

# Chapter 8

## The Civil War in the Indian Territory

### Chapter Preview

#### TERMS

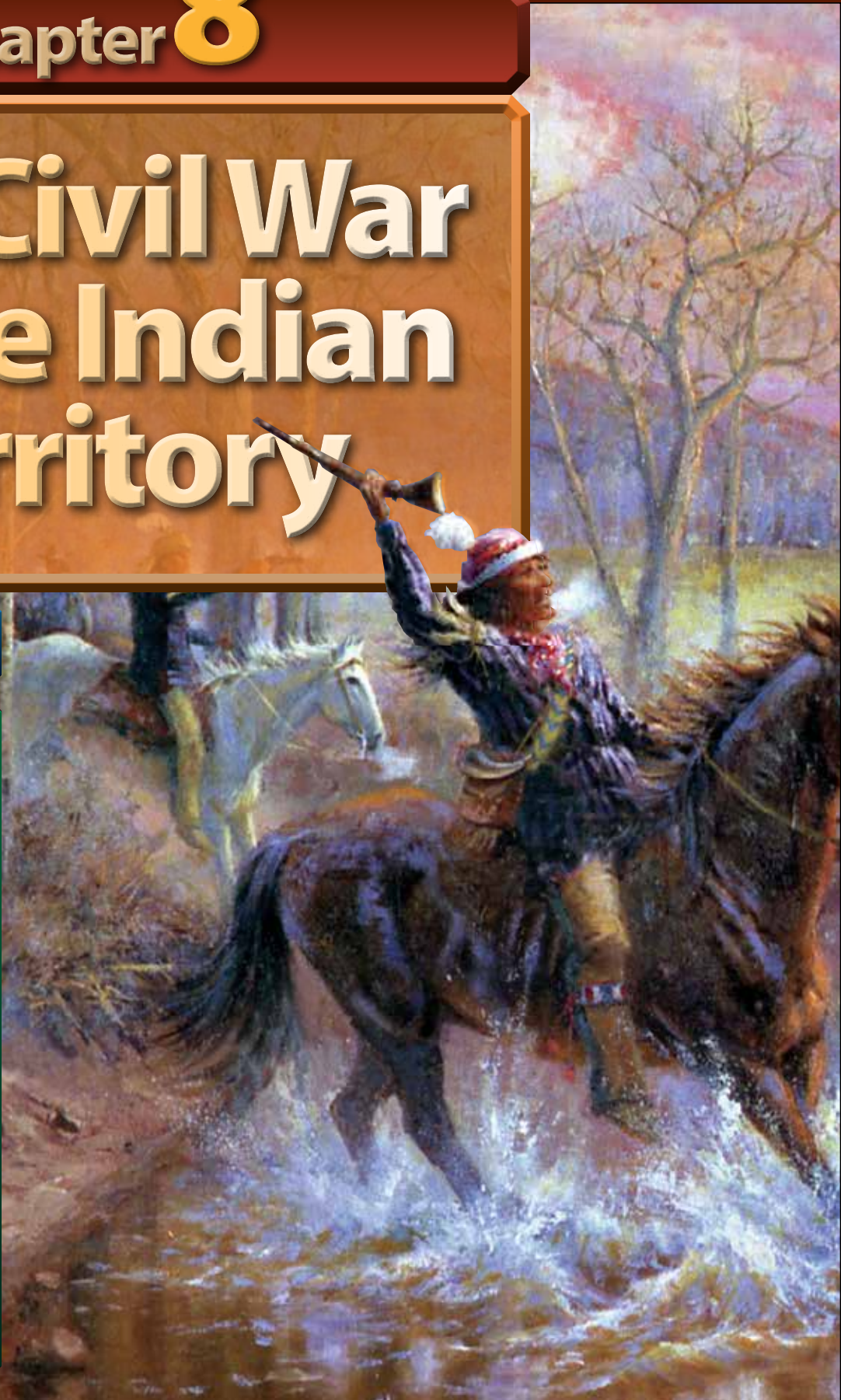
tariff, states' rights, free state, slave state, secede, Compromise of 1850, abolitionist, Underground Railroad, popular sovereignty, Confederate States of America, neutral, guardianship, guerrilla

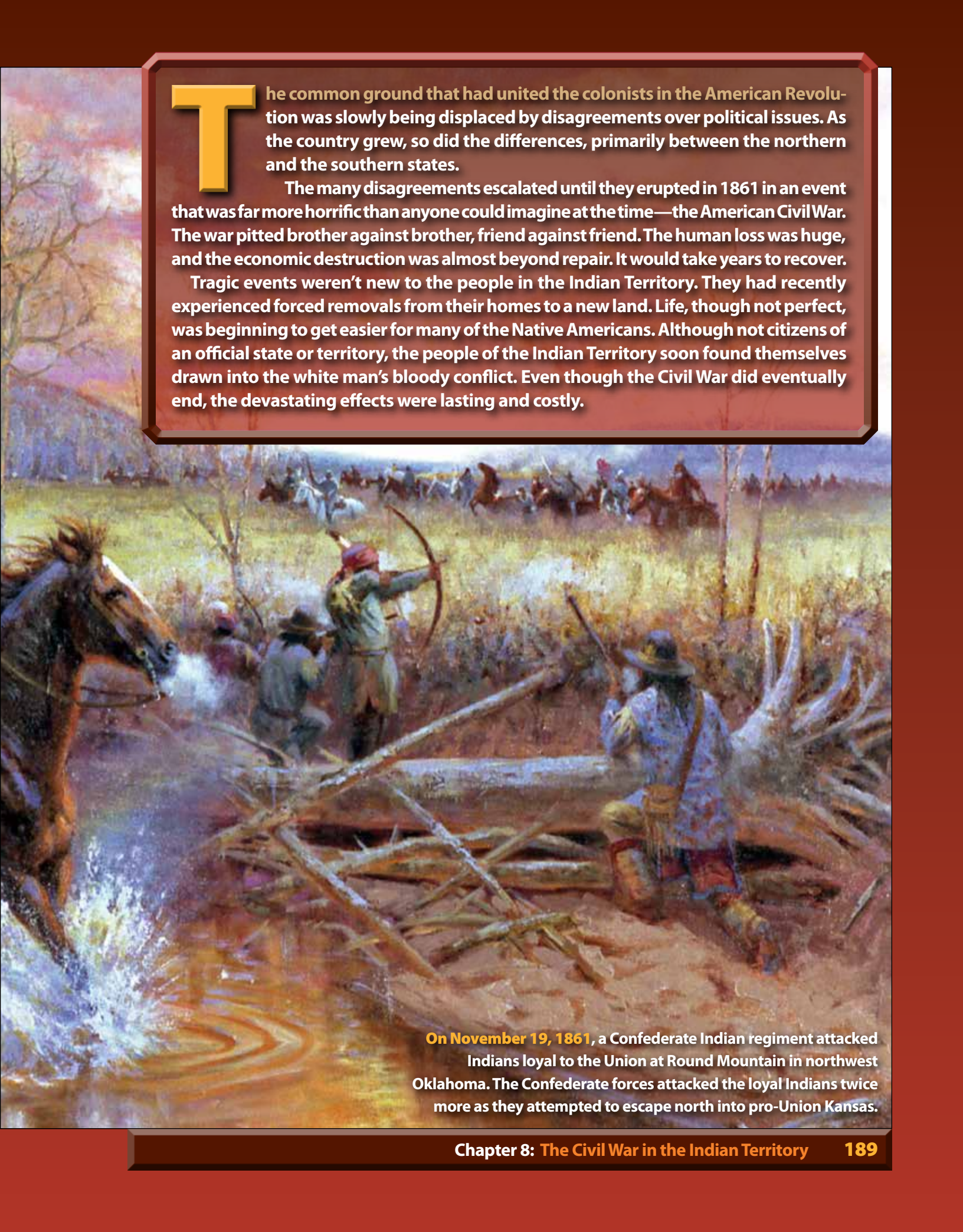
#### PEOPLE

Abraham Lincoln, Albert Pike, Ben McCulloch, John Ross, Stand Watie, Opothleyahola, James Blunt

#### PLACES

Public Land Strip, Fort Davis, Fort McCulloch, Pea Ridge, Cowskin Prairie, Fort Blunt, Honey Springs





**T**he common ground that had united the colonists in the American Revolution was slowly being displaced by disagreements over political issues. As the country grew, so did the differences, primarily between the northern and the southern states.

The many disagreements escalated until they erupted in 1861 in an event that was far more horrific than anyone could imagine at the time—the American Civil War. The war pitted brother against brother, friend against friend. The human loss was huge, and the economic destruction was almost beyond repair. It would take years to recover.

Tragic events weren't new to the people in the Indian Territory. They had recently experienced forced removals from their homes to a new land. Life, though not perfect, was beginning to get easier for many of the Native Americans. Although not citizens of an official state or territory, the people of the Indian Territory soon found themselves drawn into the white man's bloody conflict. Even though the Civil War did eventually end, the devastating effects were lasting and costly.

**On November 19, 1861**, a Confederate Indian regiment attacked Indians loyal to the Union at Round Mountain in northwest Oklahoma. The Confederate forces attacked the loyal Indians twice more as they attempted to escape north into pro-Union Kansas.



# Signs of the Times

## NEWS

Cartoonist Thomas Nast joined the staff of *Harper's Weekly* in the 1860s. Nast originated using animals to represent political parties, and he helped develop the character Uncle Sam. His cartoons helped influence voters, and Rutherford Hayes said that Nast was "the most powerful single-handed aid we had" in winning the presidential election.

## LITERATURE

Leo Tolstoy's panoramic novel of Russian society *War and Peace* was published in 1865-1869. Beginning in the early 1860s, Jules Verne's writing career, which eventually included fifty-four books, took off with *Five Weeks in a Balloon*, *Journey to the Center of the Earth*, *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, and others.

## BUSINESS

New businesses established included the Western Union Company, Macy's Department Store, Traveler's Insurance Company, and the Standard Oil Company of Ohio.

## SPORTS

The schooner-yacht *America* defeated fourteen British ships in a 60-mile yacht race around the Isle of Wight. The trophy became known as "The America's Cup."

## INVENTIONS

Mexican General Santa Anna, defeated in Texas and later exiled to New York, introduced chicle to inventor James Adams, who added flavoring to it in the world's first chewing gum factory.

## GAMES

The roller skate was perfected in 1863 when James L. Plimpton patented his "rocking skate," and the popularity of roller skating soared. The term yo-yo was first published in a Filipino dictionary in 1860, and the first U.S. patent on the toy was issued to James L. Haven and Charles Hettrich in 1866 as a "whirligig."

## Figure 8 Timeline: 1850–1870



1850

1855

1860

1865

1870

1850  
Compromise of 1850

1854  
Kansas-  
Nebraska Act

1860  
Abraham Lincoln elected president

1857  
*Dred Scott*  
decision

1861  
Civil War began

1861  
Tribes signed treaties with Confederacy

1862  
Battles at Pea Ridge, Locust Grove

1863  
Battles of Cabin Creek,  
Honey Springs, Perryville

1865  
Civil War ended

1865  
President Lincoln assassinated

1863  
Thanksgiving declared a national holiday

1862  
Transcontinental railroad authorized

# Section 1

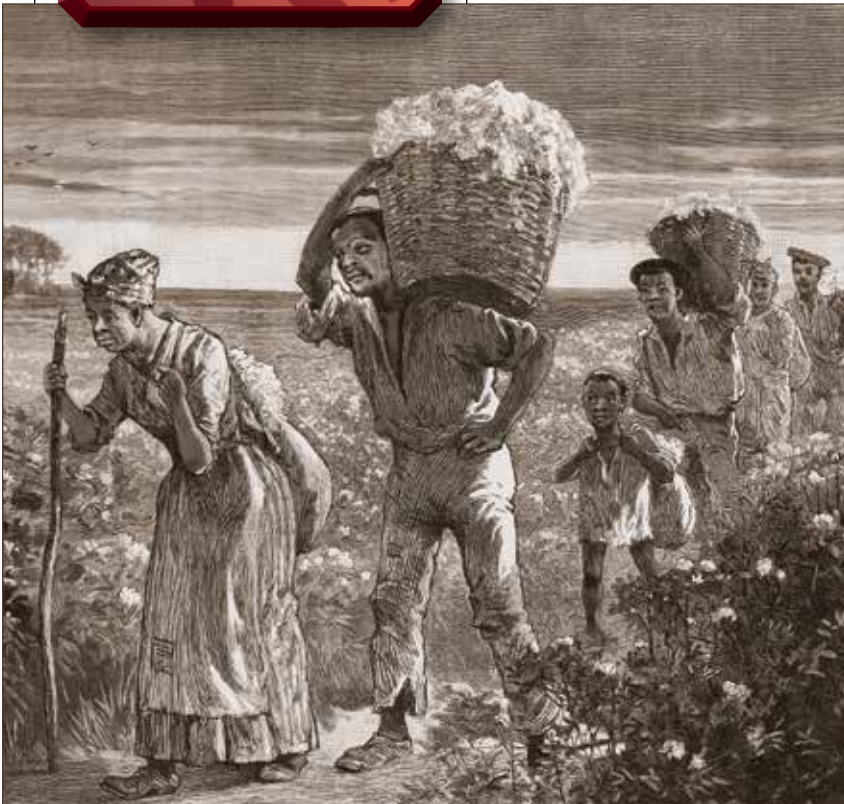
## Divided Loyalties

### Something Extra!

The Compromise of 1850 was actually a series of five laws.

### As you read, look for

- the events and issues that led to the Civil War, and
- vocabulary terms **tariff**, **states' rights**, **free state**, **slave state**, **secede**, **Compromise of 1850**, **abolitionist**, **Underground Railroad**, **popular sovereignty**, and **Confederate States of America**.



**In the South, slaves were essential to growing cotton. Some Indians in eastern Indian Territory were slave owners.**

**Conflict is a natural part of life**, brought on by our different beliefs, experiences, and values. The conflicts began to grow and widen in the United States in the 1800s, and successful solutions to the problems didn't keep pace.

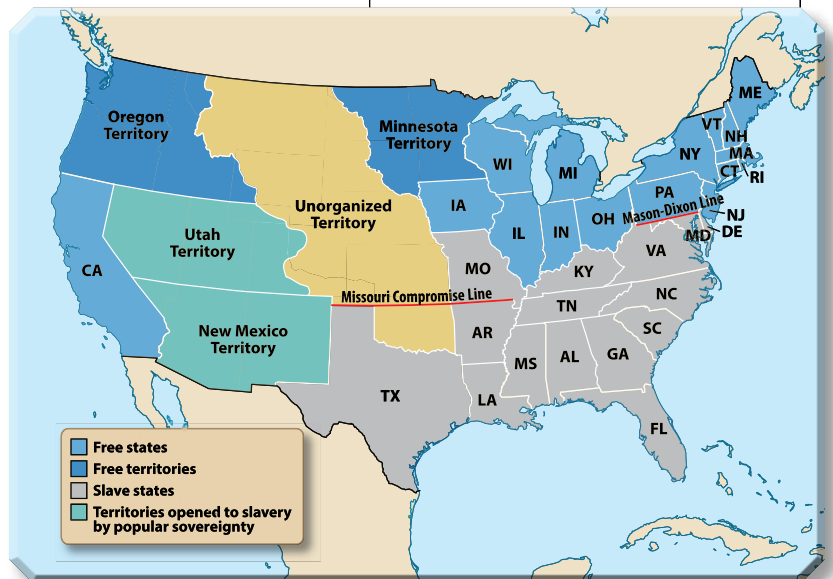
**Tariffs** (taxes) on goods, both imported and exported, were viewed differently by the northern and southern states. There were also regional differences on whether federal or state authority should prevail. This came to be known as the issue of **states' rights**. By the 1850s, industry had joined agriculture in importance in the North, and thousands of immigrants arriving in the Northeast provided cheap labor for its factories. The South's economy was based on agriculture. Most people in the southern states lived on small farms and owned no slaves.

Fewer in number, the powerful, wealthy southern plantation owners strongly believed that African slaves were essential to their economy and lifestyle. With a larger population, the North had more representatives in the U.S. House of Representatives, and the southern states believed that their way of life was threatened.

## Increasing Tensions

Slavery had once existed throughout the United States. But it had died out in the North because immigrants provided the cheap labor needed by the North's economy. Slavery might also have died out in the South had cotton not become such an important part of the South's economy.

In 1819, the United States had twenty-two states. Eleven were **free states**, states that did not allow slavery; eleven were **slave states**, states that did permit slavery. The 1820 Missouri Compromise established the 36° 30' N parallel as the line dividing the slave and the free states. That legislation was one of the first attempts at maintaining the balance of power in Congress. The balance was threatened when California applied to become the thirty-first state in 1849. Senator John C. Calhoun of South Carolina spoke out for states' rights and demanded that the balance between slave states and free states be maintained. He threatened that the southern states would **secede** (break away) from the Union if the balance was not maintained. Even though opposed to slavery, both Henry Clay of Kentucky and Daniel Webster of Massachusetts proposed the Compromise of 1850 to save the Union.



## Map 27 The Compromise of 1850

**Map Skill:** Which territories were free?

## Something Extra!

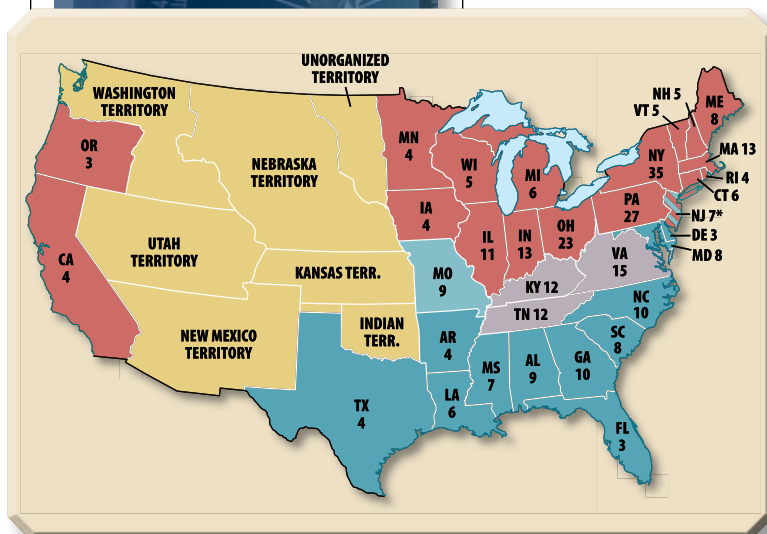
Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* dramatized the harsh reality of slavery. Some historians credit the book with adding even more passion to the northern abolitionists' efforts.

After eight months of heated debate, the **Compromise of 1850** tried to resolve many of the issues. The Texas-New Mexico boundary was settled, and Texas received \$10 million to pay off its debts to Mexico. The northern boundary of the Texas Panhandle was established at the 36° 30' N latitude line. (The Texas Panhandle's northern boundary is also the Oklahoma Panhandle's southern border.) The territories of New Mexico and Utah were organized without a mention of slavery. California was admitted as a free state. Also included in the compromise was a new and stronger Fugitive Slave Act, which required all citizens to help recover fugitive slaves.

Many northerners refused to obey the act and continued to help slaves

## Map 28 The Election of 1860

**Map Skill:** Which candidate won Arkansas?



### KEY:

- John Bell
- John C. Breckinridge
- Stephen A. Douglas
- Abraham Lincoln
- 4 Electoral Votes

\*New Jersey's electoral votes were split between Lincoln and Douglas.

escape from the South. The **abolitionists** (those against slavery) became even more active with the **Underground Railroad**, which was a secret network of safe places for slaves to hide as they escaped to the North or Canada. As it turned out, the Compromise of 1850 was only a temporary solution.

Tempers flared again when the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 was passed. The act formed Kansas and Nebraska Territories and provided for **popular sovereignty**, which allowed those living in those two territories to decide for themselves if they wanted slavery. Violence between proslavery and antislavery groups broke out in Kansas, and that territory came to be called "Bleeding Kansas." (When it became a territory, Kansas proposed that its southern border meet the Texas line. After strong objections from the Cherokee tribe, the Kansas border was moved to 37° N. That left a 34.5-mile by 167-mile rectangle west of the Cherokee Outlet and east of the New Mexico Territory. This was called the Public Land Strip, or No Man's Land as it became known in the 1880s. The Strip, or Panhandle, became part of Oklahoma Territory in 1890.)

More fuel was added to the slavery debate by the 1857 U.S. Supreme Court ruling in the *Dred Scott* case. The court ruled that slaves were "beings of an inferior order (with) no rights which white men were bound to respect." The ruling meant that Congress had no right to stop slavery in the territories.

## The Election of 1860

The presidential election of 1860

### Figure 9 The 1860 Election

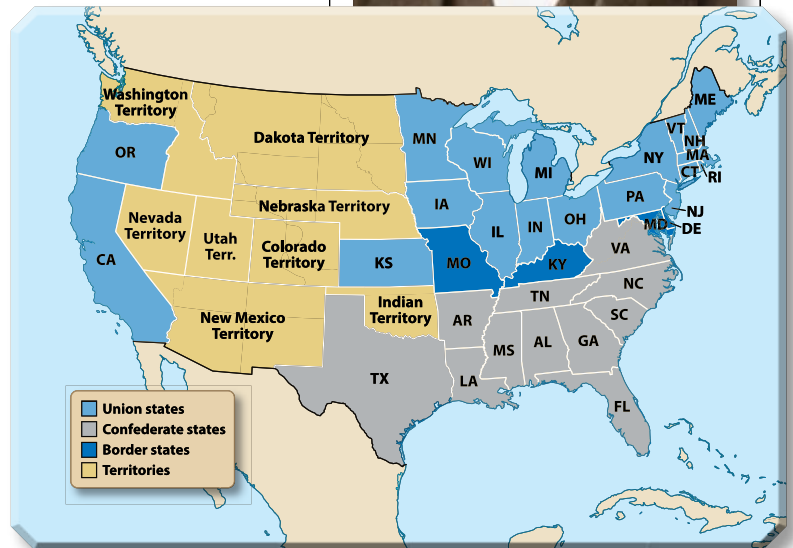
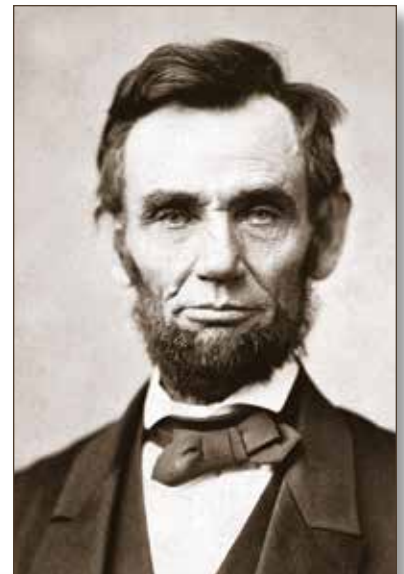
Candidate/Party	Popular Vote	Electoral Vote
John Bell (Constitutional Union)	592,906	39
John C. Breckinridge (Southern Democrat)	848,356	72
Stephen A. Douglas (Northern Democrat)	1,382,713	12
Abraham Lincoln (Republican)	1,865,593	180
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>4,689,568</b>	<b>303</b>

brought the tensions to a head. The Democratic Party split over the issue of slavery. The Northern Democrats supported Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois, and the Southern Democrats nominated John C. Breckinridge of Kentucky. The North-dominated Republican Party nominated Abraham Lincoln of Illinois on a platform that opposed the spread of slavery and supported free western homesteads, protective tariffs, and a transcontinental railroad. John Bell of Tennessee was nominated by the newly formed Constitutional Union party, which primarily stood for maintaining the Union and the Constitution.

With the Democratic Party split, the Republican Lincoln won 40 percent of the popular vote and 60 percent of the electoral votes. (A simple majority is required.) All of Lincoln's electoral votes were from northern and western states. Lincoln had no support in the South. In fact, he wasn't even on the ballot in a number of southern states.

Almost immediately, southern states began carrying out their threat to secede. South Carolina withdrew from the Union on December 20, 1860. Within six weeks, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas had followed. In February 1861, these seven states formed a new government called the **Confederate States of America**. Jefferson Davis of Mississippi was chosen as its president.

War broke out between the North and the South in April 1861 at Fort Sumter near Charleston, South Carolina. Arkansas, Tennessee, North Carolina, and Virginia soon joined the Confederacy. Both sides were confident of a quick victory.



## Map 29 The Union and the Confederacy

**Map Skill:** How many states joined the Confederacy.

### It's Your Turn

1. How did the economies of the North and the South differ?
2. How did California's request to become a state upset the balance in Congress?
3. Name the eleven states that made up the Confederate States of America.

**Top:** Abraham Lincoln, candidate of the newly formed Republican Party, won the election of 1860 with only 40 percent of the popular vote.



## Section 2

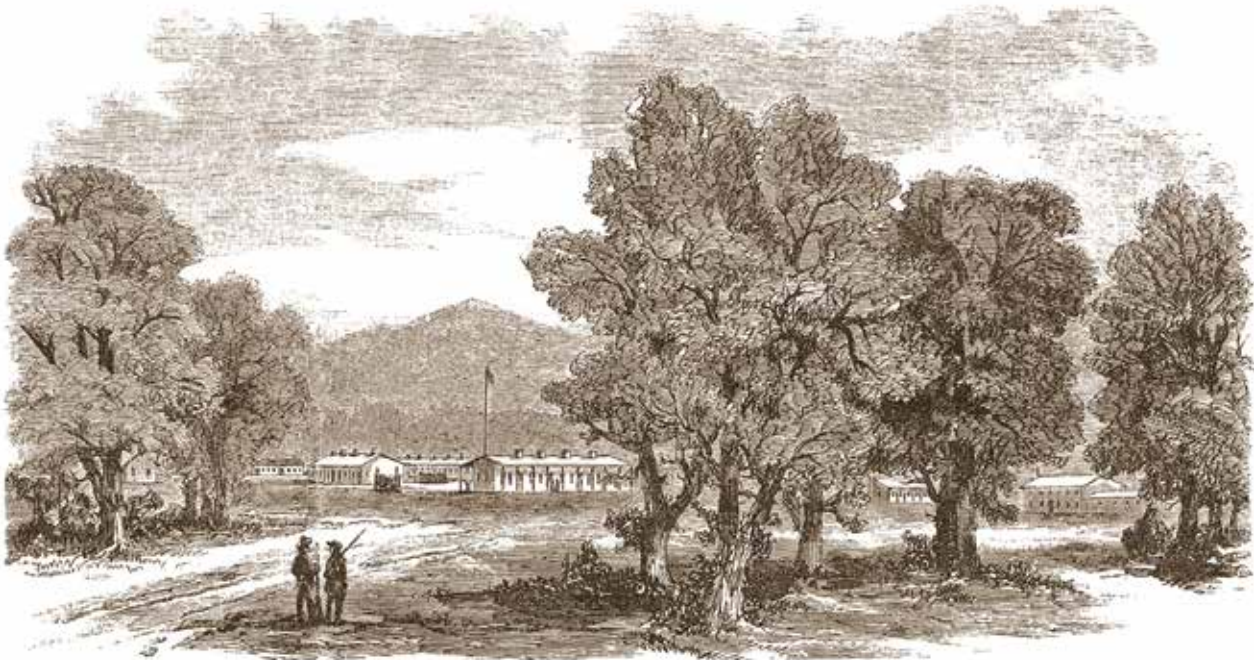
# Indian Territory Joins the Confederacy



### As you read, look for

- the reasons why the tribes split and supported both sides,
- the battles fought in Indian Territory,
- important individuals who affected the war in Indian Territory, and
- vocabulary terms **neutral**, **guardianship**, and **guerrilla**.

**Confederate officials were very aware of the rich resources in** the Indian Territory. Those resources included abundant horse and cattle herds for food, hides, and mounts; grain; lead deposits for making ammunition; plentiful supplies of salt; and men for additional soldiers. The Territory was also strategically located as a buffer between North and South and could be a central base west of the Mississippi.





In February 1861, Texas leaders approached the Five Tribes about aligning with (supporting) the Confederacy, but some of the Indians declined and decided “simply to do nothing, to keep quiet and to comply with our treaties.” The Civil War, however, quickly spread to the Indian Territory.

Only three military forts were manned in Indian Territory in the spring of 1861. Fort Washita was in the southeast corner of the Chickasaw Nation (present-day Bryan County). Fort Arbuckle was about 60 miles northwest of Fort Washita. About 160 miles northwest of Fort Washita was Fort Cobb, which was on the Choctaw lands that were leased for bands of Comanche and other tribes.

In April 1861, secessionists (those who supported withdrawing from the Union) at Pine Bluff, Arkansas, seized military supplies that were to be distributed to the forts in the Territory. Orders from Washington were to abandon the Indian country west of Arkansas and march the Union troops to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. A regiment of the Texas state militia took over Fort Washita in late April 1861. Federal troops lowered the flag “with military honors” at Fort Arbuckle on May 4 and then marched to Fort Cobb, with the Texans close behind. From Fort Cobb, eleven military companies from the abandoned forts headed north to Fort Leavenworth.

### Taking Sides

Some of the Five Tribes wanted to remain **neutral** (not take sides). Others saw advantages to siding with the South, and still others to siding with the North. Joining the South’s cause would mean the loss of a large amount of money owed to the Indians by the federal government, but many believed they had already been abandoned by the U.S. military.

The withdrawal of federal troops left the tribes to fend for themselves. With no U.S. military presence, the Indians had to accept the Confederacy

**Above:** When Union forces abandoned Fort Washita, the Confederate forces used it as a supply depot and hospital facility. **Opposite page, above:** Jefferson Davis, the president of the Confederacy, had been part of the Leavenworth expedition in 1834. **Opposite page, below:** Union forces abandoned Fort Arbuckle in May 1861.

### Something Extra!

The trail the troops followed to Fort Leavenworth was later made famous by Jesse Chisholm as the Chisholm Trail.



**Albert Pike, as Commissioner of Indian Affairs, negotiated treaties with several tribes to fight for the Confederacy. He is seen here in Masonic regalia.**

in their territory or fight it on their own. Some tribal members even held out hope that, if the South won, the Indians could return to their ancestral homes. For many Native Americans, joining the South seemed to be the best choice.

Confederate President Jefferson Davis named Albert Pike as Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Davis sent Pike, a popular Arkansas attorney and journalist, to negotiate with the tribes in May 1861. At the same time, Ben McCulloch of Texas was appointed brigadier general and given command of the Indian Territory. Pike and McCulloch traveled together to meet with Cherokee Chief John Ross at his home in Park Hill. They urged Ross to sign a treaty with the Confederacy, but he refused saying that the war would destroy his people and that it would be cruel “to engage them in (the white man’s) quarrel.”

Pike continued his mission by signing a treaty with the divided Creek Nation in July, followed by treaties with the Chickasaw and Choctaw tribes. In August, he made treaties with the Seminole, Quapaw, Seneca, Caddo, Wichita, Osage, and Shawnee. The general provisions of all the treaties were similar. The Confederacy assumed guardian-

ship of the tribes and became responsible for all the obligations to the Indians imposed by former treaties with the United States. (A **guardianship** occurs when someone legally has the authority to make decisions for and care for and control all of the property of someone.)

As Pike was returning to Arkansas, messengers told him that Chief Ross, not wanting the Cherokee to stand alone, wanted to meet with him. At a meeting of 4,000 Cherokee, the tribe decided to join the Confederate cause. Even before Chief Ross reluctantly signed the treaty, his longtime rival, Stand Watie, was drilling a group of mixed-blood Cherokee horsemen to fight for the Confederacy. Watie’s regiment was called the Cherokee Mounted Rifles.

Confederate Indian fighting regiments quickly formed. Former Indian agent Colonel Douglas Cooper commanded the Choctaw and Chickasaw Mounted Rifles, which was supported by a Texas cavalry regiment. Daniel McIntosh and John Jumper led units of Creek and Seminole. Chilly McIntosh and James M. C. Smith led Creek battalions. In addition to Watie’s unit, John Drew, William P. Ross, and Thomas Pegg led another Cherokee unit.

### **Confederate Outposts**

A Confederate outpost (a station in a remote or sparsely populated



area) was built in the Indian Territory on the Texas Road in November 1861. Commissioned by Pike, the post was located northeast of present-day Muskogee and named Fort Davis (also called Cantonment Davis) in honor of Jefferson Davis. A sloped terrain helped hide the thirteen buildings at the fort, which surrounded a prehistoric mound.

In March 1862, Fort Davis was abandoned, and Pike's troops moved 150 miles southwest and built Fort McCulloch (near Kenefic in Bryan County) on the Blue River. Fort McCulloch was located on the military route between Fort Smith, Texas supply towns, and Forts Gibson and Washita. Use of this outpost decreased after Pike resigned in July 1862. It later was used by Indian refugees and, briefly, by General Stand Watie.

### War on Indian Land

Pike's mission through the Indian Territory had opened old wounds. The Indians who supported the Union or who wanted to remain neutral felt overpowered by those who favored the Confederacy. The Upper and Lower Creek were divided before removal, and treaties with the United States had further divided them. The McIntosh-led Lower Creek had moved to the Indian Territory several years before Opothleyahola and the Upper Creek came to the new land. The tribes' differences in the Indian Territory weren't always openly hostile, but the distinction continued, and the Civil War brought out the dissimilarities.

**Fort Davis was, for a time, the main Confederate outpost in northern Indian Territory.**

# Voices from the Past

## What They Were Saying

Newspapers offer a tremendous window for us to glimpse history. Keep in mind, though, that early-day communications were much less advanced than what we have today, and that sensationalism was sometimes used to sell papers. The value of newspaper archives far surpasses any fear of misinformation. These vast sources of information can often be accessed on the Internet, on microfilm in libraries, and at newspaper offices. The following article (misspellings left intact) was read by people during the Civil War years.

### The Loyal Indians.

*Col. Coffin arrived yesterday from the Southern party of the State, in the immediate vicinity of the loyal Indians who have been driven from their homes on account of the rebellion. There are about eight thousand of these men, women and children; and the agents are now removing them from the Verdigris to the Neosho. The Colonel represents the sufferings of these poor people, on account of the insufficiency of food and clothing, as horrible, many of them having frozen their feet, and some having to undergo amputation in consequence. The agents are doing all in their power to supply them with the necessaries of life; but it is impossible to prevent much hardship from cold. For provisions they have done very well; but the extreme and protracted winter has been the cause of many deaths and considerable sickness, the measles having broken out among them. An effort has been made to remove a portion of the Creeks to the Sac and Fox reservation, but they have an unconquerable antipathy to being separated, and all wish to remain with and share the fate of the chief Opothleyoholo.—These Indians have no doubt endured more hardships on account of their loyalty and adherence to the Government than any other people.*

Source: *Daily Times* [Leavenworth, Kansas], March 15, 1862, p. 2, c. 1.

### The Loyal Creek Fight for Survival

In spite of the Confederate treaty, Upper Creek leader Opothleyahola and a large number of followers appealed to the “Great Father” (President Lincoln) in Washington, D.C., for help. They wanted to remain with the Union. The group became known as the Loyal Creek, but included about 6,500 Indians from many other tribes.

While the Loyal Creek awaited word from Washington, the white and Indian troops under Confederate Colonel Cooper learned of their attempt to seek federal help. The Loyal Creek had camped at the junction of the Deep Fork and North Fork of the Canadian River. Possibly to avoid a confrontation with Cooper’s regiment, the Loyal Creek, led by the aging Opothleyahola, headed north toward Kansas (a Union state).

On November 19, 1861, Cooper’s 2,000-man regiment attacked the Loyal Creek at Round Mountain (probably near Yale or northwest of Tulsa). Darkness halted the skirmish, with neither side claiming victory. During the night, the Loyal Creek continued moving north but left behind most of their possessions. The Confederates retreated to reorganize.

The weather turned bitterly cold. Opothleyahola led the group to Chusto Talasah or Caving Banks on Bird Creek, north of the Creek settlement of Tulsey Town (Tulsa). Cooper’s forces again attacked their camp on December 9. Once again, the battle ended in a stalemate, and Cooper retreated to Fort Gibson.

Battling the cold and dwindling supplies and ammunition, the Loyal Creek moved their camp to Chustenahlah (west of Skiatook). The Confed-

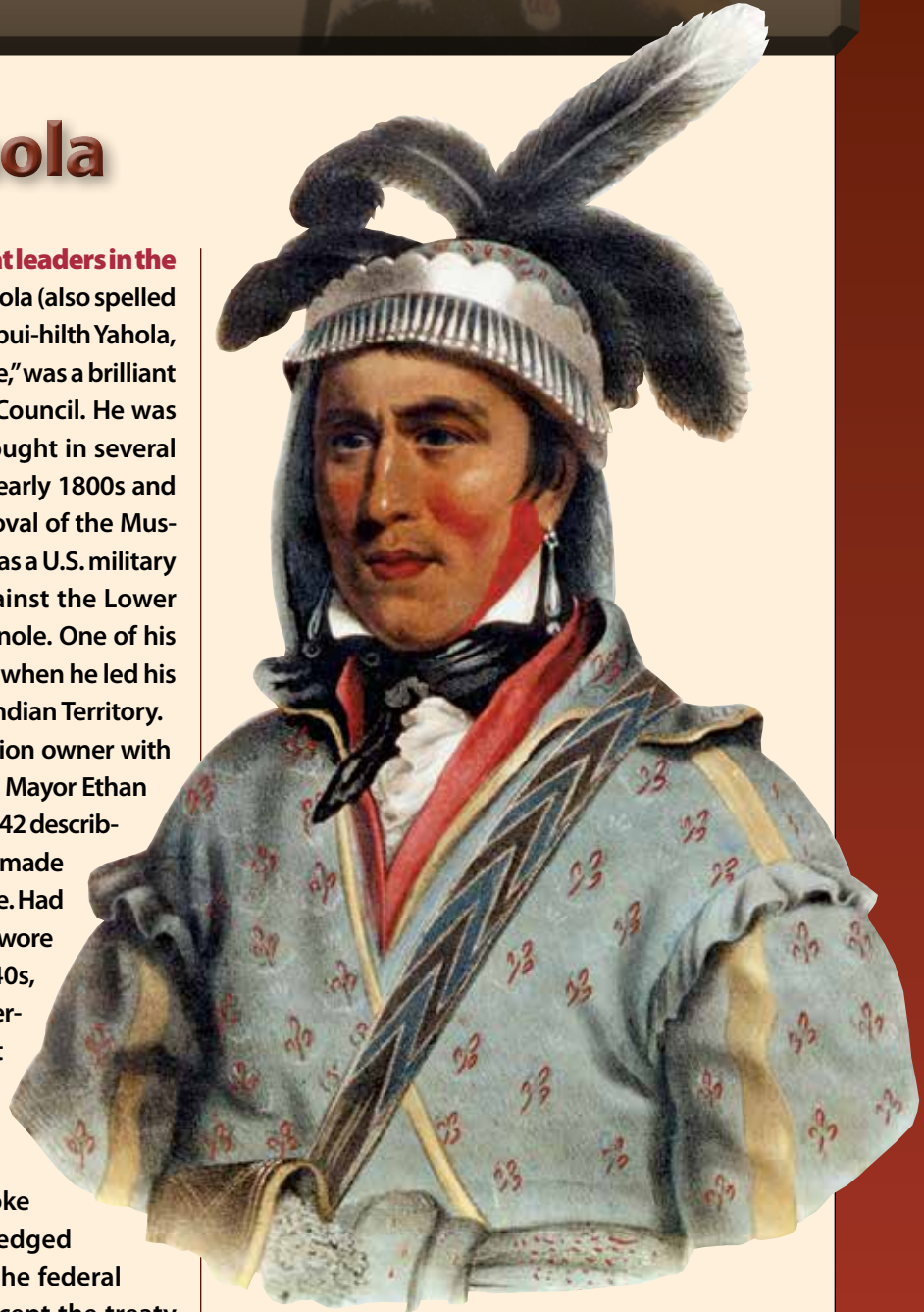
# Oklahoma Profiles

## Opothleyahola

**Opothleyahola was one of the great leaders in the** Muscogee Creek Nation. Opothleyahola (also spelled Opothle Yohola, Opothleyoholo, Hu-pui-hilth Yahola, and Hopoeitheyohola), or “Old Gouge,” was a brilliant spokesperson for the Upper Creek Council. He was born about 1798 in Alabama. He fought in several battles against white people in the early 1800s and later fought against the forced removal of the Muscogee Creek. In 1836, commissioned as a U.S. military colonel, Opothleyahola fought against the Lower Creek who had allied with the Seminole. One of his most difficult missions came in 1837 when he led his people from their homeland to the Indian Territory.

Opothleyahola, a wealthy plantation owner with slaves, adapted to life in the Territory. Mayor Ethan Allen Hitchcock wrote in his diary in 1842 describing Opothleyahola, “He is a tall, well made Indian over 45, perhaps 50 years of age. Had on a blue frock coat of good cloth, but wore deer skin leggings.” Early in the 1840s, Opothleyahola was a trader in partnership with J. W. Taylor, a white man, but the company failed “to give bond and license,” and the store was closed.

Opothleyahola again led his people to safety when the Civil War broke out. Many years before, he had pledged to never again bear arms against the federal government, and he refused to accept the treaty some Creek had made with the Confederacy. After several months, three intense battles, and blizzards, Opothleyahola and many followers finally reached safety in Kansas. The battles had taken their toll, and Opothleyahola died in Kansas in 1863.



**Opothleyahola** refused to consider any alliance with the Confederacy. He led his followers north on a grueling march to Union territory, battling winter weather and Confederate pursuers.

## Something Extra!

The Union's First Indian Home Guard Regiment was organized in May 1862 in LeRoy, Kansas. Indians were recruited through the Sac and Fox Agency in Kansas and from the refugees who had followed Opothleyahola.

### Map 30 The Civil War in Oklahoma

**Map Skill:** What is the first battle shown on the map?

erate troops attacked a third time on December 26. In a battle that lasted four hours, Opothleyahola's people were finally defeated. The survivors fled into the wooded land, still intent on reaching safety in Kansas. The dead and wounded were left to freeze in the blizzard, while the other survivors, many hungry and barefoot, continued north.

Opothleyahola was one of those who struggled into Kansas. The great leader survived the trek to Kansas, but he died in March 1863. Many of the others who survived arrived with frozen hands or feet that had to be amputated. The refugees suffered greatly from disease and the lack of food, and many Indians died from the miserable conditions. It would be years before they could once again rebuild their lives in the Indian country.

### Pea Ridge

Battles raged on many fronts in the eastern half of the country, and most resulted in Confederate victories in the first half of the war. Even though Union wins were fewer, they did occur.

Union forces won a decisive battle at Pea Ridge in northwestern Arkansas in March 1862. More than 10,000 Union soldiers commanded by Brigadier General Samuel Curtis battled 16,000 Confederates led by Major General Earl Van Dorn, McCulloch, and Pike at Elkhorn Tavern on Pea Ridge. Eight hundred Cherokee troops, led by Stand Watie and John Drew, joined in the fierce battle. After two days of fighting, the Union forces won. Some 4,600 Confederates, including McCulloch, lost their lives at Pea Ridge, compared to 1,400 Union soldiers. Pike retreated into Indian Territory, abandoning Fort Davis and setting up Fort McCulloch.

### The Indian Expedition





The loss at Pea Ridge weakened the Confederate position in the West. Union leaders in Kansas summoned troops from Wisconsin, Ohio, Indiana, and Kansas, as well as two Home Guard Regiments of loyal Indians, and formed the Indian Expedition to regain the Indian Territory. Union General James Blunt placed Colonel William Weer in command of the Indian Expedition, which began June 1, 1862. After several skirmishes with Stand Watie's cavalry, Weer faced the Confederates at Locust Grove on July 3. The southern troops fell back under heavy artillery fire. The Union soldiers proceeded to take over Fort Gibson and Tahlequah, capital of the Cherokee Nation, where they were welcomed by Chief John Ross. Even though the Union forces had captured Fort Gibson and Tahlequah, poor leadership and rumors of a counterattack sent them back to Kansas. Ross was taken into protective custody and, with his family, was sent to Philadelphia, where he remained for the duration of the war.

In October 1862, to keep the Confederates from advancing across Union lines, Blunt's two Union brigades fought Cooper's Confederate forces in northwestern Arkansas. After several battles, Cooper's troops retreated to Fort Wayne in the Indian Territory, while other Confederates went to Huntsville, Arkansas. In a surprise attack, Blunt drove Cooper out of Fort Wayne (east of Jay), leaving a cannon, supplies, and fifty prisoners.

### Black Troops

In May 1861, freed slave and abolitionist Frederick Douglass called for



**Top:** Pea Ridge was a pivotal battle won by the 10,000 Union troops. Stand Watie's Indian troops fought alongside 16,000 Confederates. **Above:** Confederate General Ben McCulloch was killed during the second day of fighting at Pea Ridge.





**General James Blunt** was in command of the troop that drove Colonel Douglas Cooper's forces from Fort Wayne.

## Something Extra!

On January 1, 1863, President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, which freed the slaves in the Confederate states. However, it did not apply to the Indian Territory.

African Americans to participate in the Civil War. The Union War Department had authorized the services of black men in 1862, and the effort was finally endorsed by President Lincoln in 1863. James Henry Lane, senator from the new free state of Kansas, was the first to organize a unit of African American soldiers in August 1862, the First Kansas Colored Infantry.

The 11th Regiment, United States Colored Troops, recruited from Fort Smith in 1863, saw its first military action in 1864. The 265 men were deployed to the Indian Territory to guard government stock and hay at Gunther's Prairie, twelve miles northwest of Fort Smith. About 300-400 Confederates attacked them on August 24, but the 11th Regiment held its position, forcing the Confederates to retreat.

### The Battle at Cabin Creek

Colonel William Phillips had been left in command of Union Indian troops in the northeastern part of the Territory. In addition to combating Stand Watie's raids, Phillips helped protect and find food for the Indians who remained in their homes. Phillips had also spent much of the winter trying to convince the Cherokee to resettle on their lands in the Indian Territory that Union troops had recaptured. Encouraged by Phillips, many Union Cherokee met at the Cowskin Prairie in the northeastern corner of the Cherokee Nation in February 1863. At the Cowskin Prairie Council, the Cherokee withdrew from the Confederacy, declared Stand Watie and his followers outlaws, and abolished slavery. They elected John Ross as chief and Thomas Pegg as acting chief. There were now two Cherokee governments in the Territory.

By April 1863, the Union had recaptured Fort Gibson. Union troops built a mile-long, 18-gun earthwork (a fortification made of earth), called Fort Blunt, on a hill above Fort Gibson.

A Union supply train, escorted by Colonel James M. Williams and the First Kansas Colored Infantry, two units of white soldiers, and the Third Indian Home Guards from Kansas, headed toward Fort Gibson on July 2, 1863. All of the creeks and rivers were swollen due to recent rains. The high water finally receded enough for Williams to lead the supply train through Cabin Creek. Watie and his regiment were waiting at the creek to capture the supply train. After a bloody battle, the Union infantry held off Watie's men, and the supplies arrived at Fort Gibson as planned. The Battle of Cabin Creek was the first engagement of the Civil War in which black, white, and Indian troops fought side by side.

### The Battle of Honey Springs

The morning of July 17, 1863, dawned with a summer rain. Union troops were tired and hungry but somewhat bolstered (strengthened) by news of great victories earlier in the month at Gettysburg and Vicksburg. Word reached the Territory of a Confederate plan to have Cooper's Indian and Texas regiments join with General William Cabell's Fort Smith forces to attack Union troops at Fort Gibson. Union General Blunt decided to attack first, before the two Confederate forces could join up. On the night

of July 15, he quickly began moving artillery and men across the swollen Arkansas River towards Honey Springs, a principal Confederate supply depot. Blunt's three thousand men included the Second Colorado Infantry; the First, Second, and Third Indian Home Guard Regiments; and the First Kansas Colored Infantry. Cooper's six thousand Confederate troops included Watie and two Cherokee regiments, Colonel Tandy Walker's Choctaw and Chickasaw unit, Colonel D. N. McIntosh's two Creek units, Colonel T. C. Bass's Twentieth Texas Cavalry, and other Texas forces.

After a small skirmish early on July 17, intense fighting shattered the silence of the peaceful countryside. In the thick of the battle, Union Indian regiments unintentionally moved in front of the African American regiment, which had been fighting a Texas cavalry unit. The Indians quickly got out of the way, and the Texans charged into the First Kansas Colored Infantry's line of sight. Many Texans were killed. Confederate troops soon had problems with wet gunpowder and inferior artillery. After a two-hour battle, Cooper's forces retreated. Before they left, they set their storage buildings on fire, hoping to keep the northerners from taking the supplies. Blunt's men managed to save some of the supplies. Blunt later said, "They [the First Kansas Colored Infantry] fought like veterans, with a coolness and valor that is unsurpassed. They preserved their line perfect throughout the whole engagement and, although in the hottest of the fight, they never once faltered. Too much praise can not be awarded them for their gallantry."

The Battle of Honey Springs was the largest, bloodiest, and most decisive Civil War battle in the Indian Territory. Other skirmishes in the territory followed, but Honey Springs joined the growing list of Union victories.

### The Battle at Perryville

Blunt's mission was to defeat the Confederates in Indian Territory once and for all. Cooper's Indian troops were still dispirited after their defeat at Honey Springs when Blunt attacked the Confederates on August 26, 1863. Blunt found them at Perryville, a major supply depot for the Confederates, located between Boggy Depot and Scullyville on the Texas Road. In the nighttime battle, the Confederates hastily retreated after a short fight, leaving behind supplies. After taking some of the supplies, Blunt ordered the town burned.



**Top:** After Union forces won the Battle of Honey Springs, they controlled all of Indian Territory north of the Arkansas River.

**Above:** Colonel D. N. McIntosh commanded Confederate Creek troops at the Battle of Honey Springs.

## Guerrilla Warfare

From September 1863, with the fall of Fort Smith, to the surrenders by the Confederate Indians in the summer of 1865, the only warfare in Indian Territory was guerrilla activity. A **guerrilla** is a member of a small military group that harasses the enemy. Colonel William Quantrill, a Confederate raider primarily based in Kansas, periodically roamed the Indian Territory. Indian raiders sometimes stole cattle and horses and burned Indian homes or villages. Stand Watie raided anything military

that could be used by the enemy. Watie especially liked to patrol the Union supply line between Fort Scott, Kansas, and Fort Gibson, where thousands of cavalry horses were kept. Watie's raiders often drove away grazing mule and horse herds, which were badly needed by the Union troops.

In June 1864, Watie's troops ambushed and captured the supply steamboat *J. R. Williams* as it made its way up the Arkansas River toward Fort Gibson. In September 1864, General Sterling Price, Watie's



**Quantrill's raiders attacked Lawrence, Kansas, in August 1863, killing more than 150 men and boys.**

## Something Extra!

Confederate guerrillas were also called "bushwhackers." Frank and Jesse James were also bushwhackers.

regiment, and Colonel Samuel Checote leading a Creek regiment attacked and captured a supply train of three hundred wagons and heavy military equipment on Cabin Creek, near where Watie had met defeat in 1863. The Confederate forces claimed huge quantities of food, medical supplies, and military arms valued at \$1,500,000.

In spring 1864, Confederate Indian units were reorganized, creating the First and the Second Indian Cavalry brigades. Stand Watie, promoted to brigadier general, commanded the First Brigade, and Colonel Tandy Walker, a Choctaw, commanded the Second Brigade. With practically no military action in the Indian Territory, most Indian troops were allowed to tend to crops and families.

## Indian Refugees

Neither the North nor the South had anticipated the many Indian refugees. The Loyal Creek, numbering about seven thousand, eventually made their way to the refugee camp in Kansas. Confederate Indian refugees sought safety in Choctaw camps or across the Red River. Pro-Confederate Cherokee fled across the Arkansas River into the Creek Nation when the 1862 Indian Expedition moved south. Others hastened to the Red River Valley as Union soldiers burned homes and harassed

civilians. Following the Confederate defeat at Honey Springs in 1863, both Cherokee and Creek quickly got out of the way of Union troops. Confederate Brigadier General Samuel Bell Maxey attempted to care for the refugees along the Red River Valley, which sometimes numbered almost fourteen thousand.

## The War Ends

On April 9, 1865, at Appomattox Court House in Virginia, Confederate General Robert E. Lee surrendered to Union General Ulysses S. Grant, ending the Civil War. Throughout the next few months, other Confederate commanders surrendered. The last Confederate commander to surrender was General Stand Watie, who gave up his sword at Doaksville on June 23, 1865.

Just before the end of the war but with Confederate defeat in sight, Creek leaders tried to arrange a general council of all Indians at Council Grove to present a united front to Union leaders. Union forces didn't approve of such a meeting. The Five Tribe Confederate representatives then met with delegates of several Plains tribes at Camp Napoleon on the Washita River near Verden. The council adopted a compact of peace, which they planned to present to the United States. The peace plan among the Indians made little difference.

The Indian Territory was devastated. Many people were maimed or had died. Livestock, fields, fences, and homes were destroyed. There was no money. All too soon, the Indians had to once again find ways to rebuild their lives.



**General Stand Watie's troops took part in eighteen battles and major skirmishes during the war. He was the only Indian to be named a general in the war. In this painting by Dennis Parker, General Watie (right) is shown surrendering at the end of the war. He was the last Confederate general to do so.**

## It's Your Turn

1. Why did many of the tribes support the Confederacy?
2. What was significant about the Battle of Cabin Creek?
3. When did the Civil War end in Indian Territory?

# Chapter Review

## Chapter Summary

- Disagreements among the states over political and economic issues escalated and ultimately led to the American Civil War.
- In an attempt to ward off conflict, Congress passed compromises and legislation such as the Missouri Compromise, the Compromise of 1850, and the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854. None of these proved to be a permanent solution. The election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860 further split the country.
- War broke out in April 1861.
- Tribes were split in their loyalties between the North and the South or whether to remain neutral. Old hostilities resurfaced.
- Indian regiments were formed, and Confederate outposts were built in Indian Territory to train soldiers for battle.
- Union forces won a decisive battle at Pea Ridge in northwestern Arkansas in March 1862; this weakened the Confederate position in the West.
- Indians sympathetic with the Union formed the Indian Expedition and entered Indian Territory from Kansas to reclaim Fort Gibson and Tahlequah, which had been controlled by the Confederacy.
- Black troops played a prominent role in Indian Territory during the Civil War.
- The Battle of Honey Springs was the largest, bloodiest, and most decisive battle in Indian Territory.
- By September 1863, guerrilla warfare reigned in Indian Territory.
- The Civil War officially ended on April 9, 1865, at Appomattox Court House in Virginia.
- The last Confederate commander to surrender was General Stand Watie, a Cherokee leader.

- The Five Tribes, who had only recently recovered from the tragedy of removal, were devastated by this war.

## Vocabulary

Create a crossword puzzle using ten of the following words. Create clues for the words.

1. abolitionist
2. brigade
3. Compromise of 1850
4. free state
5. guardianship
6. guerrilla
7. neutral
8. outpost
9. popular sovereignty
10. secede
11. slave state
12. states' rights
13. supply depot
14. tariff
15. Underground Railroad

## Understanding the Facts

1. List the terms of the Compromise of 1850.
2. What novel emphasized the plight of the slaves before the Civil War? Who was the author?
3. Which man's election as president triggered the Civil War?
4. Which state was first to secede from the Union?
5. Who was named Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Confederacy?
6. What was the largest and most decisive battle fought in Indian Territory?
7. When and where was the official end of the Civil War?
8. Who was the last Confederate general to surrender?

## Developing Critical Thinking

1. Why was Fort Gibson so important to both sides during the Civil War?
2. What do you think were the factors that contributed to the Confederate losses in Indian Territory?
3. By the end of the Civil War, the Indians had nothing left. They were in worse shape than when they had arrived after the removals. Explain why this happened.

## Applying Your Skills

1. On a map of the United States, highlight using different colors:
  - a. Union states
  - b. Confederate states before Fort Sumter
  - c. Confederate states after Fort Sumter
  - d. Territory of the Five Tribes in Indian Territory
2. On an Oklahoma map, locate and label by name and year the Civil War battles fought in Indian Territory.
3. Assume that you live near Bowling Green, Kentucky, and you are part of the Underground

Railroad. You have been told that a black slave from a nearby farm is to be smuggled into Indian Territory, where other family members live with the Creek Indians. Plan how you will get the slave into Indian Territory.

## Exploring Technology

1. Use your favorite search engine to research the lives of any three of the following Civil War leaders: Robert E. Lee, Ulysses S. Grant, Stand Watie, James G. Blunt, Albert Pike, Douglas Cooper.
2. Use your Internet research skills to find out who Quantrill's Raiders were and for what they were best known.
3. Search the Internet to find out about different Civil War reenactments that are held in Oklahoma each year.
  - a. List at least two of the battles that are reenacted and indicate which Oklahoma town is nearby each one.
  - b. Make a list of events and activities that take place during your two reenactments.

## Building Skills

## Reaching Compromises

**Americans have always had a knack for compromising** between tough choices and almost impossible deadlocks between opposing points of view. The alternatives to not being able to reach a compromise can be lack of progress, indecision, and, in some cases, violent action.

In late 1849, there were several bills before the U.S. Congress that threatened to disrupt the Union. Each side felt strongly about the issues involved and it seemed that any kind of compromise was impossible. Yet compromise was eventually achieved. Do some more research on the Compromise of 1850. Make careful notes on the different views held on each of the issues. Be able to present each point of view and discuss the give-and-take that allowed people with differing opinions to reach an agreement. Did any of the compromises cause a problem? Could conflict

have been avoided? Do compromises leave basic problems unresolved?

As citizens of the United States, we all must make compromises. Almost daily, we must give-and-take with our fellow citizens in order to coexist. It is important, though, that we recognize that there are some areas of our lives—our basic values—that cannot be compromised. As citizens, we realize that there are parts of our constitutional democracy that we cannot compromise.

What issues are not open to compromise in our society? What types of compromises are necessary for us to be able to exist in society? Would life as we know it be possible without compromise? Are there times when compromise is just not possible? Why are respect, open-mindedness, tolerance, and patience important qualities to have when making compromises?