve of the Civil War, according to the 1860 census, there was a total of 2,504 black slaves in the Oklahoma Cherokee Nation (60% more than in 1835, on the eve of the Great Removal). Only 2% of the Cherokee population owned slaves."[11] Like other Southern elites, Cherokee slave

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[9] Glenn D. Simpson, Mark L. Mortier, and Steve Burns-Chavez, "Chieftains Museum/Major Ridge Home Historic Structure and Cultural Landscape Report," (Santa Fe, NM: National Park Service, 2007), 34.

[10] Perdue, 327.

[11] Bernard Vincent, "Slaveholding Indians: The Case of the Cherokee Nation," *European Contributions to American Studies* 61, no. 11 (November 2005): 23.

owners contributed pro-slavery articles to *The Cherokee Advocate*, "By professing morality and refusing responsibility, Cherokee slaveholders indirectly justified the institution of slavery."[12] This is just one example of Cherokee pro-slavery leanings.

They also ruthlessly suppressed any attempts from the enslaved people on their plantations to gain freedom. During the Slave Revolt of 1842, a dozen or so enslaved people met near Webbers Falls in the Cherokee Nation on November 15, 1842. They were mostly from the newly established plantation of Joseph Vann and had escaped under the cover of night while traveling southwest.[13] In the next two days, they joined forces with enslaved people from the Creek Nation and totaled thirty-five. Forty Cherokee and a party of Creeks went in pursuit of the enslaved and found them entrenched near the Canadian River. After a brief skirmish, the slavers captured twelve of the enslaved and killed two. The rest escaped, temporarily. The National Council of the Cherokee Nation in Tahlequah on November 17, "promptly passed a resolution, which Chief John Ross approved, appointing Captain John Drew to command a company of one hundred 'effective men,' to pursue, arrest, and deliver the blacks to the commanding officer at Fort Gibson."[14] By November 28, Cherokees and Creeks apprehended the group of escaped slaves 280 miles away from Fort Gibson and returned them to involuntary servitude.

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[12] Perdue, 329.

[13] Daniel F. Littlefield and Lonnie E. Underhill, "Slave 'Revolt' in the Cherokee Nation, 1842," *American Indian Quarterly* 3, no. 2 (1977): 127.

[14] Ibid., 122.

The enslaved under the Cherokee did not stop their efforts for freedom. A *Brother Jonathan* newspaper article from October 4, 1856 reported, “Late advices from the Cherokee nation detail serious and bloody proceedings as occurring between the Indians and their negro slaves. These Indians, it will be recollected, are now quartered in the Indian Territory on the borders of Kansas and Arkansas.”[15] This article detailed a situation in which Cherokee slaveholders murdered four enslaved people for simply attempting to flee their involuntary servitude. Like the whites of the South, many Cherokee slavers did everything possible to protect the institution of slavery.

What about the Cherokee who resided in the western mountains of North Carolina? These mountain-dwelling Cherokee are also known as the Oconaluftee or Lufty Cherokees, so named for a nearby river in the heart of the community in the southern Appalachian Mountains. The Eastern Band largely avoided forced removal due to sheer neglect from North Carolina and negotiations in Washington by a white trader named William Holland Thomas.[16] The Eastern Band trusted Thomas because he grew up in the tribe. After losing his father before he was even born, William H. Thomas became acquainted with the Cherokee after taking a position with a store clerk and trader named Felix Walker, around the age of twelve. Thomas quickly proved to be a bright upstart. The chief of Quallatown, Yonaguska (or Drowning Bear), took a keen

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[15] *Brother Jonathan* was the first illustrated publication in the United States with weekly issues. It was operated by Benjamin Day from 1842 to 1862. "Cherokee Indians Shooting Their Slaves," *Brother Jonathan* (New York, NY), October 4, 1856, 17th ed., sec. 255.

[16] William Holland Thomas. William Holland Thomas Letter Book, 1839, William Holland Thomas and James Robert Thomas Collection, MS.2072, University of Tennessee Libraries, Knoxville, Special Collections.

interest in the young Thomas and decided to adopt him. William Thomas prospered as a trader and landholder in the mountains by learning the Cherokee language, customs, lore, and history, all while studying old law books given to him at an early age. This study of law allowed him to gain the privilege of acting on behalf of the Eastern Band in Washington when the time of removal arrived. In 1839, Yonaguska died, but he recommended that William Thomas should succeed him as the chief of the Oconaluftee Indians. As a result, Thomas was the only white man to ever hold the office of chief.[17] Later, "in 1848 Thomas was elected to the North Carolina state senate where he became an advocate for Indian rights. Although Indians were not allowed by state to own land, Thomas held their titles for them in trust in his name so that they could maintain their homes and farms."[18] He only resigned from this position after the outbreak of the Civil War.

The Oconaluftee Cherokee also had confidence in Thomas because he went to great lengths to protect their community. For example, when a dissident group of Cherokees led by Tsali refused to comply with the orders of removal in the 1830s, Colonel William Stanhope Foster offered the possibility of permitting Euchella's Eastern Band of Cherokees to remain in North Carolina if Tsali could be captured. William Thomas then convinced the older Euchella to aid in the pursuit of Tsali. Around sixty

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[17] E. Stanly Godbold and Mattie U. Russell, *Confederate Colonel and Cherokee Chief: The Life of William Holland Thomas* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1990), 40.

[18] A. Bruce Hartung, "Confederate Cherokees of Thomas's Legion," *Council on America's Military Past* 13, no. 1 (1984): 52.

men joined the search that led to the capture and eventual execution of Tsali.[19] William Thomas proved that he was prepared to search for runaway Cherokees in the hopes of securing a future for the community that had taken him in as a young boy. The Oconaluftee people largely approved of Thomas' efforts to protect the tribe since the federal government did not acknowledge it as a nation before or during the Civil War.

The politics surrounding Cherokee involvement with the Confederacy was at first difficult to understand. The southern states had acted relentlessly to remove the Cherokees from their ancestral homelands less than thirty years prior. Further, the Eastern Cherokees were especially tied to the Confederate States in a physical sense. "The North Carolina Cherokees occupied reservation lands that were in the heart of the Confederacy in Appalachia. The land on which the Eastern Cherokees eked out their subsistence livelihoods was geographically and politically vulnerable to the fortunes of war."[20] With the increased struggles in fighting for recognition at a time of fragility in the south, it was therefore only a matter of time before the Eastern Band was forced to react to the tensions leading to the Civil War. Comparatively, the Cherokees in Indian Territory were on the borders of the conflict.[21] Those two factions of the Cherokee Nation were not only at brutal odds with themselves, but also with the group who

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[19] John R. Finger, "The Saga of Tsali: Legend Versus Reality," *The North Carolina Historical Review* 56, no. 1 (January 1979): 11.

[20] Gregory D. Smithers, *Cherokee Diaspora: An Indigenous History of Migration, Resettlement, and Identity* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018), 149-50.

[21] Edward Everett Dale, "The Cherokees in the Confederacy," *The Journal of Southern History* 13, no. 2 (May 1947): 161.

remained in North Carolina after removal. Now, less than three decades removed from that dark episode in American history, the United States was torn at the seams and the Cherokee people were forced, once again, to make a decision about their future.

Previous treaties with the United States seemingly secured the loyalties of the Cherokee people to the Union – however, after false promises from the federal government and understanding their economic interests, the Cherokee Nation voted to officially join the Confederate States on October 7, 1861, at a meeting in Tahlequah, Indian Territory. Principal Chief John Ross originally argued for neutrality, however, once Union soldiers left Indian Territory to fight in the east, Cherokee Nation borders opened to Confederate forces, and changed the equation. All the while, the secessionist states encourage the Cherokee Nation to sign a treaty.

Confederate officials courted nations in Indian Territory as early as the spring of 1861. Confederate President Jefferson Davis ordered Indian Commissioner Albert Pike to secure Native American support in a letter in March 1861.[22] Pike had previously interacted with the southern tribes in Indian Territory and had a close relationship with Chief John Ross.[23] During one of these negotiation meetings with General Ben McCulloch in Arkansas, a group of men who were aligned with Stand Watie approached

[22] Brigadier General Albert Pike to Chief John Ross, April 20, 1861. John Ross Papers, Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, OK, https://collections.gilcrease.org/object/40261351a (accessed May 1, 2019).

[23] Walter L. Brown, "Rowing against the Stream: The Course of Albert Pike from National Whig to Secessionist," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 39, no. 3 (1980): 241.

Albert Pike in order to determine what guarantees might be secured if the treaty party members decided to offer their men to the Confederacy.[24] As John Sedgwick reported:

> Five 'Southern Cherokees,' as they called themselves, led by Stand Watie, came by to say they were set to raise a military regiment of their own, whatever Ross did. They didn't intend to fight against the Union, though, at least not yet. They just wanted to put down Evan Jones's Pins, sympathizers with the North who were operating under the protection of the Ross Party. If allowed to roam freely, the Pins were sure to drag the nation into yet another internal fight.[25]

Pike was eager to secure more men for the upcoming conflict. He assured the Stand Watie delegation that the Confederacy would support them against the Unionist Cherokee if the need arose. Historian Craig Gaines explained:

> With the weapons and support from the Confederate state of Arkansas, Watie soon organized a battalion of Cherokees for the Confederacy. On July 12, 1861, he was commissioned a colonel in the Confederate army. Meanwhile, the Ross party and the rest of the Cherokee Nation remained officially neutral. Watie's battalion of about three hundred men was stationed near the Arkansas-Cherokee Nation border, scouting into Kansas and Missouri to keep Jayhawkers and Kansas abolitionists out of the Cherokee Nation and Arkansas.[26]

By persuading many people to agree with him, Stand Watie secured his place in Civil War politics, therefore threatening the hold that Chief John Ross had on the Cherokee government.

After persistent negotiations with Albert Pike, Cherokee leaders called a council to discuss the situation on August 21, 1861. Four thousand members attended and

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[24] Wilfred Knight. *Red Fox: Stand Watie and the Confederate Indian Nations During the Civil War Years in Indian Territory* (Glendale, CA: A.H. Clark Co., 1988), 60.

[25] John Sedgwick, *Blood Moon: An American Epic of War and Splendor in the Cherokee Nation* (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster Paperbacks, 2019), 366.

[26] W. Craig Gaines, *The Confederate Cherokees: John Drew's Regiment of Mounted Rifles* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1989), 8-9.

examined eight resolutions, which "approved action of Chief Ross with respect to neutrality, expressed friendship for all the states and neighboring Indian tribes, declared that property in Negro slaves was guaranteed by their constitution and laws and denounced all those people who had represented them as abolitionists or hostile to the South."[27] However, the Confederacy continued to negotiate with those who supported secession, including Stand Watie.

In a sudden turn of events, John Ross signed an alliance with the Confederate States of America in October of 1861 after promises that the Confederacy would assume all debts, obligations, and protections of the Cherokee Nation.[28] Ross thus undercut the actions of Stand Watie, his political rival. Gaines observed that the "Cherokee National Council, a legislative body, agreed to raise John Drew's Regiment of Cherokee Mounted Rifles as the Cherokee government's defense force. Drew's regiment, which favored the Ross party, would also serve as a counterbalance to Watie's battalion of Ridge party supporters."[29] Whether this action was solely meant to win a political clash against Watie or not, John Ross surprised both Native American allies in Indian Terrirtory and the United States.

This treaty further guaranteed continued possession of lands by the Cherokee after the conclusion of the war with jurisdiction to disallow Confederate Agents in the

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[27] Dale, 165.

[28] Albert Pike to John Ross, Letter from Commissioner of Confederate States to Indian Nations west of the Arkansas, August 1, 1861, John Ross Papers, Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, OK, https://collections.gilcrease.org/object/40261309a1-a4.

[29] Gaines, 13.

territory. Further, “the Cherokee Nation was entitled to a delegate in the Confederate House of Representatives.”[30] The Cherokees thought they had negotiated a treaty that actually had the possibility of benefitting the tribe. As Clarissa Confer succinctly stated of the decision to join the southern side, “they entered the Civil War as a sovereign unit and maintained that status throughout the conflict.”[31]

The decision to go to war against the United States was made with all considerations thoroughly debated, and both the Cherokee Nation in the west and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians came to the same conclusion to side with the Confederacy, albeit under independent circumstances. The Cherokee Nation was prompted to join after persistent negotiations with Confederate officials and a favorable treaty, while white chief, William Holland Thomas, influenced the Eastern Band.

The end of treaty negotiations did not ease the mind of Chief John Ross, as he wrote to Albert Pike to pay “attention to the exposed condition of the Northern and almost entire Eastern border of the Cherokee Nation.”[32] Even with the prior motivations concerning slavery and promised protection from the Confederate States, John Ross remained concerned about the ability of the Confederacy to fulfill their obligations as outlined in the Treaty of 1861. In May 1862, John Ross wrote to Jefferson Davis about

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[30] Gary E. Moulton, "Chief John Ross During the Civil War," *Civil War History* 19, no. 4 (December 1973): 318.

[31] Clarissa W. Confer, *Cherokee Nation in the Civil War* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012), 4.

[32] John Ross to Albert Pike, Letter from John Ross to Brigadier General Albert Pike, March 22, 1862. John Ross Papers, Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, OK, https://collections.gilcrease.org/object/40261350.

his trepidations for an invading force of Union troops in Indian Territory, a threat which the Confederacy was largely ignoring.[33] Confederate leaders ignored Ross' calls for action, and Ross reconsidered the Confederate alliance. Following a meeting with President Abraham Lincoln, Ross wrote on September 16, 1862 about the regrettable choice to sign the alliance with the Confederate States. Ross admitted:

> The Cherokee Nation maintained in good faith her relations towards the United States up to a late period and subsequent to the occurrence of the war existing between the Government and the Southern States… That no other alternative was left them, surrounded by the Power and influences that they were and that they had no opportunity freely to express their views and assume their true position until the advance into their Country of the Indian Expedition during the last summer.[34]

Indeed, John Ross spent most of the war afterwards in the northeastern United States with his close family who were not fighting in the conflict to continue meetings with United States government officials on behalf of the Cherokee Nation. Due to arson from followers of Stand Watie, Ross lost his home named Rose Cottage in Tahlequah. Some of his family also perished in the war.

President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation in January 1863. A month later, Unionist Cherokees convened at Cowskin Prairie in Indian Territory to recognize John Ross as the principal chief of the Nation. Since Ross was in Washington, D.C., however, Unionist council temporarily gave power to Thomas Pegg.

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[33] John Ross to Jefferson Davis, May 10, 1862, *The Papers of Jefferson Davis 1856-1860*, eds., Lynda Lasswell, Crist and Mary Seaton (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1989), 170.

[34] John Ross to Abraham Lincoln, September 16, 1862, Abraham Lincoln Papers: Series 1. General Correspondence. 1833 to 1916, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., https://www.loc.gov/item/mal1845200/ (accessed June 17, 2019).

The Confederate Cherokees had elected Stand Watie as their leader in August of 1862 and had broken with the rest of the tribe who became disillusioned with the Confederacy. This 1863 National Council further "abrogated the treaty made with the Confederate States and abolished slavery, the first of the slave-holding Indian nations to do so."[35]

The Civil War thus took on a different tone for all those who were involved, from emancipation onward. The Cherokee Nation, led by John Ross, looked to free the previously enslaved and to create a new nation, instead of merely preserving the former. Unionist Cherokees respected John Ross and his change of mind towards the Confederacy[36] – and Confederate Cherokees aligned with Stand Watie until the bitter end of the war.

In the west, Stand Watie was a counterpart to William Holland Thomas in the east. Both men led groups into the war largely on trust within them. The Battle of Pea Ridge from March 7-8, 1862, was one of the most pivotal engagements that occurred west of the Mississippi River, including the largest number of Native Americans to fight in one battle. Colonel Stand Watie was the commander of the 2nd Cherokee Mounted Rifles and Brigadier General Albert Pike was the commander of Pike's Indian Brigade.[37] The *Gallipolis Journal* reported on March 20, 1862, that the Confederate force was

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[35] Moulton, 324.

[36] Ibid., 331.

[37] Walter L. Brown, "Albert Pike and the Pea Ridge Atrocities," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 38, no. 4 (Winter 1979): 345.

35,000, with 2,200 of those listed as Native Americans.[38] Watie commanded his men to run into open fields during this conflict, and Confederate leaders noted their eagerness to do so as part of "the highwater mark of the Confederate war effort in the Trans-Mississippi."[39]

Another example of the active role that Stand Watie took in the war was during the First Battle of Cabin Creek on July 1-2, 1863. Colonel Stand Watie and his forces attempted to capture a supply wagon train from Federal troops but retreated before capturing all of the Union supplies. The Second Battle of Cabin Creek happened little more than a year later, in September 1864. Brigadier Generals Richard Gano and Stand Watie once again attempted to block a Federal supply train. This time, the Confederates captured both the supplies and around 130 wagons.[40] The Second Battle of Cabin Creek was the final major engagement of the war in Indian Territory. Confederate Brigadier General William Steele included critical praise for Stand Watie in 1863:

> I became satisfied that with those exercising the chief influence among the Indians there was a settled design to subordinate white officers and white troops to Indian officers and Indian troops. In suggesting these views, I would take occasion to state that there are serving in the Indian country a few striking exceptions. Among these I may mention Col. Stand Watie, whom I found to be a

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[38] Alexander Vance published the *Gallipolis Journal* from 1837-1919. "Interesting Details of the Pea Ridge Battle," *Gallipolis Journal*, March 20, 1862.

[39] William L. Shea and Earl J. Hess, *Pea Ridge: Civil War Campaign in the West* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 197.

[40] National Register of Historic Places, Cabin Creek Battlefield, Pensacola, Mayes County, Oklahoma, National Register #71000669.

> gallant and daring officer, but, as was the case in all other instances among the Indian troops, without the slightest discipline in his regiment.[41]

Although Stand Watie gained the notice of Confederate military leaders in this way, white officers faulted his men throughout the conflict. Watie was promoted to Brigadier General in 1864[42] and was the last Confederate general to surrender in the Civil War, signing a peace treaty on June 23, 1865 at Doaksville, Indian Territory.[43]

The Eastern Band's Civil War experience was different. On September 15, 1861, William Holland Thomas formed the "Junaluska Zouaves," which included at least 200 Eastern Cherokee men, at Knoxville, Tennessee.[44] This militia unit became known as Thomas' Legion of Cherokee Indians and Highlanders, as Thomas "planned to raise a guerrilla force for local defense of the Carolinas, east Tennessee, and Virginia."[45] It included roughly 130 Cherokee men from Quallatown alone. Peter Graybeard and John Astoogatogeh, the latter of which was the grandson of Chief Junaluska, were among some of the well-known members. A Union sharpshooter later killed Astoogatogeh at an

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[41] Robert N. Scott et al., *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. Series I, Volume XXII* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880), 35.

[42] D.K. McRae and A.M. Gorman, eds., "Stand Watie Has Been Made a Brigadier," *The Daily Confederate*, October 20, 1864.

[43] Robert M. Dunkerly, *To the Bitter End: Appomattox, Bennett Place, and the Surrenders of the Confederacy* (El Dorado Hills, CA: Savas Beatie, 2015), 134.

[44] Paul A. Thomsen, *Rebel Chief: The Motley Life of Colonel William Holland Thomas, C.S.A.* (New York, NY: Forge, 2006), 167.

[45] Godbold and Russell, 101.

engagement near Baptist Gap, in Tennessee in 1863.[46] The battles of Baptist Gap and Strawberry Plains were among the more significant skirmishes for the Eastern Cherokees during the war.

Historian Gregory Smithers concluded that the Thomas Legion "took up arms for the Confederacy out of loyalty to Thomas and a determination to protect their homeland."[47] However, as the war raged on, the Thomas Legion increased in number, and eventually officials designated it as the North Carolina 69th Volunteer Regiment. A. Bruce Hartung described the regiment's growth: "This force consisted of an infantry regiment (the North Carolina 69th), a cavalry battalion of eight companies, a battalion of engineers and another battalion of infantry which was later recruited to full regimental strength and became the North Carolina 80th. In all, the Legion eventually included around 2,800 men."[48] Of that number, at least 400 were Cherokees.[49]

The regimen's primary objective was to local defend mountain passes, salt mines, and railroad bridges. Some units transferred to the Jubal Early's Shenandoah Valley Campaign in 1864. Their service there specifically included engagements at Cedar Creek (Belle Grove), Winchester, and Staunton.[50] However, the small force experienced

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[46] Carolyn Ross Johnston, *Cherokee Women in Crisis: Trail of Tears, Civil War, and Allotment, 1838-1907* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2010), 183.

[47] Smithers, 168.

[48] Hartung, 53.

[49] "Thomas' Legion: The 69th North Carolina Regiment," Napoleonic Linear Tactics: American Civil War. http://www.thomaslegion.net/.

[50] Joseph W. A. Whitehorne, *The Battle of Cedar Creek: Self-Guided Tour* (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1992), 14.

considerable losses in Virginia. “Indeed, the fortunes of the Confederate Cherokees in the Southeast were rapidly declining. Substantial Cherokee losses at the Affair of Deep Creek, otherwise known as the Battle of Quallatown, confirmed this assessment.”[51]

Confederate newspapers favorably recounted stories about the Thomas Legion, including *The Memphis Daily Appeal*, which reported on February 28, 1863:

> They excel any troops in either the Northern or Southern armies in subordination – an Indian always executes an order with religious fidelity. They scrupulously respect private property – there are no reports of depredations where they are encamped. They are the best scouts in the world, and hence the good that they accomplish among the mountain tories and bushwhackers.[52]

Southern newspapers liked the idea of Cherokees fighting for the Confederacy and used Thomas Legion successes as propaganda.

The Thomas Legion spent the winter of 1863 in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, where they engaged in a skirmish with Colonel William Palmer’s 15th Pennsylvania Cavalry known as the Battle of Gatlinburg (Burg Hill). Federal forces pushed the Thomas Legion back into the mountains after surprising the men in their camps. William Thomas explained what happened on Christmas Day of 1863, but it was not published in *The Charlotte* Democrat until January 26, 1864:

> At Gatlinsburg the command became divided. The part that remained had a skirmish with one hundred and ten Yankees, and a large number of Home Guards. Two of the Indians were slightly wounded. The loss of the enemy not known. The enemy have at least been taught that while we hold the Smoky Mountains Western N. Carolina and the adjacent portions of East Tennessee are

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[51] Smithers, 170.

[52] *The Memphis Daily Appeal* was printed from 1847-1886. It became a Confederate newspaper during the Civil War. "The Indian Legion," *Memphis Daily Appeal*, February 28, 1863.

hard to subjugate.[53]

The Thomas Legion remained on guard even after the official Confederate surrender in April 1865. In fact, the last Union man to die east of the Mississippi River was James Arwood, who died at the hands of a company of Thomas Legion men on May 6, 1865.

By the end of the Civil War, the Legion included only 200 Cherokee men and 400 white mountaineers. The rest of the peak numbers were lost to death or desertion. The Thomas Legion formally surrendered on May 9, 1865, the last Confederate unit in North Carolina to lay down its arms.[54] William Thomas' efforts to secure some protection for the Cherokee people explain the prolonged reluctance to surrender. While North Carolina recognized a privilege for this group to remain in the mountain lands after the surrender, state officials did not grant citizenship. Rights to own land were only officially recognized in 1866, after William Thomas argued with his old State Senate colleagues.[55]

Reconstruction brought a new round of federal treaties. Historian Jeff Fortney further explains:

> In 1866 all of the Five Tribes formed new treaties of "friendship" with the United States. These treaties contained the required abolition of slavery along with provisions for freed slaves to receive tribal citizenship, suffrage, and an established amount of tribal land/assets.[56]

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[53] William H. Thomas, "Thomas' Legion. Smoky Mountains, Dec. 25, 1863," *The Charlotte Democrat*, January 26, 1864.

[54] "Session 4: The War in North Carolina," North Carolina Museum of History, https://www.ncmuseumofhistory.org/session-4-war-north-carolina.

[55] Hartung, 56.

[56] Jeff Fortney, "Lest We Remember: Civil War Memory and Commemoration among the Five Tribes," *American Indian Quarterly* 36, no. 4 (2012): 530.

Reconstruction treaties effectively restored relations between the Cherokee people in the East and West with the United States government.

In the Indian Territory, a council at Fort Smith met on September 8, 1865 and provided the foundations for Reconstruction treaties, significantly altering life for the Native Americans. The language written into the Reconstruction Treaty of 1866 on behalf of the Cherokee Nation, also affected the Eastern Band. Daniel F. Littlefield concluded: "the list of demands that D.N. Cooley presented to the tribes at Fort Smith in 1865 reflected a master plan for federal policy directed at them during the next forty years: that is, the dismantling of the Indian nations, transfer of their land to non-Indians, United States citizenship for their members, and statehood for their territory."[57] What was true in Indian Territory also proved true for the Eastern Band in 1866.

By 1868, there was a recognized need for a document to be crafted for the two groups of Cherokees. *The Act of Union between the Eastern and Western Cherokees: The Constitution and Amendments, and the Laws of the Cherokee Nation* presented the state of the nation after the conclusions of the war and the passage of the Reconstruction treaty. The Cherokee Nation and Eastern Band approved the tribal act in Tahlequah in 1868, and formally dedicated it in 1870. One portion reads: "*Therefore*, we, the People composing the Eastern and Western Cherokee Nation, in National Convention assembled, by virtue of our original and unalienable rights, do hereby solemnly and

[57] Daniel F. Littlefield, "The Treaties of 1866: Reconstruction or Re-Destruction?" In *Proceedings: War and Reconstruction in Indian Territory: A History Conference in Observance of the 130th Anniversary of the Fort Smith Council: September 14-17, 1995 Fort Smith, Arkansas*, (N.P.: National Park Service, 1995), 97-98.

mutually agree to form ourselves into one body politic, under the style and title of the Cherokee Nation."[58] This document was similar to the previous treaty that the Cherokee Nation signed with the Confederacy, in that the Eastern Band also followed those terms as one cohesive tribal unit.

The western Cherokee Nation suffered significant population losses during the war. For the Indian Territory as a whole, on historian concluded that "as many as 10,000 people, or one-fifth of the Indian Territory's population, died during the Civil War because of disease or starvation."[59] That number reflects the adversities that were felt across the Cherokee Nation, both in the West and East. As if the toils of war were not enough to devastate the Eastern Oconaluftee, smallpox raged through the area during the winter of 1865 to 1866. [60] [61] A deserter of the United States Army allegedly introduced the epidemic, which resulted in an estimate of 125-300 Cherokee deaths.[62] The devastations of war also decimated the lands that were once so highly prized by the people living there – ravages of war had lain waste to the productivity of the soil, and hunger was a grave concern. Former soldiers and citizens alike in the Eastern Band were

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[58] *The Act of Union between the Eastern and Western Cherokees: The Constitution and Amendments, and the Laws of the Cherokee Nation, Passed during the Session of 1868 and Subsequent Sessions,* (Tahlequah, Cherokee Nation: National Press, 1870), 1.

[59] Smithers, 163.

[60] Lauren E. Monkewicz, "The United States 'Civil' War: The Forgotten Nation of Cherokee People and Their Dynamic Wartime Experience," (paper presented at the Young Historians Conference, Portland State University, Portland, OR, April 18, 2018).

[61] Hartung, 56.

[62] Smithers, 171.

forced to eat whatever they could find, including tree bark, roots, weeds, and leaves. Such conditions forced many of the Cherokee to flee their old homeland, and they became refugees across the southeast and beyond. Before and after the end of the war, William Thomas spent his own money in the attempt to feed his people with provisions secured from South Carolina. In a letter dated December 1, 1866, a man named William Hicks wrote, "William H. Thomas contracted with me for between eight and nine thousand dollars' worth of bacon, flour, rice for the North Carolina Cherokee Indians in the summer of 1864 to keep them from starving."[63] However, this move was a temporary fix at best, and the suffering of the Cherokee continued through Reconstruction.

William Thomas formally resigned as the chief to the Oconaluftee in 1867. The year after his resignation, United States Congress formally recognized the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation, led by the new Chief Salanitah, or Flying Squirrel.[64] Gregory Smithers paints a grim picture of the state of the tribe during this time: "Given that approximately 400 Eastern Cherokee men (out of a total population of roughly 1,000) saw active duty during the war, it is not unreasonable to assume that virtually every Cherokee family in North Carolina lost loved ones, or had family members flee as refugees."[65]

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[63] William Hicks. Deposition of William Hicks, December 1, 1866, William H. Thomas Collection I, Museum of the Cherokee Indian, Cherokee, NC.

[64] Godbold and Russell, 129.

[65] Smithers, 170.

Aside from national debates, population loss, and negotiations, or the literal rebuilding of the resources necessary to sustain a large community of people, the Cherokee faced issues with gender bias as well. Divorce rates increased as the Cherokee shifted from a matrilineal to a patrilineal society, and women were further degraded after losing much of their livelihood in the conflict. Carolyn Johnston describes the period:

> After the war had ended, no consensus emerged regarding what it meant to be a woman in the Cherokee Nation. Conversions to Christianity in-creased dramatically after the Civil War. Moreover, the Cherokee Female Semi-nary became the primary educational institution for Cherokee women, and it strongly promoted acculturation to white values.[66]

The fighting caused rifts to form in families and communities, with no immediate resolution in the Reconstruction era.

The Reconstruction era proved to be just as difficult as the Civil War itself for both the western and eastern Cherokee. The Cherokee participation in the war created not only a fighting force on the Confederate side, but it further fractured a society that was only beginning to rebuild after the forced removal from the southeastern United States. The Cherokee were not collectively in agreement in regard to the Civil War taking place in their ancestral homelands, and this splinter was felt from Oklahoma to North Carolina. This period from 1828 to 1878 was volatile and had consequences for the tribe as a whole for decades after the final surrender in the Civil War.

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[66] Johnston, 106.

CHAPTER II

WHERE THEY STRUGGLED: COMMEMORATIVE LANDSCAPE SURVEY

I have no doubt as to loyalty of the Ross Family and three fourths of the Cherokee people. Until recently they have been unable to hold any communication with our Government; While they were persistently pressed by the Agents of the Confederate States with false representations, and every influence brought to bear to seduce them from their allegiance to our Government.[1]

-James G. Blunt to Abraham Lincoln, August 13, 1862

An army's footsteps are remembered because of the impact that a collective group can have on the historical landscape. Wars are fought in order to determine the outcomes for a whole society – be it in a political, religious, or social sense – but the details of such large conflicts can be lost over time. "Individual battles swayed elections, shaped political decisions, determined economic mobilization, brought women into the war effort, and influenced decisions to abolish slavery as well as to recruit former slaves in large numbers as soldiers."[2] Similarly, Cherokee participation, and indeed the very act of contributing, shaped their present and future. The Cherokee Nation and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians participated in over twenty Civil War engagements. As historian Clarissa Confer reports on the importance of the Cherokee Nation component:

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[1] James G. Blunt to Abraham Lincoln, August 13, 1862, Abraham Lincoln Papers: Series 1. General Correspondence. 1833 to 1916, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., https://www.loc.gov/item/mal1762800/ (accessed July 5, 2019).

[2] Civil War Sites Advisory Commission, *Report on the Nation's Civil War Battlefields* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1993), 14.

> The names Honey Springs, Ft. Gibson, and Chustenahlah will never become as familiar to Americans as Gettysburg, Antietam, or Chancellorsville. This observation need not demean or dismiss the importance of Indian Territory to an overall understanding of the Civil War. Neither Union nor Confederacy could afford to ignore this region during the war. Each spent money, supplies, and political capital in an attempt to control a border region rich in resources. The outcome of the war in the Cherokee Nation mattered to those engaged in the national crisis and it should matter to us as well.[3]

This chapter explores a direct question – how has their participation been recorded in the vast commemorative landscape of the Civil War?

During the Civil War, contemporaries found the fact that Cherokee forces fought for both sides to be fascinating. Once the fighting was over, that interest disappeared, until much later, when chapters of the United Daughters of the Confederacy finally realized that Cherokees had been Confederates too. The *Asheville Citizen-Times* reported in 1935 that the United Daughters of the Confederacy unveiled a marker to commemorate the service of Cherokee soldiers. This event came almost a year after the last veteran of the Thomas Legion passed away, and the newspaper article concluded:

> The marker to be erected on the Council House grounds will be built of native stone and cement. On the side of the marker facing the highway there will be a bronze slab. At the top of this slab, in bas-relief, will be the head of a typical Cherokee Indian and below this will appear the following inscription: "In Honor of Those Brave Cherokee Indians Loyal to the Confederacy 1861-1865 Commanded by Col. Wm. H. Thomas. Erected by the Daughters of the Confederacy of the First District."[4]

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[3] Clarissa W. Confer, *Cherokee Nation in the Civil War* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012), 7.

[4] "Marker in Honor of Cherokee Indian Soldiers to Be Unveiled Today," *Asheville Citizen*, September 22, 1935.

Even this marker actually said little about the Cherokees, though. More than half of the inscribed words do not pertain to the service of the Cherokee themselves, but rather address their white commander, and recognized those who erected the monument. Most of the focus is placed on the white organizations who erected the monument, or on the white subjects with an association to the mentioned Cherokees.

With that North Carolina monument as a starting point, I set out to survey Civil War commemorative markers with the potential of addressing Cherokee contributions to the Civil War. I consulted resources and completed onsite visits, and further corroborated those visits through primary and secondary source research. I visited as many public sites as possible and used all collected information to organize raw metadata as a beginning point to create educational resources about the public interpretation of Cherokee participation in the Civil War. The following engagement sites may be found on an interactive geographic information system (GIS), accessible via the Esri platform.[5]

[5] Stefanie M. Haire, ArcGIS.com, ArcGIS.com (Esri, August 25, 2019), Using: ArcGIS [GIS software]. Version 10.7.1. Redlands, CA: Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc., 2019, https://arcg.is/1qDrvj0 (accessed October 14, 2019).

Engagements in Arkansas

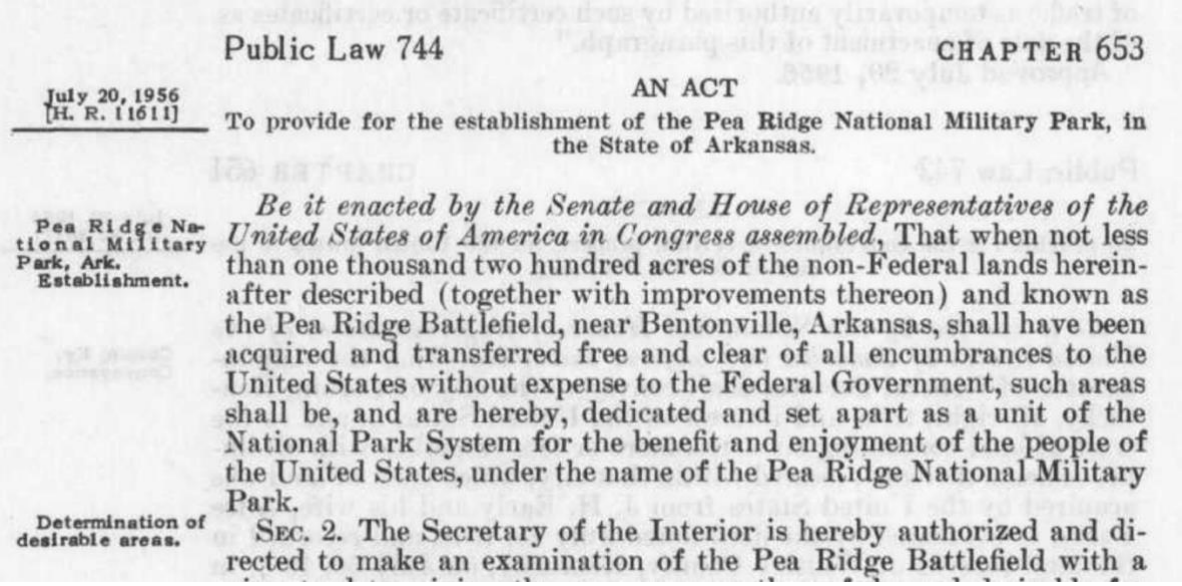
The Battle of Pea Ridge

The battle with the most participation of Cherokee soldiers was the Battle at Pea Ridge, Arkansas, from March 7-8, 1862. This engagement included the largest number of Native Americans to fight in one Civil War battle. Brigadier General Earl Van Dorn wrote from a camp in Fayetteville, "Last to arrive in Fayetteville, just in time for battle, were Pike's Confederate Indians. . . None of them were in uniforms, which were thought to be 'wasted' on Indians."[6] Colonel Stand Watie commanded the 2nd Cherokee Mounted Rifles and Brigadier General Albert Pike led the Pike's Indian Brigade. Stand Watie was therefore able to make a name for himself as a Confederate officer at Pea Ridge. A follow up April 25, 1862 skirmish between Watie's men and 200 or so Union soldiers near Elk Mills, Arkansas led to the Confederate pushing the small Federal outfit out of the vicinity of the Cherokee Nation border and into Neosho, Missouri.[7]

The National Park Service currently maintains the Pea Ridge battlefield as a National Military Park. Congress set the land aside for public use on July 20, 1956 (see

[6] John Sedgwick, *Blood Moon: an American Epic of War and Splendor in the Cherokee Nation* (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster Paperbacks, 2019), 376.

[7] Kenny Arthur Franks, *Stand Watie and the Agony of the Cherokee Nation* (Memphis, TN: Memphis State University Press, 1979), 124-126.



Public Law 744 CHAPTER 653

July 20, 1956
[H. R. 11611]

AN ACT

To provide for the establishment of the Pea Ridge National Military Park, in the State of Arkansas.

Pea Ridge National Military Park, Ark. Establishment.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That when not less than one thousand two hundred acres of the non-Federal lands hereinafter described (together with improvements thereon) and known as the Pea Ridge Battlefield, near Bentonville, Arkansas, shall have been acquired and transferred free and clear of all encumbrances to the United States without expense to the Federal Government, such areas shall be, and are hereby, dedicated and set apart as a unit of the National Park System for the benefit and enjoyment of the people of the United States, under the name of the Pea Ridge National Military Park.

Determination of desirable areas.

SEC. 2. The Secretary of the Interior is hereby authorized and directed to make an examination of the Pea Ridge Battlefield with a

Figure 5: H.R. 11611, Establishment of Pea Ridge National Military Park. Photo courtesy of gpo.gov.

Figure 5). The original creation of the park included one thousand two hundred acres, but that now has increased to some four thousand three hundred acres, making the park one of the most complete battlefield landscapes in the National Park Service system.[8]

The Pea Ridge Memorial Association holds memorial services each anniversary of the battle and has also aided in the installation of several interpretative markers. However, both Union and Confederate veterans placed the earliest monuments on the land and are still there today. What is more, the land area that makes up Pea Ridge National Military Park includes a two-and-a-half-mile section of the Trail of Tears, making the place important to the Cherokee people for yet another reason. Thus, the park is listed as a park of the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail, the Civil War Discovery

[8] National Register of Historic Places, Pea Ridge National Military Park, Pea Ridge, Benton County, Arkansas, National Register #66000199.

Trail, and the Lower Missouri Civil War Heritage Trail. The preservation actions at this Civil War battlefield meets George Boge's and Margie Holder Boge's definition of partnerships. "Cooperative management, coordinated by the NPS and involving landowners, interested citizens, and elected officials as well as local, state, and federal agencies, should form the heart of a national battlefield protection policy."[9] The park was also designated on the National Register of Historic Places on October 15, 1966.

Two stone monuments at Pea Ridge commemorate the Confederates who fought there but does not mention the Cherokee or any other Native American group. One of these markers was erected in 1887 and specifically mentioned Generals Ben McCulloch, James McIntosh, and William Slack. The other marker was set in 1889 and is titled "A United Soldiery" as a tribute to both Union and Confederate veterans.[10] A separate search of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program online marker database yielded no results for a historical marker for either the Battle at Pea Ridge or any Cherokee contribution to the Civil War. One wayside panel includes a small section on the differing loyalties of the Native American Nations in Indian Territory (see Figure 6).

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[9] Georgie Boge and Margie Boge, *Paving Over the Past: A History and Guide to Civil War Battlefield Preservation* (Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 1993), 147.

[10] William L. Shea and Earl J. Hess, *Pea Ridge: Civil War Campaign in the West* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 328.

Figure 6: Wayside panel at Pea Ridge National Military Park. Photo courtesy of Colin Miller/flickr.com.

Battle of Maysville (Old Fort Wayne or Beattie's Prairie)

On October 22, 1862, Colonel Douglas H. Cooper and his Indian Brigade were positioned near Newtonia, Missouri after receiving orders to hold the area. Brigadier General James G. Blunt and his First Division of the Army of the Frontier, which included Cherokee soldiers, moved to attack the Confederate force near Old Fort Wayne. The Battle of Maysville was the resulting skirmish which left the Union with a victory after the Confederates were forced to retreat back to Indian Territory.[11]

One historical marker remains on the landscape, on the Arkansas side of the nearby state line (see Figure 7). The Arkansas Civil War Centennial Commission erected it in 1965. Another granite marker on the Oklahoma side of the state line was originally placed in 1995 to replace an original metal highway marker. This marker was damaged

[11] Confer, 84.

in 2008 and was subsequently removed until the undamaged portion of the stone was set into a concrete base (see Figure 8).

Figure 7: Arkansas historical marker for the Battle of Maysville. Photo courtesy of Michael Manning/HMdb.org.

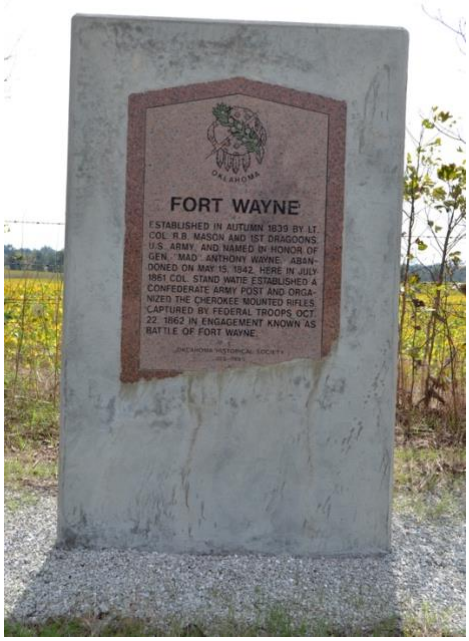

Figure 8: Oklahoma historical marker for the Battle at Old Fort Wayne. Photo courtesy of Duane Hall/HMdb.org.

Battle of Prairie Grove

The Battle of Prairie Grove occurred on December 7, 1862 in Washington County, Arkansas. It provided the opportunity, along with the Battle of Pea Ridge, for the Union to control the area known as the Trans-Mississippi West after winning both engagements. The Battle of Prairie Grove took place a mere nine months after Pea Ridge, under Union commander James Gilpatrick Blunt. He was in charge of 10,000 men, some of which were from the Cherokee and Creek nations. Thomas Carmichael Hindman was in charge of 12,000 Confederate soldiers, also including some from both the Cherokee and Creek nations.[12] Stand Watie and his "Cherokee regiment was ordered to the vicinity of Evansville, instructed, when the firing should commence, to move forward and occupy certain mills in the Cane Hill region, and to attack the enemy's train if retired toward Cincinnati."[13] When the Battle of Prairie Grove started, Watie did try to capture one of these federal supply trains, but the Union soldiers used a different route, avoiding the area where the Confederates waited. On December 10, Stand Watie received information that "federal Indians were preparing to attack his camp, Watie marched against the Northerners the next day, forcing them to withdraw."[14]

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[12] Don Montgomery, "Battle of Prairie Grove," Encyclopedia of Arkansas, October 25, 2017. https://encyclopediaofarkansas.net/entries/battle-of-prairie-grove-513/ (accessed September 20, 2019).

[13] Robert N. Scott et al., *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. Series I, Volume XXII* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880), 139.

[14] Franks, 133.

The Battle of Prairie Grove is one of the few engagements during the Civil War with Native Americans on both sides of the fight. Some 351 acres were preserved through the American Battlefield Trust as the Prairie Grove Battlefield State Park,[15] totaling 900 preserved acres altogether in partnership with Arkansas State Parks. There are at least three historical markers at the site, and none of them include language about a Cherokee component to the battle (see Figure 9).

Figure 9: Battle of Prairie Grove Historical Marker. Photo courtesy of Michael Noirot/battlefieldportraits.com.

[15] "Saved Land," American Battlefield Trust, 2019, https://www.battlefields.org/preserve/saved-land (accessed August 5, 2019).

Battle of Massard Prairie

Fought on July 27, 1864, the Battle of Massard Prairie was located in present-day Sebastian County, Arkansas near Fort Smith. Some eight hundred Confederate men attacked a group of two hundred Union troops. After only fifteen minutes, Confederates captured one hundred and forty Union prisoners, and the skirmish was finished. Confederate forces included "troops from the Choctaw, Cherokee, Seminole, Creek, and Chickasaw nations."[16] The Fort Smith Convention & Visitor's Bureau organized the Massard Prairie Battlefield Park, and the site was added to the Arkansas Register of Historic Places on November 7, 2001. One stone marker stands at the park which presents general information about this brief engagement but does not specifically offer insight into the Cherokee contribution (see Figure 10).

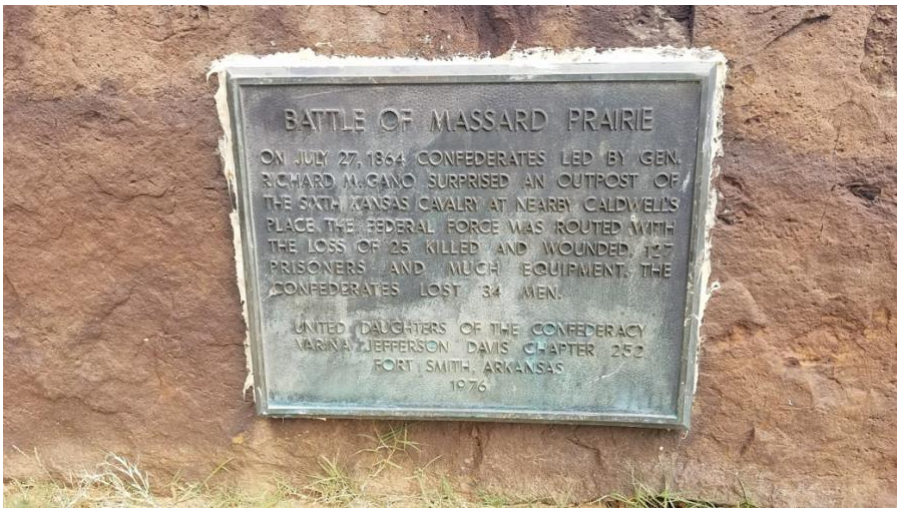

Figure 10: Detail of the Battle of Massard Prairie historical marker. Photo courtesy of Robert Latus/inspirock.com.

[16] "Massard Prairie Battlefield Park," American Battlefield Trust, July 17, 2018, https://www.battlefields.org/visit/heritage-sites/massard-prairie-battlefield-park (accessed August 5, 2019).

Battle of Fort Smith

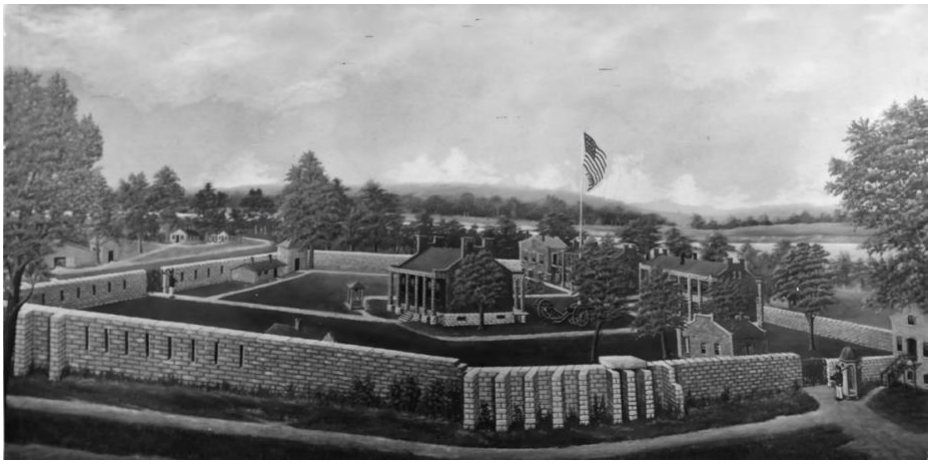

Figure 11: Artist Rendering of Fort Smith, circa 1838. Courtesy of the National Register of Historic Places, ID Number 66000202.

The Battle of Fort Smith was a small skirmish that took place on July 31, 1864. The first fort was established on December 25, 1817 as a way to preserve peace between the Osage and the Cherokee but was abandoned in 1824. The second phase of the fort began in 1838, lasted through to 1871, and is the focus of the Civil War engagement which occurred at the site (see Figure 11). Two brigades from Indian Territory fought along with the Trans-Mississippi Department under the command Brigadier General Douglas H. Cooper. Brigadier Generals Stand Watie and Richard Gano were present to lead the brigades. Brigadier General John M. Thayer commanded the Union forces. It was a Union victory with withdrawal orders given by Cooper.[17] Several

[17] Frank Arey, "Action at Fort Smith," Encyclopedia of Arkansas, December 3, 2018, https://encyclopediaofarkansas.net/entries/action-at-fort-smith-524/ (accessed July 3, 2019).

newspapers included an address from Stand Watie to the Cherokee Nation which mentioned the event:

> The next spring saw the enemy strongly intrenched at Fort Gibson, and at the close of the following summer, Fort Smith, the key of Western Arkansas and the Indian Territory, passed out of Southern possession. No efforts that could then be made by brave and zealous soldiers, under truly able commanders, could prevent, or did prevent, the whole navigable portion of Arkansas river, with its contingent territory, from falling into Federal hands.[18]

Fort Smith is now managed as a unit of the National Park Service as a National Historic Site. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on October 15, 1966.[19]

Engagements in Missouri

Battle of Wilson's Creek

The Battle of Wilson's Creek occurred on August 10, 1861, just weeks before the Cherokee Nation formally sided with the Confederacy. It is considered to be the first major battle that took place west of the Mississippi River during the Civil War. Chief John Ross had been keeping track of Confederate success in the early stages of war and noted the need to raise a home guard under John Drew after the Confederate win at Wilson's Creek. An official Cherokee regiment was not present at the battle, and "Watie was not at Wilson's Creek, but a number of his men were, joining McCulloch's troops on

[18] The Wilmington Journal was published by Alfred L. Price and David Fulton from 1844-1895. It was also a politically democrat and pro-Confederate newspaper. Stand Watie, "Cherokee Indians: To the Honorable Members of the National Committee and Council in General Council Convened," *Wilmington Journal*, November 17, 1864.

[19] National Register of Historic Places, Fort Smith National Historic Site, Fort Smith, Sebastian County, Arkansas, National Register # 66000202.

an individual, voluntary basis."[20] This small group included some Cherokees who "participated in the important Wilson's Creek or Oak Hills, Missouri, just southwest of Springfield. Joel Mayes, a well-known Cherokee cattleman, was the captain of a Cherokee company serving as scout to Brigadier General Ben McCulloch's Confederate army of Arkansas, Louisiana, Missouri, and Texas troops."[21]

Wilson's Creek National Battlefield museum has an original battle flag of the First Cherokee Mounted Rifles in its collection (see Figure 12). That flag was captured on July 3, 1862 at Locust Grove in Indian Territory by a private in the Union army. The museum at Wilson's Creek collected this artifact to commemorate the contributions of the Cherokee to that battle. No markers or monuments exist on the physical landscape which acknowledges this participation, though. There is small stone monument located on top of "Bloody Ridge" that is primarily dedicated to General Nathaniel Lyon, the first Union general that was killed in action. This 1928 marker is within the boundaries of Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Park, a unit of the National Park Service.[22]

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[20] Wilfred Knight, *Red Fox: Stand Watie and the Confederate Indian Nations During the Civil War Years in Indian Territory* (Glendale, CA: A.H. Clark Co., 1988), 66.

[21] W. Craig Gaines, *The Confederate Cherokees: John Drews Regiment of Mounted Rifles* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1989), 6-7.

[22] "Wilson's Creek - Virtual Tour Stop 7," National Park Service. U.S. Department of the Interior, April 10, 2015, https://www.nps.gov/wicr/learn/photosmultimedia/virtual-tour-stop-7.htm (accessed July 1, 2019).

Figure 12: First Cherokee Mounted Rifles battle flag. Photo courtesy of Wilson's Creek National Battlefield; WICR 30118.

Newtonia Battlefields

Two separate battles were fought at Newtonia, Missouri during the Civil War. The First Battle at Newtonia took place on September 30, 1862 and was one of the few engagements during the war where Native Americans fought on both sides, against one another. It was a Confederate victory under Colonel J.O. Shelby just months after the Battle of Pea Ridge. "Southern forces had Choctaw, Cherokee, and Chickasaw soldiers, while other Cherokee soldiers fought with the North."[23] This Union defeat was

[23] "Newtonia Battlefield," American Battlefield Trust, July 17, 2018. https://www.battlefields.org/visit/heritage-sites/newtonia-battlefield (accessed May 28, 2019).

additionally worrisome because Confederate newspapers claimed "that the battle was turned by none other than Stand Watie, whose men had seized all but one of the North's artillery pieces in the rout. This proved to be an exaggeration, and there was even some question as to whether Watie was there."[24] Even if Stand Watie was not present himself, several of his Cherokee men were and that constitutes a contribution.

A report from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources was submitted to the Senate in 2007 was prepared in order to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study on the battlefield at Newtonia, stating that "the September 30, 1862 battle involved Native American soldiers directly fighting each other," which was one reason to determine if additional protection for the land was warranted.[25] However, that study concluded that the Newtonia Battlefields do not meet congressional criteria to be designated as a newly established National Park Service unit or to be added to the boundary of Wilson's Creek National Battlefield.[26]

A wayside panel dedicated to the First Battle of Newtonia mentions the participation of Native Americans but does not specifically mention Cherokees (see Figure 13). The panel for the Second Battle of Newtonia does not mention either Cherokees or Native Americans at all.

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[24] Sedgwick, 369.

[25] Jeff Bingaman, "Newtonia Civil War Battlefields Study, Missouri: Report to Accompany H.R. 376," (Washington, D.C., Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2007), 4.

[26] "Newtonia Battlefields Special Resource Study," (Washington, D.C., Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2013), 40.

Figure 13: First Battle of Newtonia wayside panel. Photo courtesy of Dale Johnson/HMdb.org

Engagements in North Carolina

Battle of Quallatown (Affair at Deep Creek)

An engagement between the 14th Illinois Cavalry under Major Francis M. Davidson and the Thomas Legion occurred on February 2, 1864 at Deep Creek, about ten miles west of Quallatown.[27] Located in North Carolina, Quallatown was a community of Cherokees who were not required to relocate to Indian Territory in 1838. Eighteen Confederate Cherokees were taken as prisoners as a result of the 1864 affair and "the

[27] "Illinois Soldiers Overrun Thomas's Legion, 1864," NC DNCR, December 21, 2016, https://www.ncdcr.gov/blog/2016/02/02/illinois-soldiers-overrun-thomass-legion-1864 (accessed June 1, 2019).

Northerners claimed that the Battle of Deep Creek was a great victory in which they had wiped out several Thomas Indian companies."[28] While this statement was not correct, this event did discourage some confidence that the Eastern Cherokee held in the Confederacy, although the imprisoned Cherokee returned to Confederate service after their release. The North Carolina Highway Historical Marker Program sponsored a historical marker near this site in Bryson City, North Carolina (see Figure 14).

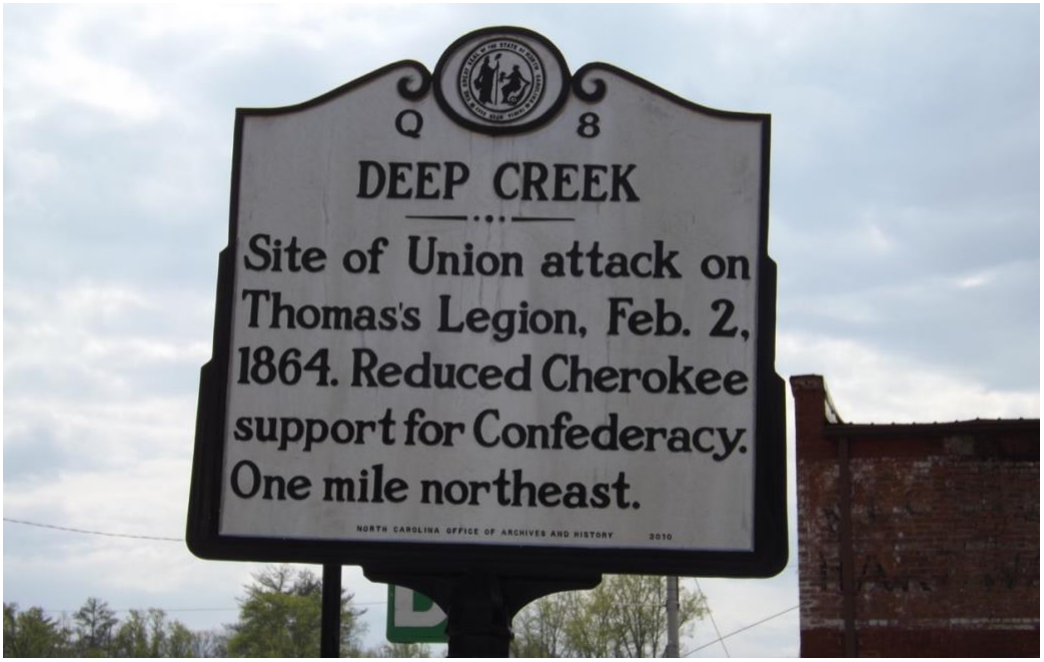

Figure 14: Deep Creek marker in Bryson City, NC. Courtesy of the NC Highway Historical Marker Program (Q8).

[28] E. Stanly Godbold Jr., and Mattie U. Russell, *Confederate Colonel and Cherokee Chief: The Life of William Holland Thomas* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1990), 120.

White Sulphur Springs Skirmish and the Battle of Waynesville

The skirmish at White Sulphur Springs transpired on May 7, 1865 near Waynesville about a month after the Battle of Appomattox Court House.[29] The Thomas Legion surprised Lieutenant Colonel William C. Bartlett and his Union troops, forcing them to retreat to Waynesville.[30] A 1923 monument commemorates it as the site of the "last shot" of the war, although that is an unverified statement (see Figure 15).[31] There is also a marker for the Battle House which mentions the Thomas Legion in Waynesville.

Figure 15: Civil War Veteran at "Last Shot Fired" Monument, Waynesville, NC, 1923. Courtesy of civilwartalk.com.

[29] Kelly Agan, "North Carolina's 'Last Shot' in the Civil War: Surrender of General James Green Martin at Waynesville," NCpedia, 2015, https://www.ncpedia.org/north-carolinas-last-shot-civil-war (accessed September 2, 2019).

[30] John C. Inscoe and Gordon B. McKinney, *The Heart of Confederate Appalachia: Western North Carolina in the Civil War* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 258.

[31] Douglas Butler, *North Carolina Civil War Monuments: An Illustrated History* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2013), 208.

Engagements in Oklahoma

Fort Gibson

Fort Gibson was initially built in 1824 in order to keep peace between the Osage and Cherokee peoples. It was abandoned in 1857 but was then briefly reoccupied during the Civil War by Confederate troops, as it is located on a strategic point above the Grand River. Fort Gibson also served as a base for Union Major General James Blunt and his men before fighting at Honey Springs, after Confederates were forced to relinquish control over the fort. "The military had constructed stone storehouses which the Indian Brigade could use for supplies. The Second Indian Home Guards went in first and pushed out a company of Watie's men, thus clearing Confederate forces"[32] north of the Arkansas River. Confederate Brigadier General William Steele wrote about these 1863 activities in one of his war reports:

> A second expedition, under Col. Stand Watie, was sent to the west of Grand River and in rear of Fort Gibson, with the view of attacking a large train of the enemy and a number of re-enforcements, known to be *en route* for Gibson. General Cabell was ordered to co-operate in this movement, by way of Fayetteville. Col. Stand Watie came up with the enemy's train and made an attack upon it. He was, however, able to accomplish little, owing to the failure of a junction of the forces under Cabell and others sent to his assistance by General Cooper. . . The enemy having thus succeeded in getting into Gibson considerable re-enforcements and a quantity of supplies, assumed the offensive from that base of operations.[33]

Fort Gibson then served as a safe haven for Unionist Cherokee and also as the Union headquarters in Indian Territory, under the new name of Fort Blunt. The Confederates

[32] Confer, 86.

[33] Scott et al., 32.

were not able to regain control of the site for the remainder of the war. Fort Gibson was not used again until 1890, when it served as the headquarters for the Dawes Commission.[34]

Fort Gibson Historic Site now interprets the history of this area under the Oklahoma Historical Society, with additional operating support provided by the Cherokee Nation. Several buildings were restored, including the barracks building and the hospital is currently undergoing restoration. Fort Gibson is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and as a National Historic Landmark. Hiking trails connect the earlier fort to post-Civil War buildings and limited interpretation is present. There is no mention of the Cherokee component to the Civil War on the landscape or on the website for Fort Gibson.

Battle of Locust Grove

On July 2, 1862, a skirmish broke out near Locust Grove (now Mayes County). Colonel William Weer commanded a group of 250 Union men and defeated a similar number of Confederate men under Colonel James J. Clarkson. As part of the charge on Locust Grove, the 6th Kansas Cavalry Regiment "encountered Watie's Cherokee regiment at Watie's mills on Spavinaw Creek."[35] Before the Confederates had a chance to respond, Union forces captured their officers. Although the Battle of Locust Grove was

[34] Brad Agnew, "Fort Gibson Historic Site: The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture," Oklahoma Historical Society, n.d., https://www.okhistory.org/sites/fortgibson (accessed August 3, 2019).

[35] Gaines, 103.

small, its impact was notable. “The Confederate soldiers who escaped capture at Locust Grove retreated toward Park Hill and Tahlequah, causing panic that resulted in large-scale desertions among the pro-Confederate Cherokees.”[36] In this battle, John “Drew’s Cherokee regiment faced the Union Cherokees, and many of them deserted to Weer.”[37]

The First Cherokee Mounted Rifles battle flag was captured at Locust Grove on July 3, 1862 by Lieutenant David Whittaker of the 10th Kansas Volunteer Infantry Regiment, which is now in the museum collections at Wilson’s Creek National Battlefield (see Figure 12).[38] There is no interpretation about the involvement of Watie’s men at Locust Grove or the resulting impact on the Cherokee Nation (see Figure 16).

Figure 16: Battle of Locust Grove marker. Photo courtesy of Michael Manning/HMdb.org.

[36] Jon D. May, “Battle of Locust Grove: The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture,” Oklahoma Historical Society, n.d. https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=LO003 (accessed September 14, 2019).

[37] William G. McLoughlin, *After the Trail of Tears: The Cherokees Struggle for Sovereignty, 1839-1880* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 204.

[38] “Gallery: Native Americans in the War,” Civil War Virtual Museum | Native Americans in the War | Cherokee Braves Flag, 2011, http://www.civilwarvirtualmuseum.org/1861-1862/native-americans-in-the-war/cherokee-braves-flag.php (accessed September 14, 2019).

Figure 17: This granite monument stands on the property at Cabin Creek Battlefield and was dedicated in June 1961. Courtesy of the National Register of Historic Places, ID Number 71000669.

Battle of Cabin Creek

The First Battle of Cabin Creek occurred on July 1-2, 1863 and was a failed attempt by Colonel Stand Watie to capture a supply wagon train for federal troops. They were "forced to withdraw after trying to capture another wagon train."[39] The Second Battle of Cabin Creek happened little more than a year later, in September 1864. Brigadier Generals Richard Gano and Stand Watie once again attempted to block a federal supply train, which succeeded in the capture of both the supplies and around 130 wagons. "Watie had 800 Indian soldiers in his command" from the Cherokee, Creek, and Seminole nations.[40] This second battle was the final major engagement of the Civil War in Indian Territory.

These important events have been commemorated through preservation attempts by the Oklahoma Historical Society, which acquired roughly ten acres of the associated site through a donation, after the Vinita Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy purchased the land parcel in 1961. A nonprofit organization called the Friends of Cabin Creek Battlefield, Inc. has carried out additional educational projects. These efforts on behalf of all involved parties include a short driving tour, monuments, and interpretive markers. The site is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places, first registered in 1971. Regarding preservation of the site, the Cabin Creek National Register application included:

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[39] Steven L. Warren, *The Second Battle of Cabin Creek: Brilliant Victory* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2012), 41.

[40] Ibid., 43.

> The original appearance of Cabin Creek Battlefield was quite similar to today. Much of the area was heavily wooded as at present; agriculture has made few encroachments. The old U.S. Military Road is no longer open across Cabin Creek, and a small log stockade present during the Civil War years no longer stands. The bed of Cabin Creek has shifted but little since the Civil War. Virtually no erosion has occurred to the bluffs above Cabin Creek since the war.[41]

Changes in the landscape have occurred, including the absence of a period building on the site, potential damage to archaeological resources due to agricultural practices, and the situation of historic markers on the landscape. One of these markers erected by the United Daughters of the Confederacy includes Stand Watie's name (see Figure 17). The Oklahoma Historical Society erected another, which details the Cherokee contribution (see Figure 18).

Figure 18: Cabin Creek Battlefield Marker. Photo courtesy of Paul Ridenour/paulridenour.com.

[41] National Register of Historic Places, Cabin Creek Battlefield, Pensacola, Mayes County, Oklahoma, National Register #71000669.

Battle of Honey Springs

The Honey Springs Battlefield has been a point of continued efforts for the Oklahoma Historical Society. This engagement occurred on July 17, 1863, with Cherokee and Creek regiments fighting on both sides. The managed site currently includes over 1,000 acres, a new visitor center, interpretative signage, and six walking trails. It has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1970, as well as a National Historic Landmark in 2013, with the application noting the condition of the site as such,

> The original condition of the Honey Springs battle site was not much different from today. Several changes, however, should be noted. Since the 1920s the Texas Road, which originally bisected the 2,993-acre battlefield, has been closed and returned to nature and agricultural purposes. The log station and storage building, together with the stone Confederate powder house (at Honey Springs itself), no longer stand, though the foundation of the powder magazine remains.[42]

Additionally, reenactments of the battle take place for special events and school groups on a biannual basis. The latter activity is relatively common for historic battlefields, but also encourages degradation of the landscape in a preservation sense. Indeed, there are multiple shared concerns with preservationists regarding the space of battlefields. Reenactments can cause confusion with archaeological work, as the materials used in such theatric displays are found in juxtaposition with authentic artifacts. Such an issue is a threat to the continued preservation of the place and conservation of the archaeological data that remains on the field. Additional trepidations include the prior repairs, construction, and demolition of structures on associated property, the act of

[42] National Register of Historic Places, Honey Springs Battlefield, Oktaha and Rentiesville, Muskogee and McIntosh County, Oklahoma, National Register #70000848.

farming and the related cultivation of the plow zone, raising livestock, fallow areas growing into wooded spaces, and looters.[43] These concerns are virtually the same across an array of battlefields and similar outdoor spaces.

One historical monument on the Honey Springs commemorative landscape specifically mentions the contributions of Native Americans. The Intertribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes dedicated it on July 18, 1987 (see Figure 19). Several other markers memorialize different groups. The Oklahoma Historical Society also sponsors Honey Springs Battlefield and Visitor Center.

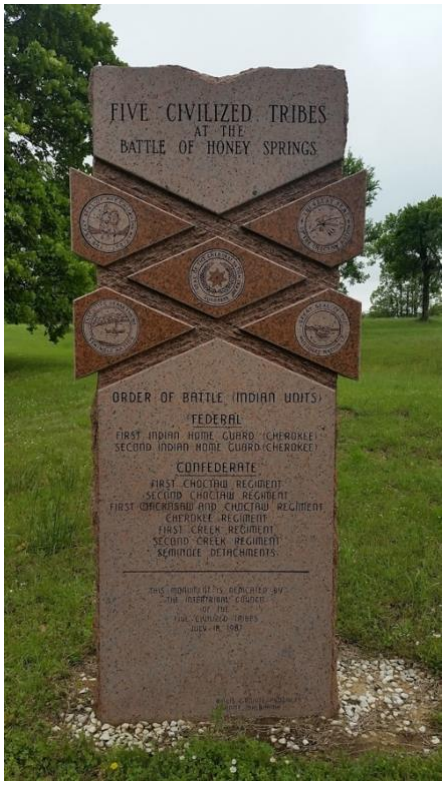

Figure 19: Monument dedicated to the Five Civilized Tribes at the Battle of Honey Springs. Photo courtesy of rachanaontheroad.blogspot.com.

[43] William B. Lees, "Battlefield Preservation in Oklahoma," (Fort Smith, Arkansas, 1995), 133-34.

Webbers Falls

Webbers Falls was settled as a trading post in 1828, ahead of the Indian Removal Act of 1830. In April 1863, Union troops burned the plantation style-home of Joseph "Rich Joe" Vann in Webbers Falls to the ground while searching for Stand Watie. This building was also the original starting point for the Slave Revolt of 1842.[44] "In 1863 Union troops burned Vann's home along with most of the town but failed to capture Confederate Gen. Stand Watie and his troops, who had established headquarters at Webbers Falls during the Civil War."[45] One historical marker exists beside the bridge over the Arkansas River. In 1995, the Oklahoma Historical Society erected a stone marker (see Figure 20). There is no mention of Stand Watie on either marker.

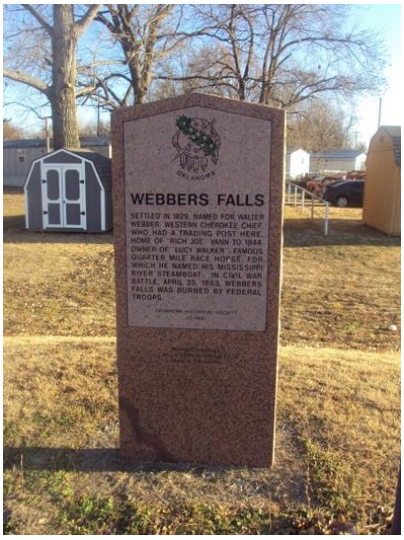

Figure 20: Webbers Falls Historical Marker. Photo courtesy of Michael Manning/HMdb.org.

[44] Daniel F. Littlefield and Lonnie E. Underhill, "Slave "Revolt" in the Cherokee Nation, 1842," *American Indian Quarterly* 3, no. 2 (1977): 127.

[45] Linda Mayes Miller, "Webbers Falls: The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture," n.d., https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=WE007 (accessed August 15, 2019).

Ambush of Pleasant Bluff

The only naval battle in Oklahoma during the Civil War, the Ambush of Pleasant Bluff, occurred on June 15, 1864. Colonel Stand Watie directed his men to capture the steamboat *J.R. Williams* full of Federal supplies at Pleasant Bluff along the Arkansas River near Tamaha. Wilfred Knight wrote of the soldiers, "they were beside themselves with enthusiasm and excitement as their capture of the cargo literally meant survival for many of their families."[46] Before Watie secured all of the provisions onboard, Colonel John Ritchie ambushed the Confederates and stopped them from taking the flour, bacon, tin ware, and other dry goods. Stand Watie burned the *J.R. Williams* along with its cargo in response to the skirmish. Today, there is a stone marker (see Figure 21) located near the site, recognizing Stand Watie's role in the battle, along with the participation of the Choctaws, Chickasaws, Creeks, and Seminoles on the southern side.

Figure 21: Battle of the J.R. Williams monument. Photo courtesy of Michael Manning/HMdb.org.

[46] Knight, 222.

Battle of Round Mountain
Battle of Chusto-Talasah (Caving Banks, Little High Shoals)
Battle of Chustenahlah (or Patriot Hills)

Multiple conflicts involving the Unionist groups under Creek Chief Opothleyahola occurred in November and December 1861. Opothleyahola was leading a group of around 2000-2500 people with him out of Confederate territory when they were repeatedly attacked for not accepting their nations' alliances with the Confederacy. Colonel Douglas H. Cooper led a group of perhaps 1300 soldiers in addition to Colonel John Drew's First Cherokee Mounted Rifles and suffered only minor numbers of casualties. "Watie's forces routed the Unionist Indians, suffering few casualties."[47] However, many men deserted the First Cherokee Mounted Rifles after being forced to attack fleeing elders, women, and children. At least one Oklahoma Historical Society monument is dedicated to the Battle of Chustenahlah (see Figure 22).

Figure 22: Battle of Chustenahlah marker. Oklahoma Historical Society 167-1995. Photo courtesy of blogoklahoma.us

[47] Laurence M. Hauptman, *Between Two Fires: American Indians in the Civil War* (New York, NY: Free Press Paperbacks, 1996), 49.

Doaksville Archaeological Site

The final surrender of the Civil War came at a village in Indian Territory called Doaksville on June 23, 1865 by Brigadier General Stand Watie, one of only two Native Americans to ever attain that rank. While the precise location of the surrender cannot be pinpointed, as Doaksville rapidly declined after the close of the Civil War, there is an archaeological site that is accessible to the public which interprets the story there (see Figure 23). The Oklahoma Historical Society now maintains the site, which includes a short hiking trail and interpretive signage.[48]

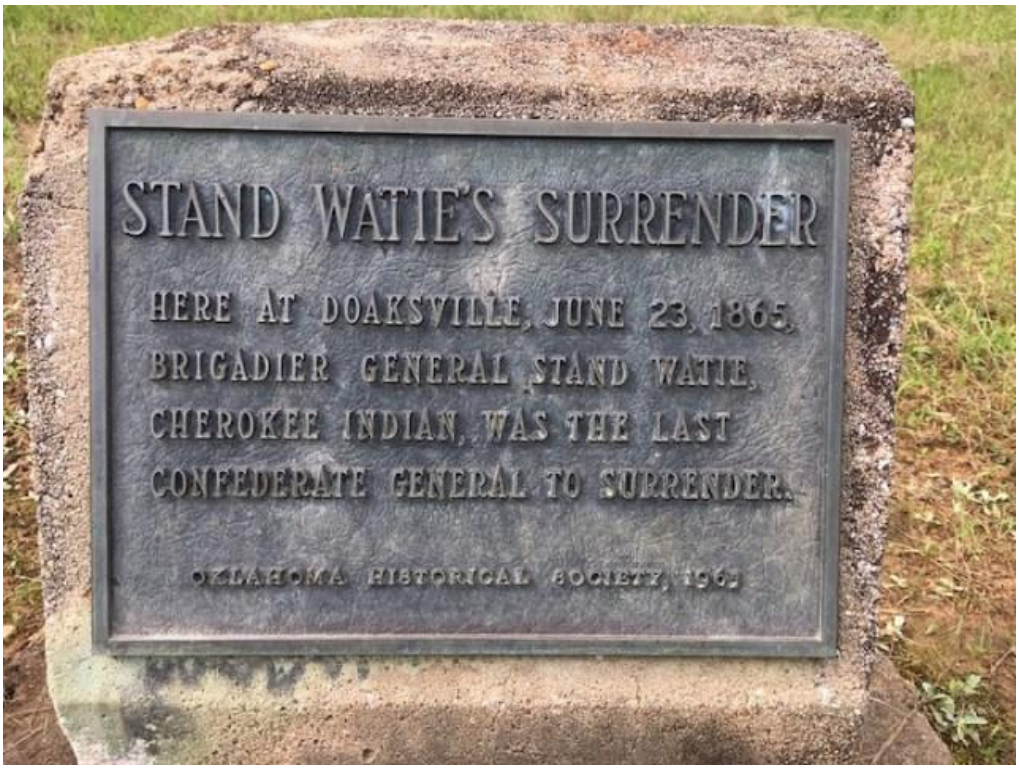

Figure 23: Marker to commemorate Stand Watie's surrender near Doaksville. Erected by the Oklahoma Historical Society in 1965. Courtesy of Chris MacKowski/emergingcivilwar.com.

[48] Robert M. Dunkerly, *To the Bitter End: Appomattox, Bennett Place, and the Surrenders of the Confederacy* (El Dorado Hills, CA: Savas Beatie, 2015), 134.

Other notable Confederate monuments are located in front of the Cherokee National Courthouse building (see Figures 24 & 25), which is now home to the Cherokee National History Museum. One is dedicated to the Confederate Cherokees who perished in the fighting, and the other to Stand Watie.[49] These are not located at the site of any specific battle, but in front of the building which once signified justice and order.

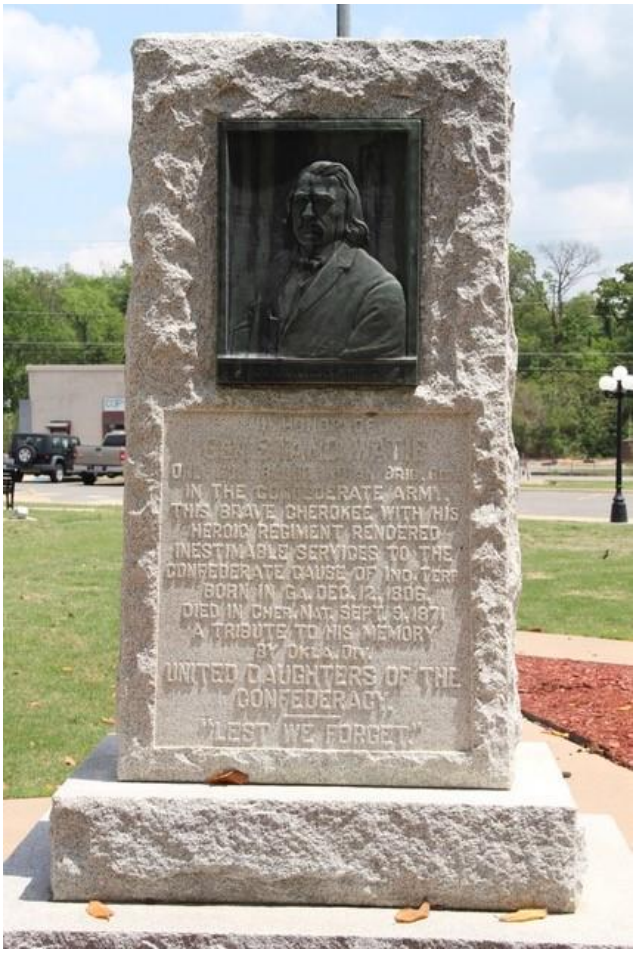

Figure 24: Confederate monument, dedicated to Stand Watie, in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. Carroll Van West, photographer.

[49] Jacob McCleland, "As Cities Remove Confederate Monuments, Cherokees Grapple with Civil War Past," KGOU, August 31, 2017, https://www.kgou.org/post/cities-remove-confederate-monuments-cherokees-grapple-civil-war-past (accessed March 14, 2019).

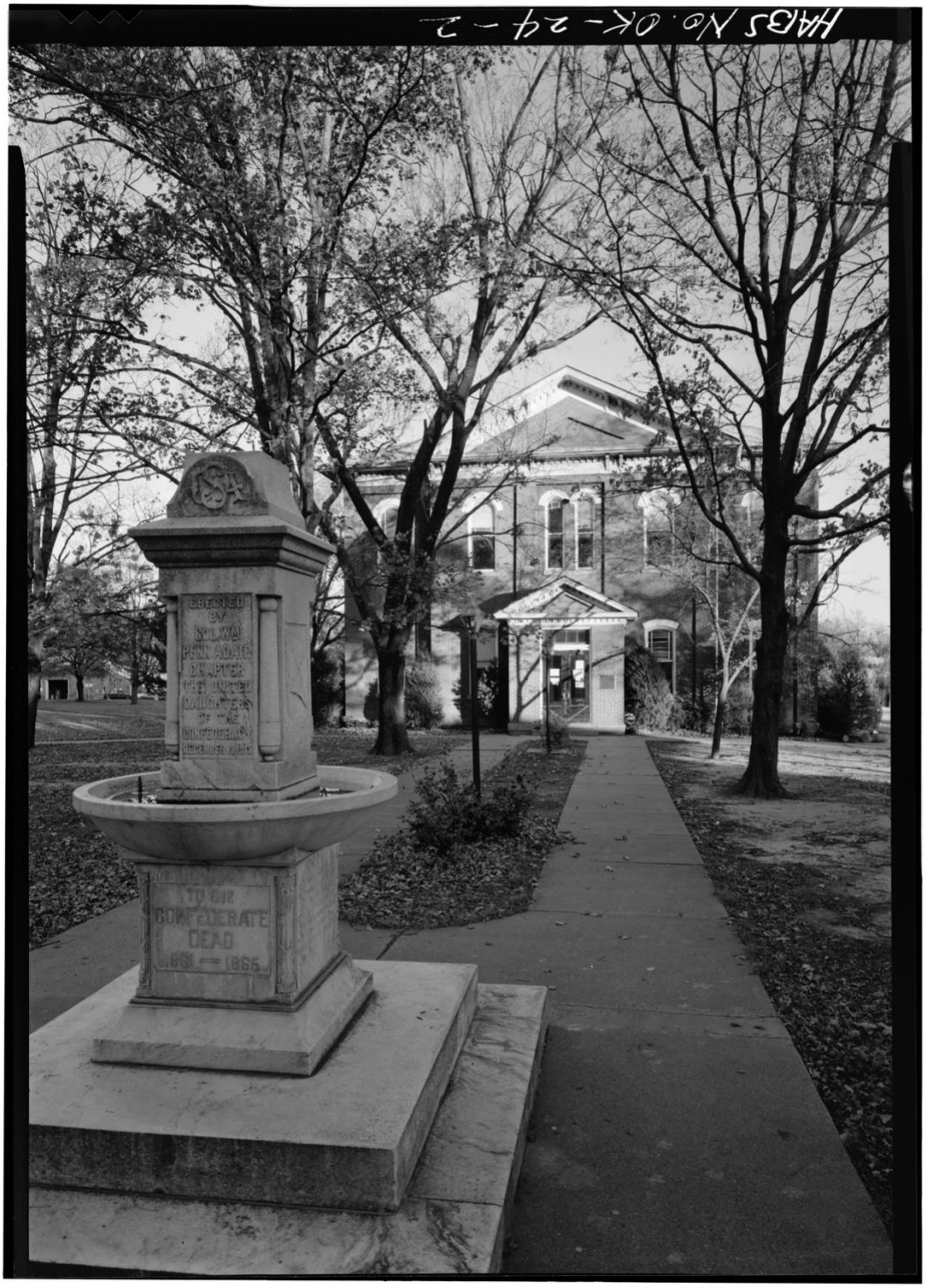

Figure 25: Cherokee National Capitol Building, 101-29 South Muskogee Avenue, Tahlequah, Cherokee County, OK (Confederate Monument in foreground). Photograph by HABS, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.. HABS *OKLA, 11-TAHL, 2*-2.

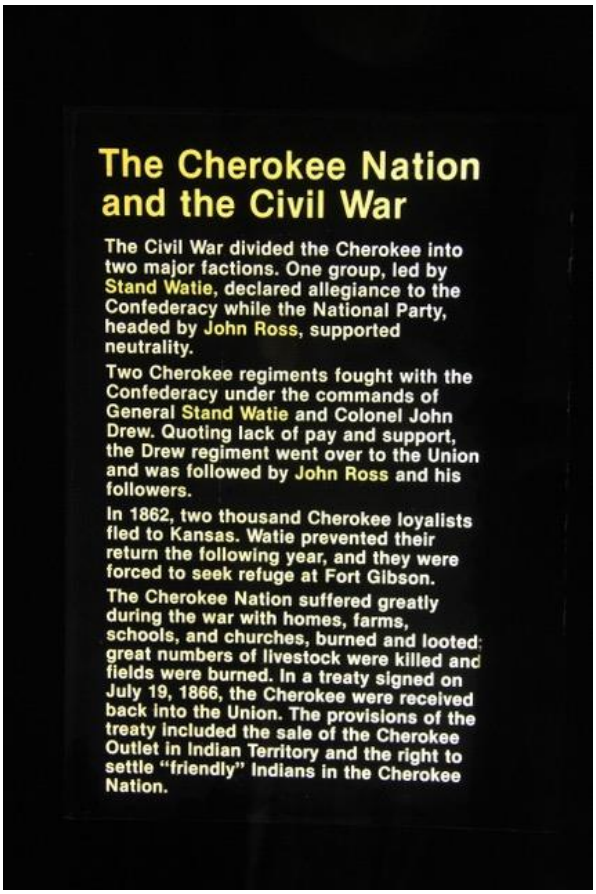

Figure 26: "The Cherokee Nation and Civil War" interpretive panel, Sequoyah's Cabin Historic Site, Sallisaw, Oklahoma. Carroll Van West, photographer.

Additional interpretive materials are scattered throughout the state of Oklahoma. For example, Sequoyah's Cabin Historic Site in Sallisaw, Oklahoma interprets general information about the Cherokee role in the Civil War through an interpretive panel inside the museum (see Figure 26). This museum was preserved and is managed by the Oklahoma Historical Society and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1966.[50] The John Ross Museum in Tahlequah, Oklahoma also has interpretive

[50] National Register of Historic Places, Sequoyah's Cabin, Sallisaw, Sequoyah County, Oklahoma, National Register #66000634.

signage present which details the Cherokee contribution to the Civil War (see Figures 27 & 28).

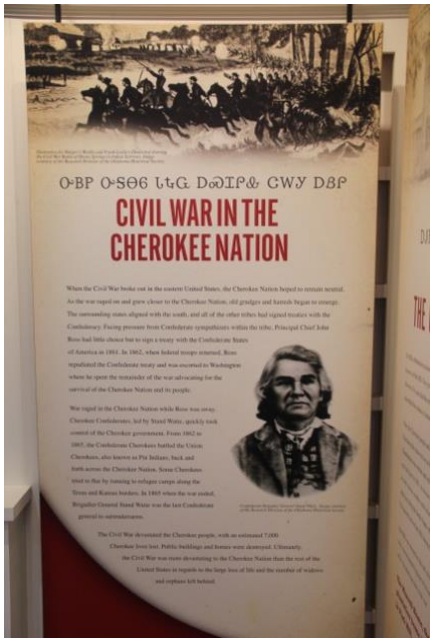

Figure 27: "Civil War in the Cherokee Nation" interpretive panel, John Ross Museum, Tahlequah, Oklahoma. Carroll Van West, photographer.

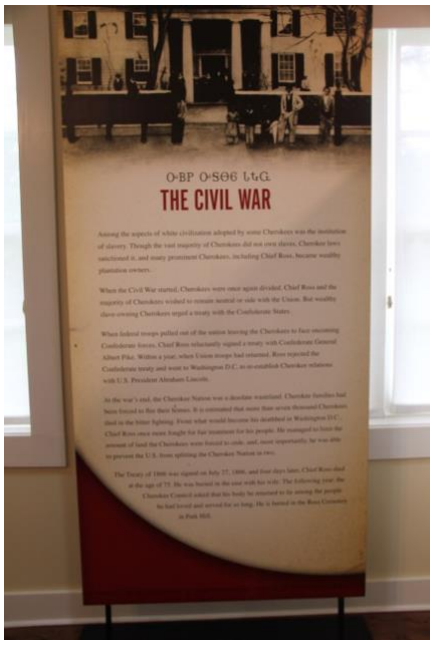

Figure 28: "Civil War" interpretive panel, John Ross Museum, Tahlequah, Oklahoma. Carroll Van West, photographer.

Engagements in Tennessee

Strawberry Plains

Although not a singular conflict, the first order for Thomas's Legion of Cherokee Indians and Highlanders was to guard a railroad bridge at Strawberry Plains outside of Camp Ogonstoka near Knoxville (see Figure 29). E. Stanly Godbold, Jr. and Mattie U. Russell explain the importance of this seemingly tedious mission:

> About mid-May, they were ordered to Strawberry Plains, about fourteen miles from Knoxville, to guard the Tennessee and Virginia Railroad bridge over the Holston River. The bridge was about seventy miles south of the Virginia state line and the Shenandoah Valley and was located between the Cumberland and Great Smoky Mountains. The valleys and gaps through which this railroad and its connectors passed from Virginia to Knoxville, to Chattanooga, and Atlanta, formed a route into the heartland of the South.[51]

The Thomas Legion "performed many important duties throughout the region, including defending gaps in the Cumberland and Smoky Mountains, arresting deserters in Georgia, and defending the railroad lines from Bristol to Chattanooga."[52] Specifically, they went "into Haywood, Jackson, and Cherokee Counties, North Carolina, and Clay County, Georgia, with orders to arrest all deserters and recusant conscripts and all tories who have been engaged in unlawful practices on the Tennessee line of the mountains."[53]

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[51] E. Stanly Godbold and Mattie U. Russell, *Confederate Colonel and Cherokee Chief: The Life of William Holland Thomas* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1990), 103.

[52] Vicki Rozema, *Footsteps of the Cherokees: A Guide to the Eastern Homelands of the Cherokee Nation* (Winston-Salem, NC: John F. Blair Publisher, 2007), 140.

[53] Robert N. Scott et al., *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. Series I, Volume XVIII* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1887), 811.

No historical marker exists on the landscape around Strawberry Plains regarding either the Cherokee component in the defense of the area or for failed the Union attack on the railroad bridge in November 1861. The Strawberry Plains story is also omitted on an interactive map that was generated by the Civil War Trails, Inc. program, due to a landowner's objection.

Figure 29: Strawberry Plains, Tennessee. Battlefield (Railroad Bridge on Holston Rover). 1864. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.. LC-DIG-cwpb-02142.

Baptist Gap

A skirmish occurred at Baptist Gap, near Rogersville, Tennessee, on September 13-15, 1862 between the 49th Indiana and Confederate forces under Major General J.P. McCown. This engagement was intended to protect Confederate communication lines in the region. "When the Confederates received information that Union soldiers were preparing to move through gaps south of the Cumberland Mountains from southwestern Virginia into eastern Tennessee,"[54] two companies of Thomas Legion were ordered to protect the area. Second Lieutenant Astoogatogeh, who was the grandson of the late eastern Cherokee Chief Junaluska, perished during the fighting at Baptist Gap after charging towards the 49th Indiana Regiment.[55] His death prompted a renewed energy for the rest of the Cherokees, and they drove the Union soldiers away from the gap.[56] There is currently no marker or other interpretive signage located at the site or in nearby Rogersville, Tennessee.

[54] Godbold and Russell, 105.

[55] "Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers Who Served in Organizations from the State of North Carolina," § (n.d.); Record Group 109 - Carded Records Showing Military Service of Soldiers Who Fought in Confederate Organizations, compiled 1903-1927, documenting the period 1861-1865; Mallett's Battalion (Camp Guard) and McCorkle's Battalion, Senior Reserves and McLean's Battalion, Light Duty Men and Thomas' Legion (Astoogatogeh, Confederate Army), https://www.fold3.com/document/58665716/ (accessed September 12, 2019).

[56] Rozema, 48.

Battle of Burg Hill

On December 10, 1863, the 15th Pennsylvania Cavalry under Colonel William J. Palmer surprised the Confederate soldiers in William Holland Thomas's Legion of Cherokee Indians and Highlanders. The Thomas Legion camped on a hill overlooking the town in an area called White Oak Flats (now known as Gatlinburg in Sevier County, Tennessee) and were forced to retreat through the streets after the Union force pushed them out of camp. Thomas "marched his troops to Gatlinburg, on the Tennessee side of the Smokies, perhaps in response to a suggestion from General Vance that he guard the entrance to the mountain passes on their western side."[57] William Holland Thomas wrote an article for local newspapers after the skirmish:

> My command being assigned to duty with Brig. Gen. Vance, by Gen. Bragg, when the command is brought together in East Tennessee, the heart of the Confederacy, it is quite probable that more important services may be rendered. Better have a home in the mountains, where civil and religious liberty can still exist, than submit to Lincoln's hirelings, though we be furnished with the flesh-pots of Egypt.[58]

The Civil War Trails Program placed a marker at the Gatlinburg Special Events Office to commemorate the history of this brief event in 2017 (see Figures 30 & 31). There are no other markers present in downtown Gatlinburg for further historical contextualization.

[57] Godbold and Russell, 117.

[58] William H. Thomas, "Thomas' Legion. Smoky Mountains, Dec. 25, 1863," *The Charlotte Democrat*, January 26, 1864.

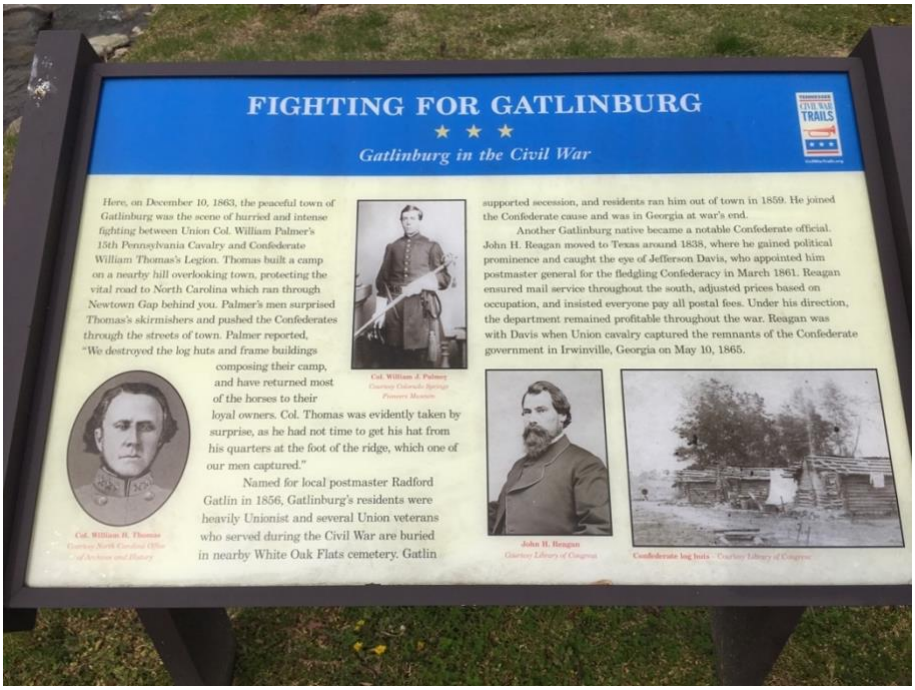

Figure 30: Civil War Trails wayside panel. Author's photo collection.

Figure 31: Civil War Trails wayside panels in Gatlinburg, Tennessee. Author's photo collection.

Fort Harry

Oral tradition contends that Fort Harry was constructed by a detachment of the Thomas Legion as a semi-permanent base in 1862 around present-day Newfound Gap Road and Alum Cave.[59] Union troops burned the log fort in 1864, at which point it was abandoned and the exact location has not been found since.

The area which the fort occupied is now inside Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Fort Harry is contextualized as a saltpeter defense on Mount LeConte with a historical marker, placed by the Civil War Trails Program in 2017, beside a similar marker about the Battle of Burg Hill in downtown Gatlinburg (see Figures 31 & 32).

Figure 32: Civil War Trails wayside panel for Fort Harry in Gatlinburg, Tennessee. Author's photo collection.

[59] "Civil War Journal: Thomas's Legion," National Park Service (U.S. Department of the Interior, July 13, 2015), https://www.nps.gov/grsm/learn/historyculture/civil-war-2.htm (accessed on March 1, 2019).

Alum Cave

Saltpeter is a natural substance that is used to make gunpowder and was found in abundance in the mines at Alum Cave on Mount LeConte in Sevier County, Tennessee during the Civil War. William Thomas and his legion guarded the cave during the Civil War while in present-day Gatlinburg.[60] Alum Cave is now inside the boundary of Great Smoky Mountains National Park and is part of a popular hiking trail.

Engagements in Virginia

Winchester

The land and people around Winchester, Virginia endured battles during 1862, 1863, and 1864. The Third Battle of Winchester occurred on September 19, 1864 and is also known as the Battle of Opequon. Major General Philip Sheridan of the Union clashed with Confederate General Jubal A. Early's smaller force, resulting in a victory for the Union after Early and his men were forced to retreat. The Third Battle of Winchester was the bloodiest engagement in the Shenandoah Valley, with at least 8,000 causalities on both sides. A group of Cherokee men from the Thomas Legion fought alongside the Confederate forces and also suffered grave losses after Brigadier General George A. Custer surrounded them during the fighting.[61]

[60] Rozema, 174-175.

[61] Vernon H. Crow, *Storm in the Mountains: Thomas Confederate Legion of Cherokee Indians and Mountaineers* (Cherokee, NC: Press of the Museum of the Cherokee Indian, 1982), 95.

The Civil War Trust preserved 447 acres of the Third Winchester Battlefield, which is accessible to the public.[62] The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation has worked to preserve another 150 acres along with other partners, including the Virginia Outdoors Foundation and the Virginia departments of Historic Resources and Game and Inland Fisheries. Interpretive wayside markers dot a walking and hiking trail through the park, though Cherokee forces were omitted from those resources.

Battle of Cedar Creek (Belle Grove)

The Battle of Cedar Creek, otherwise known as the Battle of Belle Grove, was part of the larger Shenandoah campaign of 1864 of which General Jubal Early was the primary commander. This engagement specifically occurred on October 19, 1864 and included a small group of Cherokee men from the Thomas Legion under Colonel Thomas Smith's Brigade.[63] U.S. General Philip Sheridan was attempting to drive out any remaining Confederate forces in the valleys of Virginia and General Early's troops were camped near Strasburg. Early decided to surprise attack the Union soldiers on October 19 but suffered a significant counterattack which forced him to retreat with his forces. This Union victory thus boosted the morale of the North just in time for Abraham Lincoln to be reelected in November.

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[62] "Third Winchester Battlefield," American Battlefield Trust, May 22, 2018, https://www.battlefields.org/visit/battlefields/third-winchester-battlefield (accessed on June 27, 2019).

[63] Joseph W. A. Whitehorne, *The Battle of Cedar Creek: Self-Guided Tour* (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1992), 14.

Many monuments, historical markers, and plaques dot the landscape surrounding Cedar Creek and the Belle Grove Plantation (see Figure 33). Most of these recall the general events of the battle with regard to Union participation, although the Daughters of the Confederacy dedicated one monument in 1920 by to memorialize the death of Major General Stephen D. Ramseur (see Figure 34). There is one brief mention of the small number of Native Americans who were present for the fighting on a marker that was also erected by the United Daughters of the Confederacy (see Figure 35). This area is further commemorated as a National Historical Park under the National Park Service and was listed on the National Register of Historical Places on August 11, 1969.[64]

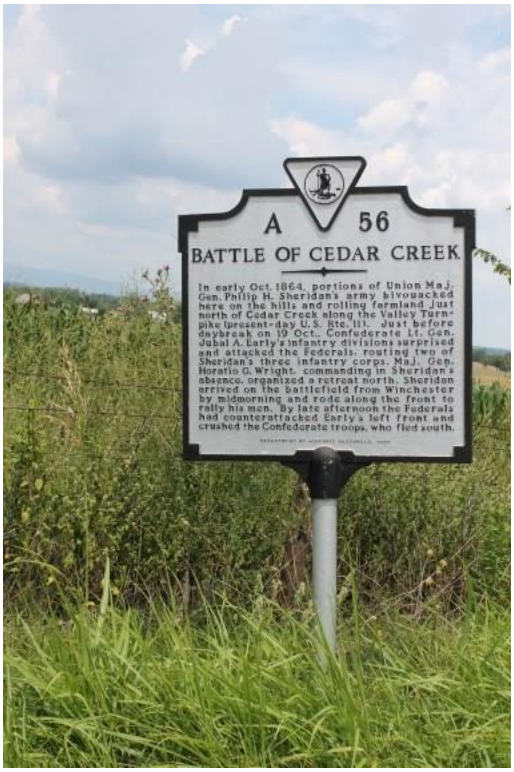

Figure 33: Battle of Cedar Creek Marker, erected by the State of Virginia. Photo courtesy of Haleigh Marshall/NPS.

[64] National Register of Historic Places, Cedar Creek Battlefield and Belle Grove, Middletown, Frederick County, Virginia, National Register #69000243.

Figure 34: Ramseur Monument Dedication in 1920. North Carolina Collection, University of NC Library at Chapel Hill.

Figure 35: N.C. Troops at Cedar Creek. Photo courtesy of Allen C. Browne/HMdb.org.

During the Civil War, whites commended Native Americans for their involvement on both sides of the conflict with a shroud of curiosity and wonder through newspapers and similar publications. The *Richmond Enquirer,* for instance, presented strong praise for the participation of Cherokee men during the war: "Our Indian allies, under Stand Watie and others, who have never wavered in the darkest hours of our struggle, who have sacrificed their all to the great cause of Southern liberty, will ever be gratefully remember by the people of the Confederate States."[65] While serving as a sort of spectacle for white Americans, the Cherokee also served their commanders will eagerness. These Native American men were directly involved in battles and skirmishes, from Indian Territory to the Appalachian Mountains, which determined the overall course of the war.

Some interpretive signage or other commemorative resources exists on the landscape in which Cherokees participated during the Civil War, and at other sites such as the Greenhill Cemetery where William Holland Thomas was interred (see Figure 36). However, these markers, wayside panels, museum exhibits, or other sites are either outdated in the presentation of this complex history, or they were purposely designed in order to minimalize the Native American contribution to the history. At some sites, their role in the conflict is omitted outright, either due to negligence or an unawareness of their presence.

[65] The *Richmond Enquirer* was a staunchly democratic newspaper and supported the Confederacy during the Civil War. It ran for 73 years, from 1804-1877. "1st Indian Brigade, Camp Longstreet, Choctaw Nation, March 30, 1864," *Richmond Enquirer*, May 6, 1864, Volume LXI, Number 80.

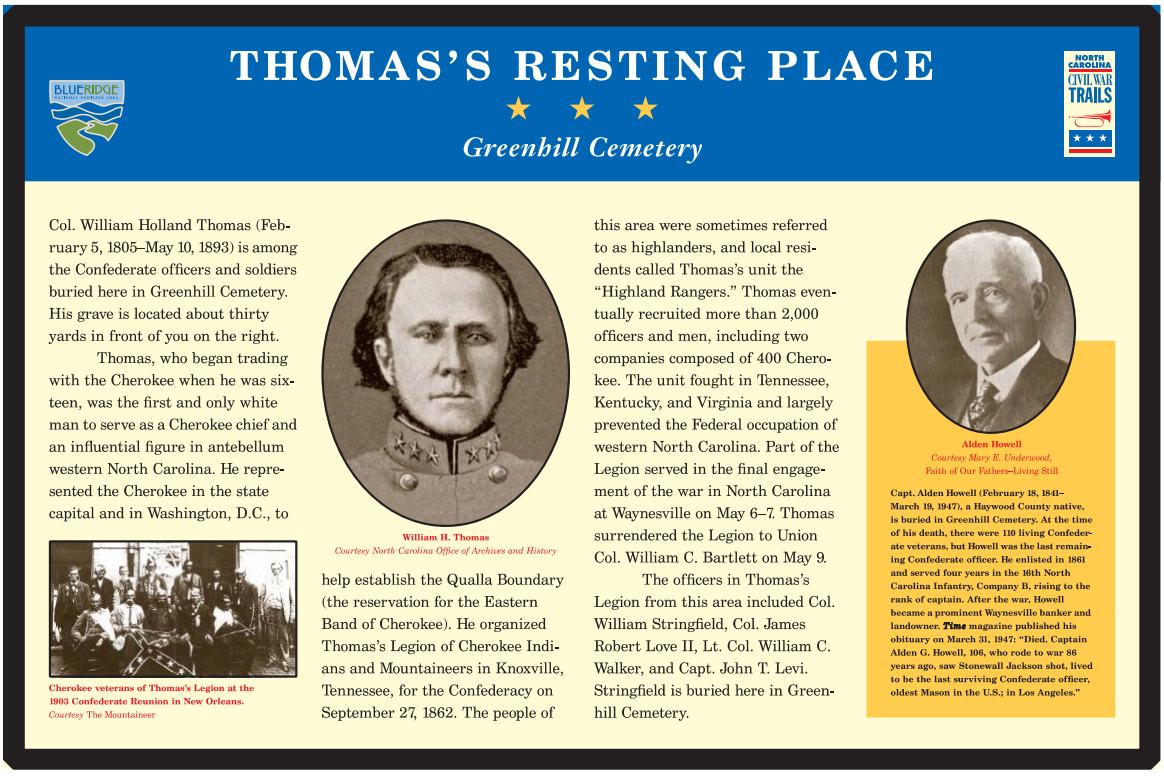

Figure 36: "Thomas's Resting Place," Interpretive wayside marker near Greenhill Cemetery. Reprinted with permission from Civil War Trails, Inc., 2019. Civil War Collection, State Archives of North Carolina Digital Collections.

It is important to note that while this is a preliminary survey, initial conclusions suggest that the history surrounding the Civil War and soldiers within the Cherokee Nation and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians needs to be revisited in order to do justice to the sacrifices that they made over one hundred and fifty years ago. There are far too many gaps in public memory and on the physical commemorative landscape in comparison to the Cherokee. The current representation that does exist is not proportional to the number of Cherokees who fought, or with their actions during the Civil War.

CHAPTER III

INCORPORATING SPATIAL TECHNOLOGY WITHIN CIVIL WAR SITES

> Soon after the General Mass Convention, held by that intelligent portion of the Cherokee people who could not be infected with the deliberate treachery of their principal rulers, Confederate forces of the District made an advance northward, the enemy was expelled from our borders and our prospect was fair for a continued possession of our country.[1]
>
> -Stand Watie to the Cherokee Nation, July 11, 1864

When the Civil War ended, many associations formed in order to commemorate both the different motivations for fighting and for fallen comrades or ancestors. Contributing Cherokee veteran groups also continued to meet for years after the fighting finished, at reunions which were held around the United States. This included "in 1900, Indian veterans founded the United Confederate Veterans, an organization later renamed for Sou-noo-kee, a Cherokee hero of the Civil War who was killed in a skirmish at the Cumberland Gap."[2] While Cherokee soldiers fought for their leaders or for the perceived good of the entire tribe, some amount of loyalty to the battle unit remained after the close of the conflict. This loyalty persuaded them to meet for so many years afterward. Much like other groups with a vested interest in the Civil War, such as the United Daughters of the Confederacy, some Cherokees began to support

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[1] Stand Watie, "Cherokee Indians: To the Honorable Members of the National Committee and Council in General Council Convened," *Wilmington Journal*, November 17, 1864.

[2] Laurence M. Hauptman, *Between Two Fires: American Indians in the Civil War* (New York, NY: Free Press Paperbacks, 1996), 120.

memorials to memorialize their past efforts. The North Carolina monument dedicated to Cherokee Confederates in 1935 by the United Daughters of the Confederacy of the First District on the Qualla Boundary reservation is one example, which originally led me down this research path.

The importance of memorializing the Cherokee contribution to the Civil War cannot be understated. The sites listed in chapter two of this preliminary study are case studies for how people presently interact with history. These places allow for both associated and seemingly unaffected groups to visit a place where violence or trauma occurred in order to learn and heal from the past. Significant sites in this context "are historic places that foster public dialogue on pressing contemporary issues in historical perspective."[3] Therefore, these sites have the potential to unlock a sort of connection in the visitors who flock to the place where something of note happened. As David Bodenhamer explained the purpose of studying history through place:

> The past, of course, is irretrievable, which is why historians draw a sharp distinction between it and the arguments or lessons we derive from it. We understand the past's value: it is our source of evidence; without, we would know nothing or have any sense of who we are. But the past escapes us as soon as it becomes past. We cannot recapture it; we can only represent it. In representing the past, we seek perspective, the point of view that allows us to discern patterns among the events that have occurred. We are not trying to transmit accumulated knowledge – culture and tradition do this, among other means – but to understand the significance of our experience.[4]

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[3] Liz Ševčenko and Maggie Russell-Ciardi, "Sites of Conscience: Opening Historic Sites for Civic Dialogue," *The Public Historian* 30, no. 1 (February 2008): 9.

[4] David J. Bodenhamer, John M. Corrigan, and Trevor Harris, eds., *The Spatial Humanities: GIS and the Future of Humanities Scholarship* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2010), xii.

The visceral connection that a person can experience by visiting a historic site may also inform a more contemporary commentary on the subject at hand. The experience which is felt at a historic place is the backdrop for those modern conversations. For the Civil War, this experience can include forming an opinion on the removal of monuments from public places based on the time period in which they were erected. This modern argument does not have definitive answer yet, but the debate continues through a larger public discourse all the same.[5]

Many of the monuments, markers, or other commemoration materials listed in this preliminary survey were erected during the early twentieth century, during the Jim Crow era, when white supremacists felt threatened by Reconstruction after the Civil War. Whites passed a series of laws were passed by the white majority which enforced segregation along racial lines, and minority groups were largely erased from historical sites. As late as 1935, the United Daughters of the Confederacy monument in Cherokee, North Carolina minimized the mention of the Cherokee Confederate soldiers. Instead, this particular monument highlighted the name of the white commander of the Cherokee, and the group of white women who erected the artifact more than the Cherokee men who actively participated.[6] Also, the lack of memorials at several Civil

[5] See, for examples, Chas Sisk, "Tennessee Strips $250,000 From Memphis As Payback for Removing Confederate Statues," NPR, April 18, 2018; Jess Bidgood et al., "Confederate Monuments Are Coming Down Across the United States. Here's a List.," *The New York Times*, August 16, 2017; Brigit Katz, "At Least 110 Confederate Monuments and Symbols Have Been Removed Since 2015," Smithsonian.com (Smithsonian Institution, June 8, 2018).

[6] "Marker in Honor of Cherokee Indian Soldiers to Be Unveiled Today," *Asheville Citizen-Times*, September 22, 1935.

War sites from the 1930s to 1970s, with a Cherokee component, stands as a testament to the erasure of minorities from Civil War history. These sites include but are not limited to: Prairie Grove, Fort Smith, and Massard Prairie in Arkansas; Wilson's Creek in Missouri; Waynesville in North Carolina; Locust Grove and Webbers Falls in Oklahoma; Strawberry Plains and Baptist Gap in Tennessee; and Winchester and Cedar Creek (Belle Grove) in Virginia. Other markers, like the North Carolina Highway Historical Marker in Bryson City which commemorates the Battle of Quallatown (Affair at Deep Creek), briefly mentions the Thomas Legion but does not offer any additional information for context. While this marker does not omit the Cherokee contribution altogether, it is also ineffective at presenting a fuller picture of the history at that location.

Without a systematic effort to preserve sites and material culture, history is threatened with each loss of a place, diary, photograph, or any other piece of the narrative. Estimates in 2004 contended, "of the more than 10,000 locales where the Civil War was waged, 384 have been determined to be principal battle sites. Today, seventy-one of those battlefields (nineteen percent) have been lost with another 160 (forty-two percent) in imminent danger."[7] In order to combat continued loss, which is permanent and detrimental, it is crucial to not only support preservation but also to educate the public. It is likewise important to teach a more comprehensive history when possible – complete with both negative and positive stories – in order to understand where society has been and track our achieved progression. Therefore, accessible

[7] Earl T. Redding, "The Preservation of Civil War Battlefields: Preserving Our History and Culture," *Albany Law Environmental Outlook Journal* 8, no. 2 (2004): 238.

historical education is a constructive first step in the goal to properly educate the public and to preserve our shared history.

This thesis offers a geographic information system to present this type of research to a wider audience. It is in a digital format, and therefore easy to access; it is interactive and engaging, complete with photos of the sites which are easily navigable; and it provides supplemental or baseline information to educators, as the final Esri StoryMap product can be used in a classroom setting to aid with instruction. "With an introduction to classroom use of GIS, teachers and their students will gain greater knowledge of geography and student will learn better and retain more, all while meeting or exceeding new technology standards in the classroom."[8]

A visual documentation of the Cherokee contributions to the Civil War also allows for easier interaction with the associated data. The GIS product of this thesis has the potential to present a complex history in a visual and collaborative way (see Figures 37, 38, and 39). Interested audiences can manipulate a point on the map to better understand the greater movements of Civil War forces in relation to their home communities, movements of opposing forces, or for a myriad of other research goals which are unknown at this time. By using the resulting GIS from this research, an onlooker will soon gather that the Cherokee played a pivotal role in the Civil War but have not been wholly recognized for that participation through existing markers.

[8] Lisa K. Tabor and John A. Harrington, "Lessons Learned from Professional Development Workshops on Using GIS to Teach Geography and History in the K-12 Classroom," *The Geography Teacher* 11, no. 2 (January 1, 2014): 48.

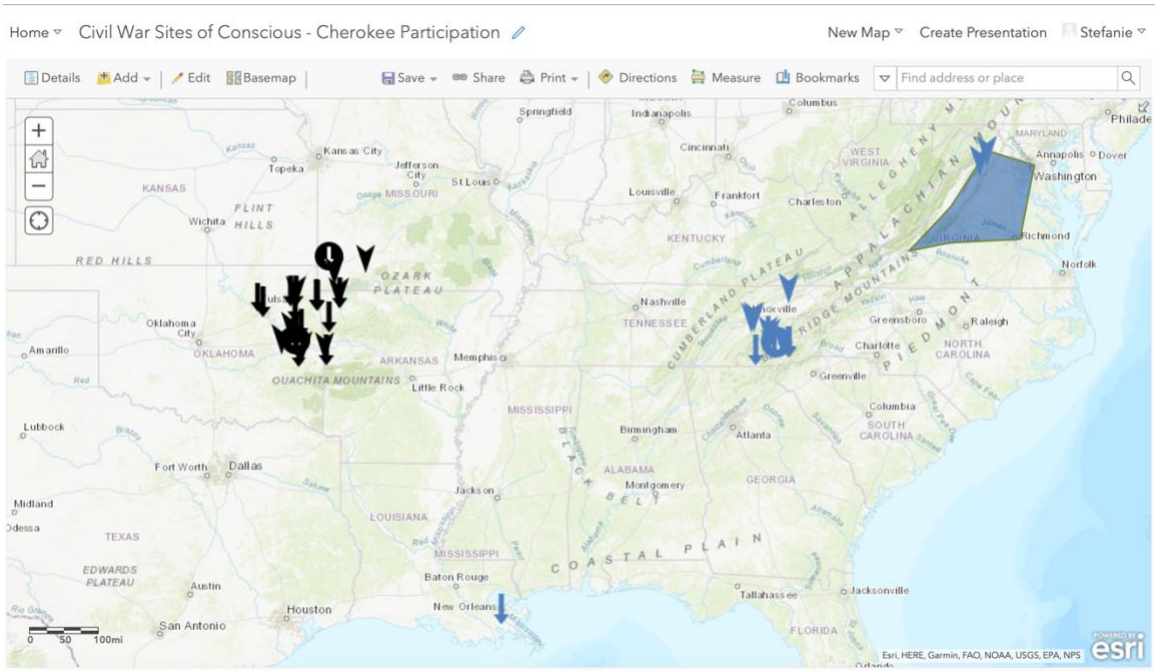

Figure 37: Overview of Civil War sites with a Cherokee component. Author's geographic Information System/esri.com.

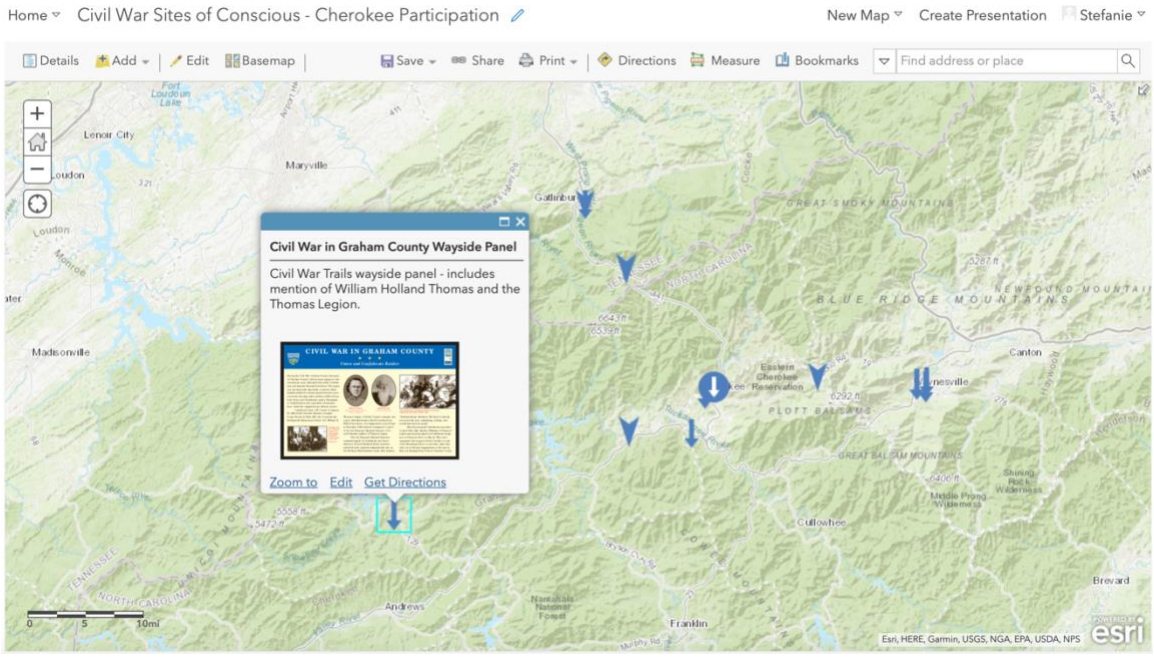

Figure 38: Detail of a site in North Carolina. Author's geographic Information System/esri.com.

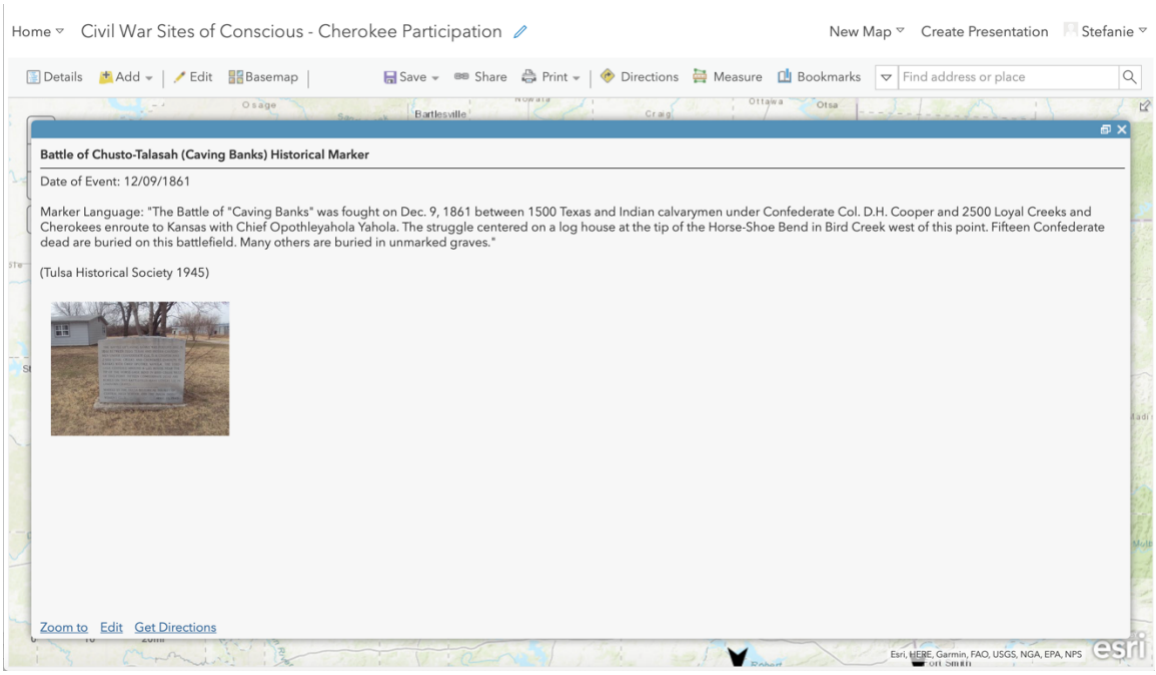

Figure 39: Detail of a western site with associated historical marker. Author's geographic Information System/esri.com.

Accessible geographic information systems are already used in the field of history. One example of an organization that is succeeding with an online presence is the North Carolina Highway Historical Marker Program, a part of the Division of Historical Resources, which includes some 1,600 markers across the state.[9] This program has done a great job in not only erecting many markers on a variety of historical events, but also prioritizes accessibility those markers through their website. The search function is quite useful in that the state is organized by lettered sections, and the user

[9] "NC Highway Historical Marker Program," NC DNCR, https://www.ncdcr.gov/about/history/division-historical-resources/nc-highway-historical-marker-program (accessed October 7, 2019).

may search based on that organization or by a type of historical event. There are also photos of each marker available for download on the website.

Another program with an online presence is the Oklahoma Historical Society, which also lists the historical markers across the state, but without specific coordinates and photos of each marker. Specific organizations such as the North Carolina Highway Historical Marker programs and the Oklahoma Historical Society have certainly improved inclusivity over the last fifty years, but there is still more to be done in order to properly acknowledge the Cherokee contribution to the Civil War.

Even with an interactive system in place to explore the geography of the Civil War, there are still questions to consider. If history has already passed, and some historical markers or monuments are fueling contemporary controversies, then why attempt to engage public memory through these types of commemorative materials? A complete look at a historical event is impossible to render on such a limited medium, after all. "Although the amount of text on a typical historical marker may be brief, this is not to suggest that its significance is diminished as a result."[10] Most of the existing historical markers that are currently on the public landscape are relatively easy to read for both pedestrians and motorists. They provide a sort of roadside history lesson across the country and may offer a foundation for further research. In current society, though, it might not be enough to just commemorate important sites through historical markers.

[10] Stephen A. King and Roger Davis Gatchet, "Marking the Past: Civil Rights Tourism and the Mississippi Freedom Trail," *Southern Communication Journal* 83, no. 2 (December 18, 2017): 106.

The public has to be aware that such a marker exists, and that is where spatial technology can really aid in bringing difficult history to a wider audience.

The Cherokee contribution to the American Civil War, in both the East and West, had direct impacts in the course of the conflict. Such efforts have been memorialized since the end of the war. "In the decades following the Civil War, veterans' groups returned to battlefields to erect monuments to their fallen comrades. Today, these monuments provide a way for visitors to commune with the past."[11] One problem facing the general public is a lack of accessibility for the locations of such places. If a person is not a local citizen of an area, they may not know exactly where a monument is located. The resulting database and GIS of this research will therefore provide not only a starting point for public research in Cherokee history and genealogy but can also inform potential research questions in the future.

Anne Kelly Knowles is a historical geographer and sums up some of the uses of GIS within history as:

> The ability of GIS to integrate, analyze, and visually represent spatially referenced information is inspiring historians to combine sources in new ways, to make geographical context an explicit part of their analysis, to reexamine familiar evidence, and to challenge long-standing historical interpretations. Historical GIS is proving increasingly valuable as a research method, a framework for digital archives, and a means of bringing a geographical sensibility to our view of history.[12]

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[11] Anne Kelly Knowles, *Past Time, Past Place: GIS for History* (Redlands, CA: ESRI Press, 2004), 60.

[12] Ibid., xiii.

Using GIS within the field of history can also allow for an increased reach into the public sphere. By expanding the audience for history, new education can easily enter the mainstream consciousness and provide a baseline for future public history projects. "Historical GIS projects typically go through a number of phases of which perhaps three can be identified: database development, exploration and enhancement, and topic-led questions."[13] This thesis then serves as the scholarship behind at least two of those referenced phases. This resource previously did not exist on the topic of Cherokee contributions to the American Civil War, and thus addresses a void in that story.

Public interpretation for recognizing Cherokee contributions to the Civil War needs to be improved. There can be additional markers, wayside panels, or other interpretive signage. This thesis and the resulting GIS map are just part of the first step in recognizing those gaps in the commemorative landscape. With extended research, contemporary society can make decisions which includes the minorities who fought in the Civil War and provide a broader context for the conflict itself.

[13] Ian N. Gregory and Alistair Geddes, eds., *Toward Spatial Humanities: Historical GIS and Spatial History* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2014), 1.

CONCLUSION

> We deeply regret having to say to you that our delegate. . . returned to his people from the seat of your Government, after being received and accepted as a delegate from the Cherokee people to your Congress. . . pass some law by which the introduction of white citizens from the Confederate States can be so effected as to give to each and every citizen and their families an equal share in all our lands, privileges, and rights as Cherokee citizens; and all he proposes to give us for the surrender of our nationality, lands, and homes is, that we will be granted one brigadier general, one more colonel, a few favorite positions in office, and a ruined people.[14]
>
> -Samuel M. Taylor, John Spears, and Alex Foreman to Jefferson Davis, July 21, 1863

Commemorative resources, such as historical markers, museums, wayside panels, and monuments give something tangible to the public which they can visit and learn from firsthand. Increased access to those resources can bolster attendance at historical sites, leading to an amplified awareness for the importance of improving historic preservation, as "never do sites 'speak for themselves,' in any sense of the phrase."[15] It is therefore not an unconstructive observation to suggest that more commemorative resources can only serve to increase our understanding of complex American history. "As the concept of American history expands, there's been a call for public spaces to more accurately reflect this more nuanced history – and for the

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[14] Samuel M. Taylor, John Spears, and Alex Foreman to Jefferson Davis, June 21, 1863, in *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. Series I, Volume XXII*, ed. Robert N. Scott et al., vol. 22, 1880-1901 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880), 1122.

[15] Ned Kaufman, *Place, Race, and Story: Essays on the Past and Future of Historic Preservation* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2009), 116.

expansion and revision of many state historical markers."[16] It begins with the simple recognition of each involved party in a historical event and can then lead to long-term positive outcomes for our shared material culture. Surviving buildings, battlefields with intact artifacts, and even letters or photographs all aid in our understanding of the past. Thus, these materials require preservation if we are to learn anything from them. One problem with this, though, is that many people are unaware of their existence.

If those places can be recognized and preserved, something is then added to our collective human story, or as historian Ned Kaufman terms, our shared "story sites" and "storyscapes" – "the important point is that all of the stories describe some aspect of a shared past, and each story is felt by the tellers to have some bearing on the character of their neighborhood, village, city, or region, and its citizens today."[17] These story sites have the potential to allow visitors to not only learn but to also heal from the violence that occurred at the sites, and from the intense motivations which led to the violence in the first place. After all, debates are still at the forefront of many people's mind today, specifically questioning whether we should dismantle the previous Civil War monuments and memorials that were erected during the early to mid-twentieth century, when institutionalized racism was ever-present. As a part of the debate for removing Confederate monuments, Cherokee Nation historian Catherine Gray has

[16] Kevin M. Levin, "When It Comes to Historical Markers, Every Word Matters," Smithsonian.com (Smithsonian Institution, July 6, 2017), https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/when-it-comes-historical-markers-every-word-matters-180963973/ (accessed October 2, 2019).

[17] Kaufman, 39.

commented: "It's all kind of coming here to the Cherokee Nation at this point and I don't think a lot of us have really given much thought to these monuments before… It seems to me that people are pretty split on this issue right now."[18] The very act of erecting memorials to white male officers only propelled the idea of white supremacy forward, causing further ostracization between people of different races, classes, or political leaning. Historian Timothy Smith noted:

> Civil War battlefield preservation, or at least the marking of sites, actually began during the war itself. Soldiers erected monuments and signs to denote special places, most often burial grounds, but by the end of the war monuments began to mark historic sites as well. Certainly, national cemeteries on the battlefields did as much. The Reconstruction generation continued this process through numerous new national cemeteries as well as through actual preservation, mostly privately at Gettysburg. Yet in an era of continuing animosity over the war and its causes – namely race and slavery – this generation's work was necessarily one sided, partisan, and limited.[19]

Monuments from Reconstruction through the Jim Crow era are the worst offenders for omitting minority groups, such as the Cherokee.

As more scholars dedicate time and research to different perspectives on the Civil War and to the broader nineteenth century in the United States, it becomes increasingly apparent that Native American groups were wholly engrained in the politics surrounding the war.[20] This awareness should then lead to the question of whether

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[18] Jacob McCleland, "As Cities Remove Confederate Monuments, Cherokees Grapple with Civil War Past," KGOU, August 31, 2017, https://www.kgou.org/post/cities-remove-confederate-monuments-cherokees-grapple-civil-war-past (accessed March 14, 2019).

[19] Timothy B. Smith, *Altogether Fitting and Proper: Civil War Battlefield Preservation in History, Memory, and Policy, 1861-2015* (Knoxville, TN: The University of Tennessee Press, 2017), xviii.

[20] Julie L. Reed, *Serving the Nation: Cherokee Sovereignty and Social Welfare, 1800-1907* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2016), 92-93.

Cherokee contributions to the Civil War are presently commemorated in an appropriate manner since public history seeks to make even controversial history accessible to an inclusive audience. Therefore, this thesis offers baseline data for those Civil War sites with a Cherokee component, in that each were researched, mapped, and documented. That work was completed with the underlying question of whether Cherokees were left out of public memorialization or if present mentions of the Cherokees were accurate to accompanying primary sources.

After an analysis of secondary literature and completing a preliminary survey of the public landscape, it is certain that commemoration for the Cherokee contribution to the Civil War has improved in the twenty-first century. Resources like the North Carolina Highway Historical Marker Program, Oklahoma Historical Society Historical Markers, and Civil War Trails, Inc. wayside panels have mentioned Cherokee contributions to the Civil War, especially since 1995. These wayside panel have also become excellent public history tools which are easily manipulated and relocated, depending upon advancements in the associated scholarship.

The Cherokee Nation in Indian Territory was suffering from great political divisions, all while the Confederate States negotiated treaties with grandiose yet false promises. The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians in Appalachia were likewise struggling in their ancestral homeland as they fought for official recognition from the federal government and the state of North Carolina. It is astounding then that the Cherokee were able to participate in the Civil War in such a significant way, without even fully

recovering from the Trail of Tears in 1838. These efforts and struggles need to be acknowledged.

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