

PAYNE COUNTY

# Historical Review

Colonel Cooper's Civil War Report on the  
Battle of Round Mountain

*by Muriel Wright*

Report from *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*  
Vol. 39, Winter, 1961-62, pp. 352-397

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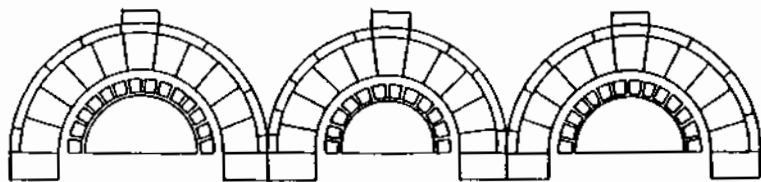
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*PAYNE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY*

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by Muriel H. Wright

## Colonel Cooper's Civil War Report on The Battle of Round Mountain

### INTRODUCTION

Colonel Douglas H. Cooper, in command of the Indian Department of the Confederate Army, reported the military expedition, in which the "Engagement at Round Mountain" is listed as the first of three battles against Opothleyahola, the noted Creek leader who headed the Union forces in the Indian Territory one hundred years ago. Writers on the Civil War have usually given little attention to this first engagement, stressing instead the outcome of the third fight—Battle of Chustenahlah—when the Union Creeks were finally defeated by Confederate troops, and driven north with their families through winter cold and snow as miserable refugees to Kansas. Yet the Battle of Round Mountain began the bloodshed that led to this tragedy for the Union Creeks and their allies, and started the bitter division among the people of other tribes in the Indian Territory, during the Civil War.

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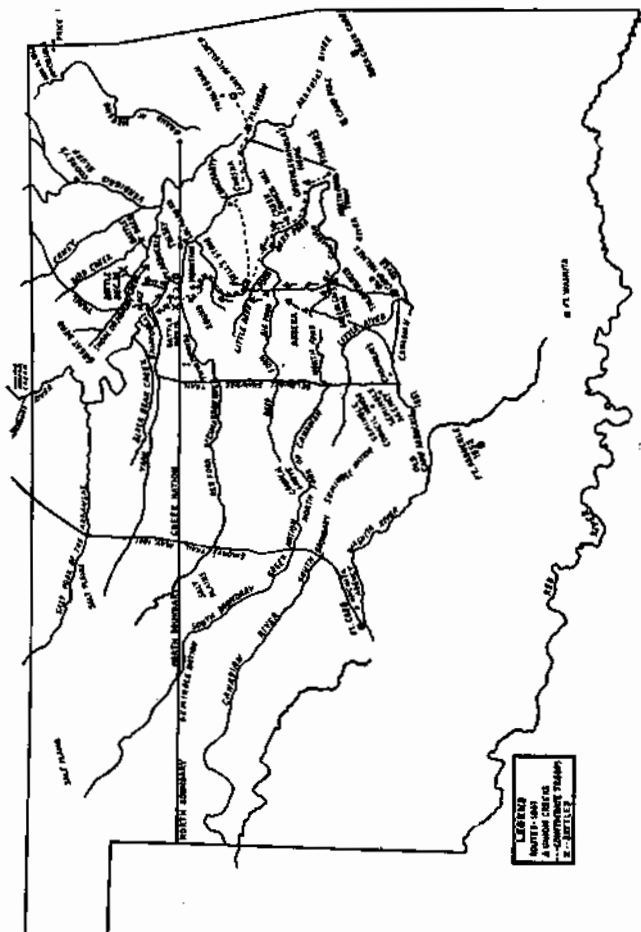
Muriel Wright authored the following article that was published in *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, volume 39, Winter, 1961-62, pp. 352-397. Copyright 1962. Reprinted from The Chronicles of Oklahoma (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Historical Society, 1962.

Colonel Cooper states that toward evening on November 19, 1861, after crossing to the north side of the Red Fork, now Cimarron River, a detachment of Texas Cavalry under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel William Quayle, was forced to retreat by a superior force of the enemy in a skirmish that ended in a "short but sharp conflict" after dark. Cooper gives no clue to the exact site of the battle nor does his description suggest the name "Round Mountain." The records prepared by others than Cooper and the officers of his command, during and immediately after the Civil War, refer to the engagement on November 19 as the Battle of Red Fork. The *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* first published the name of the engagement as "Round Mountain."

Colonel Cooper wrote the report at Fort Gibson on January 20, 1862, addressing it to the Confederate Secretary of War, J. P. Benjamin at Richmond, Virginia. He closed with an apology to the Secretary for the sending the report, two months after the first engagement against the Union Creeks, in November. Cooper with the officers of his command and the poorly clad, practically untrained troops had experienced all the rigors of a war in itself during these two months. The expedition had set out to force Opothleyahola's recognition of the recent Confederate Creek treaty, and to stop him and his followers—more than 3,500 men, women and children—on their march north from their home settlements in the Creek Nation toward the mouth of the Red Fork River, on the Arkansas. Cooper briefs the operation of his troops in the field, giving very little about what happened on the day of November 19. Where and at what time in the day did the Confederate command overtake the followers of Opothleyahola on the march? Where was the appointed rendezvous for Opothleyahola's armed warriors? Where was Opothleyahola's encampment just before the battle north of the Cimarron? These are important points in making any logical conclusion on the Creek leaders' movements and plans in his opposition to an alliance with the Southern Confederacy. A close study of Colonel Cooper's report with those of his officers and other documents reveal the Battle of Round Mountain more than just one "short but sharp conflict" in a brief period of rifle fire between the Confederate troops and Opothleyahola's forces, at some point in the hills north of the Cimarron River.

Most historians interested in this subject besides searchers and writers on local history have maintained that the Battle of Round Mountain took place north of the river, near one of the many hills some miles northwest of present Keystone, a small

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town that centers the region around the mouth of the Cimarron. Yet none of these northwestern hills is known as "Round Mountain." Old time Indians living in this vicinity since before the Civil War, some of whom were participants, or were closely associated with participants, in the fighting have held that the battle between the Union Creeks and the Confederates on November 19, the first year of the War took place south of the Cimarron. South of the river six miles, almost due south of Keystone, is a high hill called Round Mountain in the extreme southwestern corner of Tulsa County, about twenty miles southwest of the City of Tulsa.

And now, another view has been developed in recent years, on this Civil War battle. The Payne County Historical Society has promoted the theory since 1949, that the first battle between Cooper's Confederate forces and the Union Creeks in 1861 took place near the Twin Mounds in present Payne County. This theory discards a well known historical map and records, besides Civil War tradition in the region at the mouth of the Red Fork, in the effort to prove the Twin Mounds as the site of the first battle against the Union Creeks.<sup>1</sup> This site is about eight miles north of the Cimarron and more than forty miles west of Keystone by any trail in 1861.

A handsome stone monument was erected a few years ago by the Payne County Society, about three miles northwest of the town of Yale to commemorate the Twin Mounds location as the site of the first Civil War battle against Opothleyahola.<sup>2</sup> This site for the Battle of Round Mountain has never been accepted by the Oklahoma Historical Society in its statewide program of marking historic sites, carried on since 1949. Nor has the 'Twin Mounds' site been proven correct to the satisfaction

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<sup>1</sup> Angie Debo, "The Site of the Battle of Round Mountain, 1861," *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Vol. XXVII, No. 2 (Summer, 1949), pp. 187-206. The battle site promoted in Payne County is in Sec. 8, T. 18 N., R. 5 E., about eight miles north of the Cimarron River.

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<sup>2</sup> The historical programs promoted by the Payne County Society have been under the direction of Dr. Berlin B. Chapman, Professor in the History Department of Oklahoma State University, at Stillwater. Dr. Chapman is well known for his research in Oklahoma history and for his studies in this field, published in book form and in articles that have appeared in *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* from time to time since 1933.



of Oklahoma historians and others interested in the history of the Civil War in the Indian Territory.

The emphasis now given events of the Civil War in the Indian Territory in the statewide program carried on by the Oklahoma Civil War Centennial Commission calls for a review of Cooper's report at this time. The Civil War Commission is producing an Oklahoma pictorial map through the work of the Oklahoma Historical Society's Committee on Historic Sites, giving the locations of battles and other sites of the Civil War period in this region. The Commission also is forwarding plans to erect markers and monuments at some of these sites, and to conduct historical tours and programs to commemorate outstanding events of the War.

This review of Colonel Cooper's Report of 1862 is presented here in *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, based upon the well known records and other historical materials that have been recently brought to light relating to the Battle of Round Mountain, in the interest of preserving the true history of the Indian Territory in the American Civil War.<sup>3</sup>

#### THE STATEMENT OF MR. JACK T. ALEXANDER

The writer has kept in mind the subject of the Civil War battle site in the Keystone region, having made field trips in its vicinity and researched the records from time to time for data since 1949. About two years ago, a letter was received from

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<sup>3</sup> In this review of Colonel Cooper's Report, the writer makes grateful acknowledgement for the assistance given in the compilation: to Dr. James H. Gardner, former member of the Board of Directors of the Oklahoma Historical Society and President of the Gardner Petroleum Company in Tulsa, who is well acquainted with the Big Bend country of the Arkansas in Pawnee County, through his work in the geological field for many years; and to Mr. Jack T. Alexander, a member of an old Cherokee family, who has lived all his life in Tulsa County, and has spent much time in search and study of the hills in the vicinity of Keystone and Mannford, the old, traditional region of the Battle of Red Fork, or Round Mountain since the time of the Civil War. Further acknowledgement is due Mr. Robert H. Dott, Executive Head of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists, of Tulsa; Mrs. Orpha Russell of Tulsa, whose articles relating to the Battle of Round Mountain appeared in *The Chronicles* (1951 and 1957); and Bob Foreman of *The Tulsa Tribune*, whose recent feature story appeared (November 18, 1961) in commemoration of the centennial of the Battle of Round Mountain. Mr. Art Stoneman and Charles Zickefoose, both of Keystone, whose families have lived in this country since 1893, gave information on historic sites in this region.

Mr. Jack T. Alexander expressing his interest in proving the site of the Battle of Round Mountain near Keystone to correct the error made by the proponents of the Twin Mounds' site. His interest in this subject has been important in the writer's intensive research during the past year that has resulted in the study and review of Colonel Cooper's Report. From his research in the Keystone region and reading over the writer's work file of materials, Mr. Alexander recently sent in a statement giving his own conclusions on the site of the Battle of Round Mountain. Since his statement briefs important data<sup>4</sup> for the Keystone location of the battle, and summarizes the question promoted by the proponents of the 'Twin Mounds' site, it is given here to point up the problem and historical data for readers of *The Chronicles* before beginning the writer's review of Colonel Cooper's Report:

*Documentary Evidence And Conclusions On  
Site Of Round Mountain*

The events of the hegira of Opothleyahola's forces have been generalized in several articles of fairly recent date drawn from the *Official Records*, by Wiley Britton, Abel, Debo, Russell and others and are familiar to those who have read them. There are some documents and details of events not generally known and sometimes in conflict with conclusions of writers of this century, and for this reason should be presented.

The first document, and most important, is the map drawn by John T. Cox and submitted in 1864 with his report of Yahola's movements. This cannot be ignored or taken lightly as Cox compiled this information less than three years after it happened from participants and events were fresh in their minds. Although not to scale, Cox shows "Camp Gouge" and the Battle of Red Fork very near the confluence of the Arkansas and Cimarron Rivers, where he states the enemy was repulsed. He also shows the Caving Banks and Hominy Falls sites accurately, so there is no reason to doubt his location of the first engagement of this series.

Now, we find from a letter written by Colonel Cooper that he was in camp near Thlopthlocco Square, Creek Nation on October 29, 1861. Also that Colonel Drew was at Ft. Gibson on October 31, 1861. On November 5, 1861 Colonel Cooper

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<sup>4</sup> These papers are cited as sources indicated in this review as Civil War File 1861, and are located in the Editorial Office files.

ordered Colonel John Drew to march up the Neosho with the least delay to join and support Colonel Stand Watie, and from a letter by Colonel Drew we find that he did so, arriving at Camp Codey, Verdigris River on November 19, 1861, and was still there according to dispatches dated November 25 and 27. On November 27, Colonel Cooper wrote Drew, mentioned the first skirmish, and stated that he would move part of his forces to the Lochapoka Town, part to Dick Coody's, and part scout back on Deep Fork and North Fork.

On December 2, Acting Adjutant-General R. W. Lee sent a dispatch from Camp Perryman at Tulsey Town, stating that from a Cherokee prisoner he learned that Yahola's forces were camped "about six miles above the mouth of Red Fork, on this (north) side of Arkansas River and about twenty-five miles from us." This would be Walnut Creek, and the camp site was about one mile from the mouth of the Creek. On December 4 from Camp Denmark near the Kansas line, Colonel Watie inquired of Colonel Drew as to the whereabouts of the "Discontented Creeks."

We come now to the first letter of record written by other than an officer. His first name was Thornton, and signed his letter with initials TBM. He participated in the first and second battles, was in preparation for the third, and states: "The first battle we fought at *Round Mountain* about five miles North of the Red Fork of the Arkansas." This letter was written from Camp Choska on December 23, 1861.

The account of Judge James R. Gregory, Ninth Kansas Cavalry, whose home was one mile south of present Bristow during the Civil War appearing in the *Galveston News*, November 27, 1901, states:

"One body of the Union Creeks was camped on the Arkansas River near the old Skistook place (then in the Cherokee Nation but now in the Osage Nation) and the others on the North Fork River, above mentioned. General Cooper with his forces proceeded to attack the Creek Camp on the North Fork River. The Union Creeks, under the command of Chief Opothleyahola marched in one-fourth circle around the right flank of Cooper's army to the Northeast, attempting to form a junction with the Union Creeks on the Arkansas River. Before the junction was effected General Cooper's army overtook this faction of the Union Creeks crossing the Cimarron just at dusk. A battle ensued, which was fought after darkness set in. After stopping the advance of the Confederates, the Union Creeks proceeded on the same night to form the junction which they had in contemplation on the outset, and which they accomplished the following day. General Cooper did not follow the Union Creeks the next day, but retired toward Choska to

wall reinforcements.

Copies of these documents and others of the period have been made available through the Editorial Department of the Historical Society, and in these let us first go back and establish the positions of the forces. Cooper was almost directly south of the mouth of the Red Fork River when at Thlophlocco Town. He deployed Drew and Watie to present Coody's Bluff on the Verdigris, northeast of the Red Fork. If he was expecting Yahola to go west or to the Walnut Creek in Kansas why did he send forces so far away? From splitting his forces, according to the letter of November 27, apparently he did not know where Yahola was. Likewise, note Watie's inquiry to Colonel Drew on Yahola's locations.

Trooper "TBM" states the battle was five miles north of the Red Fork. The Payne County proponents by their own reckoning place it eight miles north of the Red Fork. Also, if Trooper TBM had seen the Payne County Twin Mounds he surely would have used the plural designation. Now comes Judge Gregory to state that the *contemplated junction was completed the next day after the battle*. Can someone explain how this large body of people could move on foot overnight the distance involved from the Twin Mounds site to the Skiatook settlement, over forty airlines miles? They could not, but they could have from the region in Pawnee County of Section 13, T. 20 N., R. 8 E. on Cowskin Creek, which is just four and one-half miles from the Red Fork River and where, in 1876, Mr. J. C. Byers found the wagon remnants and camp debris.

In addition, let us look up these camp sites of Yahola, as pointed out by a descendent of one of Yahola's followers. The *first* known is near Bristow, Section 27, T. 16 N., R. 9 E. (Rock Creek, a branch of the Little Deep Fork); the *second*, Section 13, T. 20 N., R. 8 E. (Cowskin Creek); *third*, Section 1, T. 20 N., R. 9 E. (Walnut Creek); *fourth*, Section 35, T. 21 N., R. 11 E. (Delaware Creek); and *fifth* the Section 20, T. 21 N., R. 13 E., (Bird Creek). Trace these on a quadrangle map and the route confirms the Cox map. When asked if the trail followed by Opothleyahola could have, or did go any farther west than this, the answer is "No."

There is also the evidence as related by Elizabeth Sapulpa and Willie Bruner, who were Creek Indians, and Sam Brown, Euchee Chief, as to four caves dug for protection about one-half mile north of old Fort Arbuckle which is in SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 2,

T. 19 N., R. 10 E., Western Tulsa County, and about eight miles east of the Byers site. The Cox map clearly shows a division of forces by Yahola south of the Red Fork River showing that they had knowledge of pursuit. Division of forces by Indians was a common military tactic. The warriors bore to the northwest and the Byers site and the non-combatants were sent eastward to these cave sites and old Fort Arbuckle for their protection. In all our history of the American Indians can it be found where they did not have utmost concern for the safety of family, women, children and the aged? Fort Arbuckle, built in 1834, was undoubtedly known to the residents of the Creek Nation, and used as a landmark and reference point.

The lone bit of evidence that the Twin Mounds' proponents have is the wagon remnants and debris found on the Salt Creek near there. Consider this: Item in the *El Reno News* for June 25, 1897, p. 6, col. 13 states;

*The Cushing Herald* says: The battle of Twin Mounds, Payne County, fought near the close of the war, between Texas Rangers and some northern men, when about thirty were killed and wounded, was not so much a skirmish between Unionists and Rebels as between certain Texas cattlemen who were trying to recapture their large number of steers that had been confiscated by a band from somewhere up north. The battle put a stop to occasional wholesale stealing of large herds of marketable beefs.

These findings are the result of much research, over two years (1959-1961), many miles traveled, many times to all these points mentioned solely in the interest of historical accuracy.

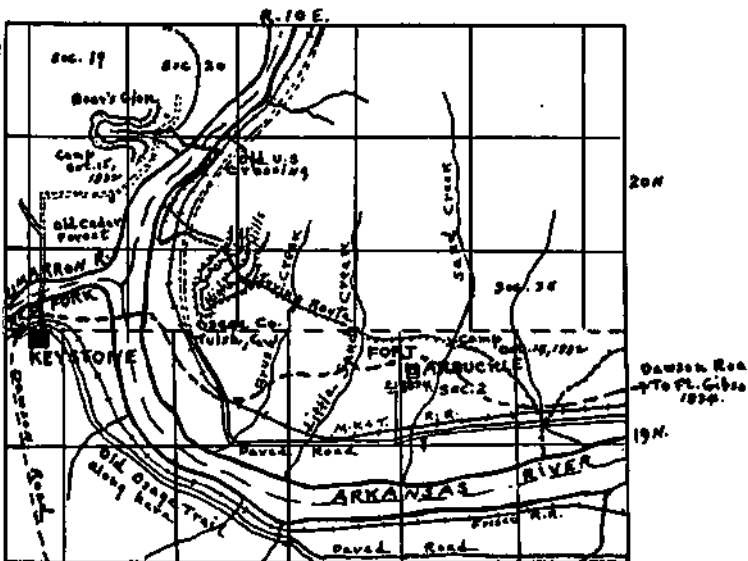
—Jack T. Alexander

#### SOME NOTES ON THE HISTORY AND TOPOGRAPHICAL FEATURES OF THE WESTERN CREEK AND THE CHEROKEE SETTLEMENTS BEFORE THE BATTLE OF ROUND MOUNTAIN

Notes on the history of the Tulsa region given by Dr. James H. Gardner in *Chronicles of Oklahoma* for 1933, describe topographical features and historical events that relate to the location of the Battle of Round Mountain. These notes are based on the original reports of Captain J. L. Dawson, of the Seventh Infantry, who made two expeditions from Fort Gibson to the mouth of the Red Fork, in 1831 and again in 1834.

On his second expedition, Captain Dawson reported a good location for a proposed military post on "a fine body of land, 6 miles square" on the north side of the Arkansas River just east of the mouth of the Red Fork. The post was established

here by Major George Birch in the summer of 1834, buildings were erected and the new stockade fortification was named "Camp Arbuckle" ("Fort Arbuckle") for Colonel Mathew Arbuckle, the Commandant at Fort Gibson. Camp Arbuckle was abandoned as a garrisoned post in the fall of 1834 but low mounds of earth and chimney stones marking the locations of the four main buildings are still seen on the site of this early day fort in Wekiwa Township, north of the Arkansas River about eight miles west of present Sand Springs. Even long after the Civil War, one of the old buildings of stone and heavy timbers was standing at the southeast corner of Camp Arbuckle. This site is a little over one-half mile south of the old north boundary



To Little River 1834.

Historical points near the mouth of the Red Fork (Cannon) James H. Barkman, 1903.

of the Creek Nation. A few yards south of this boundary line and about one-fourth of a mile northwest of the old post ground is a deep, dry gulch, in the sand banks of which the Union Creeks constructed four, big dugout caves where many of the women and children were lodged about the time of the Battle of Round Mountain. These people were in the van of the Opothleyahola followers—about 900, mostly women and children led by the old men—who had come up from the Canadian River region and the Deep Fork by early November, 1861. After the Battle of Round Mountain, they were joined here by their menfolk who were a part of Opothleyahola's warriors, under the command of Micco Hutka. This band of warriors is said to have remained here for a time before moving down the Arkansas and over to Shoal (or Hominy) Creek before the Battle of Chusto Talasa (Caving Banks), fought on December 9, 1861. Cooper's report indicates that the remains of the fortification at Camp Arbuckle were undergoing additional construction, such as the building of more shelter and repairing the stockade for further use of the old fort. When Dr. Gardner located and visited the site of Camp Arbuckle in 1933—nearly 100 years after its founding and 70 years since the outbreak of the Civil War—, he saw evidences of the fortification and piles of chimney stones, 6 to 16 feet across, on the sites of four original buildings. These had stood about 50 to 100 feet apart at the corners of a quadrangle within the grounds of the stockade. The stone in the original buildings evidently had been hauled to the post a long distance, but the timbers must have been of cedar from the fine cedar forest in the vicinity, described by Captain Dawson reporting his first expedition in 1831.

Dr. Gardner recently sent in a statement with a copy of a letter from Samuel Kinney written in 1835, describing old Fort Arbuckle near the Red Fork on the Arkansas.\* The statement and exact copy of the letter are given here:

In the *Chronicles* of June 1933, (Volume XI, No. 2), we related the search which resulted in fixing the location of the military establishment erected in 1834 near the mouth of the Red Fork (Cimarron) River

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\* In his letter of June 14, 1861, to the writer, relating to this study on the site of the Civil War "Battle of Round Mountain," Dr. James H. Garner states: "I do wish to say that after a careful analysis of the records, and the recent conference with you and Mr. Jack Alexander on the subject, I am convinced the site of this engagement was in the Keystone area as had long been defended from good authority . . . I can find no point to fit the accounts of the site of the engagement better than the Byers location in section 13, T. 20 N., R. 8 E. . . ."

mentioned variously as Camp Arbuckle, Fort Arbuckle and particularly in the war records as Post Arbuckle, being an outpost from Ft. Gibson for temporary protection of the settlers in this portion of the Creek Nation.

All that now remains at the site of the old post are four sizable piles of sandstone rocks from the foundations and chimneys which were gathered to permit cultivation in an open field in SW $\frac{1}{4}$  section 2, T. 19 N., R. 10 E. in the west portion of Tulsa county on the Bud Anderson farm. It is outside of the flood area of the Cimarron Dam now under construction. The report of Lieutenant Samuel Kinney, of the Seventh Infantry, written at Camp Arbuckle on February 5, 1835, to Major General T. B. Jessup, Quartermaster General, follows:<sup>5</sup>

Camp Arbuckle  
February 5th, 1835.

Sir:

In June last, two companies were detached from the 7th Regiment, by order of Brig. Genl. Leavenworth, then commanding the South Western frontier, to select a site, at or near the mouth of the Red Fork of the Arkansas River, and to erect a fort upon the same. Brevt. Major Birch commanding the detachment, selected a site, three miles below the mouth of the Red Fork, on the left bank of the Arkansas River and half a mile from it.

By virtue of Order No. 1 of Oct. 22, 1834 emanating from the Head Quarters of the South Western frontier, this Post was abandoned, and the troops withdrawn, with the exception of a small detachment left under my command, to guard a quantity of stores forwarded to this Post, during the summer from Fort Gibson.

This Post is distant from Fort Gibson seventy five miles. W. NW. twenty five. The works at this Post were commenced in June last, but, owing to the sickness of the troops, they progressed slowly. The drawing herewith enclosed, exhibits the ground plan of the buildings erected, they are all built of square hewn timbers, (with the exception of the kitchen) the quarters are one story, the Blockhouse two, shingle roofs, and built upon foundations of stone, raised a foot and a half above the surface of the ground. Each of the company and officers quarters is one continuous building, divided into 2 rooms of 22 feet square, with a vacant space, 8 ft. wide, between the rooms. The exterior walls are continuous, being intended as a line of defense, having for that purpose loop holes cut in them. Temporary floors are laid in the Blockhouse, two rooms of the company quarters and one of the Officers. They are otherwise rendered temporarily occupiable by the troops.

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<sup>5</sup> From the National Archives and Records Service in Washington D. C., we have obtained the photostat copy of a hand-written letter from this post in 1835 by Lt. Samuel Kinney to General T. B. Jessup which describes the post. Kinney states that he enclosed with his letter a drawing to exhibit the ground plans of the buildings but unfortunately a search by the archivist in charge of the Early Wars Branch failed to find it in the files.



No Hospital has been erected, the quarters adjacent to the Company Kitchen are occupied as an Hospital.

No storehouses have been erected, The Blockhouse being occupied as a storehouse.

I am, Sir, respectfully  
Your Mt. obt. Servt.  
Saml. Kinney  
Lieut & Act. Asst. QMaster  
Comdg. Detachment. 7th Infy.

To,  
Majr. Genl T. S. Jesup  
QuarterMaster Genl.  
Washington City  
D. C.

—James H. Gardner

#### THE BIG OSAGE WAR AND HUNTING TRAIL THAT BECAME THE DAWSON ROAD

Other than pointing out a location for the new military post on the Arkansas in 1834, Captain Dawson's main work on his second expedition was marking the "Big Osage War and Hunting Trail"<sup>6</sup> south from the mouth of the Red Fork to the mouth of Little River on the Canadian, in present Hughes County. Here, another military post known as Camp Holmes (old Fort Holmes) was built in the same year. This Osage Trail ran from the Claremore Mound region (present Rogers County) south and west along the north side of the Arkansas to a river crossing about twelve miles below the mouth of the Red Fork. Dawson marked the Osage Trail beginning at a crossing about two miles below the mouth of the Red Fork, and continued west about a mile, passing around the low wooded hill that stands at the east edge of present Keystone; thence, south to the head of Rock Creek, passing en route through the prairie that lies immediately east of Round Mountain, in present Tulsa County. This bald, round hill (947 feet) is the lower of two elevations, the second (1033 feet) of which is broken in outline and wooded, standing a little over a mile southeast.

Dawson blazed the full length of the Big Osage Trail, placing high mounds of earth reinforced with stone and timber at intervals, to serve as markers at special places along the way. Old timers have said one such marker on top of Round Mountain

<sup>6</sup> The Big Osage War and Hunting Trail had reference to the trail used by the "Great Osage" tribal division, whose villages were located in western Missouri in 1800.

could be seen from the Dawson Road as it became known in history.

The Dawson Road was traveled by the Delawares and the Shawnees from their settlements south of the Canadian, on their way to visit their tribesmen and the Indian agencies in Eastern Kansas, long before the Civil War. The same trail, with some detours and side trails was the main route through the western-most settlements of the Creek Nation for many years. These settlements were in the western part of present Creek and Okfuskee counties, on the east edge of the Cross Timbers, a wide band of rough country covered with blackjack and heavy undergrowth from 30 to 50 miles wide extending from the Red Fort to the Arkansas River, forming a natural barrier to the western prairies and plains far west.<sup>7</sup>

Some of the "towns" (communities) in the western Creek settlement along the old Dawson Road and other trails in the vicinity that are specially mentioned in the campaign against the Union Creeks, were Thlopthlocco, on the North Canadian River, about eight miles south of present Okemah; Greenleaf's Town (or Store) on the north side of the North Canadian, about four miles northwest of Thlopthlocco; Arbeka and "towns" nearby north of the Canadian, in the vicinity of present Boley; Big Pond north of the Deep Fork, some six or eight miles southeast of present Depew; Sell's Store about three miles north of the Little Deep Fork, at a crossing on Brown's Creek; and about four miles up the Little Deep Fork northwest of Sell's Store,

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<sup>7</sup> The Cross Timbers and the Arkansas River formed the natural, western boundary for the Creeks and the Cherokees before the Civil War, even though their land claims extended far west beyond these barriers. All the country west of here, extending south from the Arkansas (in present Kansas) to the Canadian, though it overlapped the Cherokee, Creek and Seminole lands, was acknowledged as the territory of the Comanche, Kiowa and Kiowa Apache by the Treaty of Fort Atkinson in 1854. The late 1850's saw this western region as dangerous ground after the big battles fought by U.S. troops and Texans from the South, against the Comanches. It was still more dangerous at the outbreak of the Civil War, with the withdrawal of the U. S. troops from the Indian Territory, in May, 1861, and the occupation of the military posts by Confederate troops. None of the eastern Indians would think of taking their families and settling in the western country at this time, particularly the Union Creeks. For them, the Big Bend Country along the Arkansas in the Cherokee Outlet was the "far west" to which they were invited by James McDaniel and other leaders, and the trails to this region led due north from the Canadian to the Red Fork through the Creek settlements at the east edge of the Cross Timbers.

on the south side of the stream, was the principal tribal town of the Yuchi (or Euchee), "Long Tiger Town" in the vicinity of the present Slick, in Creek County. There were also Yuchi living on Big Salt Creek, a branch of the Deep Fork, south of present Dewey; some lived on Euchee Creek, on Rock Creek and on Salt Creek, a branch of the Red Fork, in the Red Fork Settlement. This was wild, sparsely settled region, the northwestern frontier of the Creek Nation in 1861. Tulsa and nearby Locha-poka close to the river, on the site of the present City of Tulsa, were the northernmost Creek tribal towns of this northwestern frontier.

#### SKIATOOKA'S SETTLEMENT

Soon after the government survey of the north boundary of the Creek Nation in 1850, the same line as the south boundary of the Cherokee Outlet, a number of Cherokees came to live on the north side of the Arkansas River as far west as the Big Bend where Cleveland is located, in present Pawnee County. This is the first Big Bend in the Arkansas above the mouth of the Red Fork, which with other bends farther west upstream is in the big loop of the Arkansas that forms the Great Bend Country, or Big Bend Country, in this region, now Osage County, Oklahoma. Each of these lesser loops of the winding Arkansas is also known locally as the "Big Bend," by people living in the vicinity. The farthest west of the Cherokee settlements was Skiatooka's place near the present site of Osage, on the north side of the Arkansas about two miles below Cleveland which is in the Big Bend of present Pawnee County. Other Cherokees lived east on the streams some miles down the Arkansas, and over on Hominy (or Shoal) and Bird Creeks and their tributaries. This region was the northwestern frontier of the Cherokee Nation, known as Skiatooka's settlement before the Civil War.

On Hominy Creek a few miles above the mouth on Bird Creek lived James McDaniel,<sup>3</sup> a prominent Cherokee who was

<sup>3</sup> James McDaniel was the grandson of a Scot by the name of McDaniel and his fullblood Cherokee wife, whose three children were Alexander, Lewis and Catherine. James McDaniel lived on Salequoyah Creek, Georgia in 1835, and served as one of the early editors of the *Cherokee Phoenix*. He came west during the Removal from Georgia in 1839, and made his home on the Illinois River in Going Snake District until he moved west to Cooweescoowee District about the time of its organization in 1854. When the Cherokee Regiment was organized in May, 1861, to protect the Cherokees living on the northern border, Chief John Ross appointed James McDaniel as Captain of Company D, under the command of Colonel John Drew. The signing of the Confederate Cherokee treaty at Park Hill, October 7, 1861, was immediately followed

neutral in his stand in the struggle between the North and the South at the outbreak of the War in 1861. It was through his approval and counseling with Skiatooka and others that Opothleyahola brought his people north of the Arkansas into the Cherokee Outlet after the battle of Round Mountain, having previously designated Skiatook's settlement as the rendezvous where all the Union Indians were to meet.

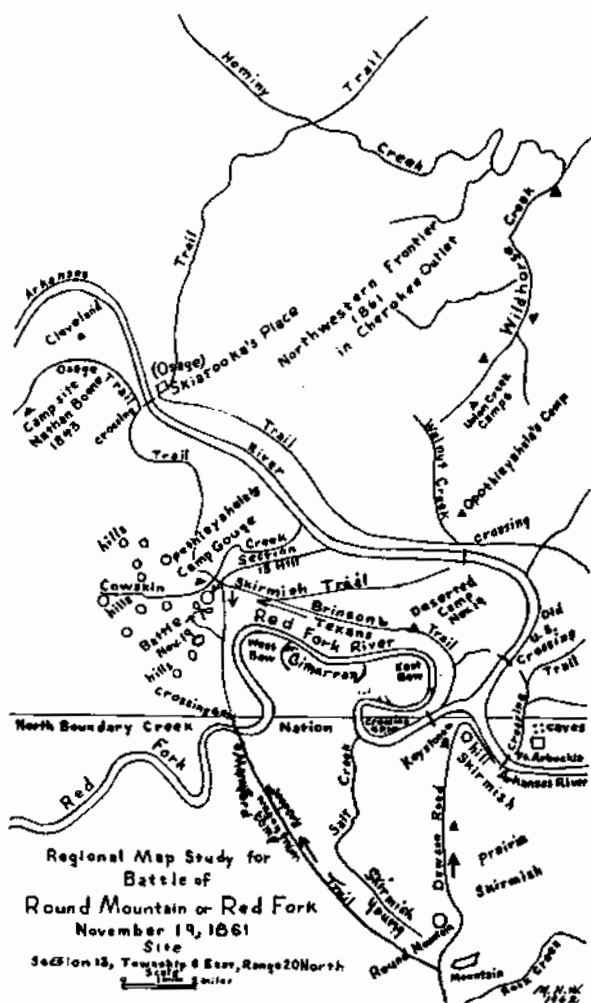
Contrary to the generally accepted idea and writings of historians that Opothleyahola and his people were in hurried flight to Kansas when they first moved north, these Union groups had set out on their march for the Red Fork Settlement, and encamped near the mouth of the Red Fork just north of the Creek boundary, to await aid of Federal forces that were promised them from the North. The Union Creeks were waiting for this aid when they were attacked by Colonel Cooper's Confederate troops, and the hot fight took place, known in history as the Battle of Round Mountain. Just after this battle on the night of November 19, Opothleyahola with his warriors crossed to the north side of the Arkansas and encamped at the appointed rendezvous, in Skiatook's settlement.<sup>9</sup>

James McDaniel himself as well as Skiatooka immediately joined the Union Creeks, and fought in the second battle at Caving Banks on Hominy Creek, December 9, as a leader of the 400 Cherokees who had defected the day before from Colonel John Drew's Confederate Cherokee Command. Showing the location of Opothleyahola's camp for the Confederate troop movements before this second battle, Colonel Drew's letter written at Camp Brown on December 1, states: "Opothleyahola's camp is in the Cherokee Nation on the same creek that Capt. McDaniel lives

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by Albert Pike's order organizing Drew's Regiment for service in the Confederate Army. Though Captain McDaniel was automatically in the new organization, he served only a short time, if at all, under its Confederate command. Strongly neutral in his stand in the War just beginning, he joined Opothleyahola's forces after the Battle of Round Mountain and fought in the big battle at Caving Banks on December 9, on the side of the Union Creeks. He later was commissioned Captain of Company A, in the Second Indian Home Guard Regiment of the Union Army. He served with the Union troops in a number of battles, including Prairie Grove, Arkansas, and Coffin Springs, near Welling, Oklahoma. He was Cherokee delegate to Washington after the War, and signed the agreement admitting the Delawares to citizenship rights in the Cherokee Nation. He died while in Washington about 1867. It is reported that he was buried in the Arlington Cemetery.

<sup>9</sup> James R. Gregory, *op. cit.*, in Civil War File, 1861.



on, about seventeen miles above."<sup>10</sup> The next day—December 2—Acting Adjutant General R. W. Lee wrote from his headquarters,<sup>11</sup> Camp Perryman at "Tulsey Town Settlement," stating that Opothleyahola on this date was "about 6 miles above the mouth of the Red Fork, on this (North) side of Arkansas River, and about 25 miles from us in considerable forces. . . ." These statements from the Confederate commanders, Drew and Lee, point to Opothleyahola's position on Walnut Creek on the north side of the Arkansas. Years after the Civil War, Postoak whose relatives had been with the Union Creeks in the Battle of Round Mountain searched out Opothleyahola's camp site from information given him, at a location on the east side of Walnut Creek, about a mile north of the Arkansas.

The head of Walnut Creek (almost due north from its mouth) is only a few miles from the head of Wild Horse Creek, a branch of Hominy Creek. Old maps show a country road up Walnut Creek to the present community of Wild Horse in Osage County, and thence a dim trail leads along Wild Horse Creek over to Hominy Creek, the airline distance from the mouth of Walnut Creek to the mouth of Wild Horse Creek being about twelve miles. By December 1, 1861, the Union Creeks had gathered "in considerable forces," apparently strung out in their camps from Opothleyahola's location (on Walnut Creek) "6 miles above the mouth of the Red Fork," on the north side of the Arkansas, over to a location on Hominy Creek, "seventeen miles above" James McDaniel's. These positions are borne out by these statements in the reports of the two Confederate officers, Colonel John Drew, of the First Cherokee Regiment, and Adjutant General R. W. Lee, of the Texas Brigade.

Within less than a week after Lee's report of December 2, Opothleyahola's warriors—about 1,500 Creek, Seminole, Yuchi

<sup>10</sup> Original letter, R. W. Lee, A.A. Adj. Genl. Brigade, Indian Department, Camp Perryman, Tulsey Town Settlement, Dec. 2, 1861, to Col. John Drew, C.S.A., Comdy, Cherokee Regt.—Civil War File 1861.

<sup>11</sup> Original letter, Col. John Drew (unsigned), Head Qtrs. Chero. Regt., Camp Brown, Dec. 1, 1861, to Lt. Col. Ross (*ibid.*) John Drew was commissioned Colonel of the Regiment of Cherokee Mounted Volunteers, and William P. Ross, Lieutenant Colonel, by Albert Pike, Commissioner of the Confederate States to the Indian Nations West of Arkansas, at Park Hill, Oct. 7, 1861 (Original paper, *ibid.*). John Drew, was a prominent leader among the Western Cherokees, and a signer of the Cherokee Constitution at Tahlequah, Sept. 8, 1839, (Carolyn Thomas Foreman, "Early History of Webbers Falls", *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Vol. XXIX, No. 4 (Winter, 1951-1952), p. 457. Additional biographical notes on John Drew appear in this article).

and some Delaware and Kickapoo "all painted up for a fight"—had swarmed down Hominy Creek to a position near Caving Banks, given as "Camp McDaniel" on the Cox Map, a primary source that shows the movements of the Union Indians in the Opothleyahola campaign. This point is one of many that prove the reliability of this remarkable map drawn by Agent John Cox in 1864, from data supplied by participants in the battles against Opothleyahola and by James McDaniel, all of whom were members of the Union Indian Home Guard Regiment stationed at Fort Gibson in 1864.<sup>12</sup>

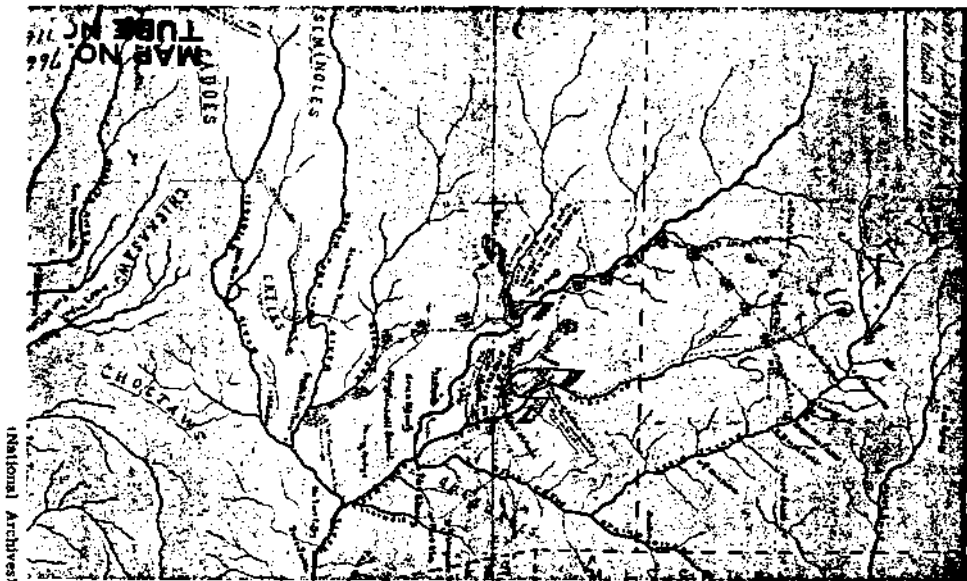
#### COLONEL COOPER'S REPORT ON THE BATTLE OF ROUND MOUNTAIN

The portion of Colonel Cooper's report written on January 20, 1862, relating to the battle near the Red Fork with the three reports of his two officers, Captains M. J. Brinson and R. A. Young, is given here as published in the *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Series I, Vol. VIII, pp. 5-7, 14-15:

#### OPERATIONS IN INDIAN TERRITORY No. 1

Report of Col. Douglas H. Cooper, First Choctaw and Chickasaw Regiment, commanding Indian Department, of operations November 19, 1861 . . .

<sup>12</sup> John T. Cox, born and educated in Ohio, moved to Kansas in 1857. He laid out six new townsites as county surveyor, and served as a clerk in two sessions of the Kansas Territorial Legislature before the summer of 1861, at which time he enlisted in the Union Army at Fort Lincoln, in Bourbon County. In the spring of 1862, he assisted with the organization of the Indian Home Guard regiments. Cox served as first lieutenant and as quartermaster in these regiments. In December, 1862, he was engaged in mapping the country through which the Union Army passed, and was present at the Battle of Prairie Grove, Arkansas, where he mapped the battlefield for *Harper's Weekly*. He was later appointed U.S. Indian Agent, and was at Fort Gibson where the Indian Regiments were quartered in the spring of 1864. He made his map showing the movements of Opothleyahola's followers in 1861, from data supplied by participants in the battles against the Union Creeks and by Captain James McDaniel who enlisted in the Indian Home Guard regiments when they were organized. In submitting his map to the U.S. Indian Office during the War, Mr. Cox spoke of "the facilities within my reach for obtaining facts connected" with the remarkable exodus of the Union Creeks from their Nation in 1861.—See biography of "John T. Cox," by Dean Trickett, Civil War authority of Tulsa. In *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Vol. XXIX pp. 493-4, and also, letter of John T. Cox in Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Report 1864. The original of the Cox Map is in the National Archives.



The John Cox Map. Drawn in 1864 from data given by participants in the battles between the Confederate forces and the Union Creeks, in the Indian Territory.



Headquarters Indian Department  
Fort Gibson, Cherokee Nation, January 20, 1862.

SIR: Having exhausted every means in my power to procure an interview with Hopoethleyohola, for the purpose of effecting a peaceful settlement of the difficulties existing between his party and the constituted authorities of the Creek Nation, finding that my written overtures, made through several of the leading captains, were treated with silence, if not contempt, by him, and having received positive evidence that he had been for a considerable length of time in correspondence, if not alliance, with the Federal authorities in Kansas, I resolved to advance upon him with the forces under my command, and either compel submission to the authorities of the nation or drive him and his party from the country.

Accordingly, on the 15th day of November last, the troops, consisting of six companies of the First Regiment Choctaw and Chickasaw Mounted Rifles; a detachment from the Fourth (Ninth) Regiment Texas Cavalry under Lieutenant-Colonel Quayle; the Creek regiment, under Col. D. N. McIntosh, and the Creek and Seminole battalion, under Lieut. Col. Chilly McIntosh (the Creek war chief), and Maj. John Jumper (Chief of Seminoles), in all about 1,400 men, were moved up the Deep Fork of the Canadian towards the supposed camp of Hopoethleyohola's forces. The camp, which had been abandoned, was found, and the trail from it followed, with varied prospects of success, until the 19th of the month named, on which day some of the disaffected party were seen and a few prisoners taken. From these prisoners information was obtained that a portion of Hopoethleyohola's party were near the Red Fork of the Arkansas River, on their route towards Walnut Creek, where a fort was being erected, and which had for some time been their intended destination in the event of not receiving promised aid from Kansas before being menaced or attacked.

After crossing the Red Fork it became evident that the party was near and the command was pushed rapidly forward. About 4 o'clock p.m. some camp smokes were discovered in front a short distance and the enemy's scouts seen at various points. A charge was ordered to be made by the detachment of Texas cavalry under command of Lieutenant-Colonel Quayle, upon the camp, which, however, was found to have been recently deserted. Other scouts, being discovered beyond the camp, were pursued by the Texas troops about 4 miles, when they disappeared in the timber skirting a creek, upon which it was afterwards ascertained the forces of Hopoethleyohola were then encamped. While searching for the fugitives the troops were fired upon by the concealed enemy, and 1 man was killed. The enemy immediately appeared in large force, and our troops, rallying and forming, succeeded in making a stand for a short time, when the efforts of the vastly superior force of the enemy to outflank and inclose them caused them to retire.

During the retreat towards the main body of our forces a constant fire was kept up on both sides. Many of the enemy were killed, and on our part 1 officer and 4 men and 1 man wounded. So soon as the firing was heard at the position of the main body the Choctaw and Chickasaw regiment was formed and advanced towards the enemy.

The exceeding darkness of the night rendered the relative position of our friends and foes uncertain and restrained the firing on our part until the enemy was within 60 yards of our line. Even then the order to fire was withheld until Col. James Bourland, of Texas (my volunteer aide on the occasion), and myself rode to the front, and the former called to those approaching, asking if any Texans were there, which was answered by the crack of the enemy's rifles. A brisk fire was then opened by companies I and K, under Captains Welch and Young, and by companies D, E, and G, under Captains Hall, Reynolds, and McCurtain, as they successively took position. After a short but sharp conflict the firing of the enemy ceased, and under cover of the darkness he made good his retreat. About 50 Choctaws and Texans were then sent out, under Actg. Asst. Adjt. Gen. R. W. Lee, to examine the ravine in front and on the flanks, when it was found that the enemy had left the field and retreated in the direction of their camps.

During the action the line was re-enforced by portions of Captains Brinson's, T. G. Berry's, J. E. McCool's, and Stewart's companies, of the Texas regiment, under Lieutenant-Colonel Quayle, and by a few Creeks, under Lieut. Col. Chilly McIntosh, Captain Severs, and Lieutenant Berryhill. In the last encounter we had 2 men severely wounded and 1 slightly. Many horses were shot. Our men escaped mainly in consequence of being dismounted and by firing either kneeling or lying down. Our entire loss in the engagement was 1 captain and 5 men killed, 3 severely and 1 slightly wounded, and 1 missing. Prisoners taken since the battle concur in stating the loss of the enemy to have been about 110 killed and wounded.

Soon after daylight on the 20th the main camp of the enemy was entered, and it was found that they had precipitately abandoned it, leaving behind the chief's buggy, 12 wagons, flour, sugar, coffee, salt, etc., besides many cattle and ponies. Hopoethleyohola's force in this engagement has been variously estimated at from 800 to 1,200 Creeks and Seminoles and 200 to 300 negroes.

The conduct of both officers and men within the scope of my observation was marked by great coolness and courage. I would particularize as worthy of high commendation the conduct of Col. James Bourland (who kindly volunteered his valuable services on this occasion and at other times); Actg. Asst. Adjt. Gen. R. W. Lee; Maj. Mitchell Laffore; Lieut. Joseph A. Carroll, acting adjutant Choctaw and Chickasaw Mounted Rifles; Capts. O. G. Welch, R. A. Young, and Lem. M. Reynolds, commanding Chickasaw companies, and Capts. Joseph R. Hall and Jackson McCurtain, commanding Choctaw companies, of the Choctaw and Chickasaw Mounted Rifles; Lieutenant-Colonel Quayle and Captains Brinson and McCool, of the Texas regiment; Captain Severs, of the Creek regiment; Lieut. Col. Chilly McIntosh, Creek battalion; Lieut. Samuel Berryhill, of the Creek regiment, and Maj. J. Jumper, Seminole battalion.

The promptness with which the Choctaws and Chickasaws came into line and the steadiness with which they maintained their position during the entire action merit unqualified praise, especially when it is considered that the night was extremely dark, the number and position of the enemy uncertain, and that they stood for the first time under

an enemy's fire.

The following is a list of the killed and wounded: W. J. Lytle, Captain Welch's squadron Choctaw and Chickasaw regiment, severely wounded; Daniel Cox, Captain Welch's squadron Choctaw and Chickasaw regiment, slightly wounded; Capt. C. B. Stewart, Texas regiment, killed; John H. Crow, Texas regiment, killed; — Reed, Texas regiment, killed; — Jackson, Texas regiment, killed; John Friend, Texas regiment, severely wounded; — Smith, Creek regiment, killed; — Smith, Creek regiment, severely wounded; one killed, name not reported.

\*     \*     \*     \*     \*     \*     \*

This report has been long delayed, but the apparent neglect will, it is hoped, be justified when it is considered by the Department that we have been constantly in the field on active service since the events reported until within the past two weeks, during which the placing of the troops in winter quarters has engaged my time and attention.

I have the honor, sir, to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

DOUGLAS H. COOPER,

*Colonel, C. S. Army, Commanding Indian Department.*

Hon. J. P. BENJAMIN

*Secretary of War, Richmond, Va.*

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No. 2

*Report of Capt. M. J. Brinson, Ninth Texas Cavalry, of engagement  
at Round Mountain.*

Camp Wilson

*Creek Nation, November 25, 1861.*

SIR: I hereby transmit to you an account of the battle fought on the 19th instant:

The attack was brought on by the second squadron about sunset, composed of about 70 men. I was promptly aided on my right by Captain Berry and on my left by Captain McCool, who formed in my own, or second squadron. After firing from three to five rounds I perceived the enemy in strong position and force, numbering some 1,500 Indians, and flanking my small force upon the right and left, I had necessarily to fall back to the main command, some 2½ miles, under a heavy retreating fire. The whole command—in which I fought my own squadron, Captain Berry's company, a part of McCool's, and a part of Captain Williams' company—I am confident did not amount to exceeding 150 men.

In my own company I regret to have to report the loss of John H. Crow, a private, killed. None wounded. One horse, 1 gun, and 5 powder-flasks lost.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

M. J. BRINSON

*Commanding.*

Lieut. Col. William Quayle.

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Reports of Capt. R. A. Young, First Choctaw and Chickasaw Regiment,  
of engagement at Round Mountain.

Springfield Camp,  
Cherokee Nation, November 30, 1861.

COLONEL: On the 19th instant, a while after night-fall, we were ordered to saddle up and mount our horses, and the order was given to march. After marching about 200 to 300 yards we were ordered to halt and form, which we did, and then advanced (to with) in about 150 yards of the enemy and dismounted. While dismounting we were fired on and 2 of our horses shot. My men dismounted in good order, and I ordered them to advance and fire. We advanced 8 or 10 paces from our horses and fired, the enemy keeping up a constant fire on us. We loaded and fired the third time and silenced the enemy's guns.

The prairie was on fire on my right, and as we advanced to the attack I could see very distinctly the enemy passing the fire, and I supposed a large body of men (200 or 300), but they were about 300 yards from me and the prairie was burning very rapidly, and I may have taken the motion of the grass for men.

I lost 6 horses in the fight; those that were not mortally wounded stampeded, and we could not find them next morning. I suppose the engagement lasted fifteen minutes.

I am, colonel, respectfully, yours,

R. A. YOUNG,

Capt., Comdg. Co. K, 1st Regt. C. and C. Mounted Rifles,  
Col. D. H. Cooper  
Commanding Indian Department.

-----, 1861.

COLONEL: On the morning of December [November] 19 I was ordered to bring up the rear with my squadron, and about 6 miles from camp the rear guard sent me a message that they were attacked by the enemy. I immediately wheeled the squadron and went back to their assistance and got about half a mile, [when] I discovered the enemy retreating towards the creek. I formed, and Colonel Cooper rode up and ordered me to charge. After pursuing about 2 miles we came to the creek and I dismounted my men and advanced into the swamp, but not finding the enemy, I ordered the men to return to their horses and mount. My squadron was on the right of our command, and after I had mounted the squadron I received orders from Colonel Cooper to form on the left of the Texas regiment, and in order to get to the left of the Texas regiment I had to pass down the creek, and discovered the regiment coming up to my right, and about the same time discovered the enemy to my right in a bend of the creek, formed around a house. I formed and charged. We routed them from this position and followed them into the swamp 300 yards. They flanked us, and I fell back to the house in order to prevent them from surrounding us. We advanced on them a second time, and were compelled to fall back to the house in consequence of their flanking around. We had only 80 men in the squadron, while the enemy had 400 or 500, fighting us with all the advantages of the creek on us and a complete natural ambuscade to protect them.

I have to report the death of Private F. T. Rhodes and 9 others wounded in the squadron.

We fought them between three and five hours.

I am, colonel, respectfully, yours,

R. A. YOUNG,

Captain, Choctaw and Chickasaw Mounted Rifles, C. S. Army.  
Col. D. H. Cooper,  
Commanding Indian Department

Captain Young's second report presented above from the *Official Records* has generally been discarded by historians writing on the Opothleyahola campaign since the text of the report seems to give a description of Young's action at the Battle of Chusto Talasah (Caving Banks) fought on December 9, 1861. However, a close reading of this report in the light of other reliable data on the battle at the Red Fork or Round Mountain is startling in its description, and reveals much that happened during the day of November 19, not given by Cooper. The writer here has no valid reason to doubt the original editing of Young's report and its inclusion in the *Official Records* with that of Colonel Cooper, on the "Engagement at Round Mountain." Though Young's report is not vital as documentary evidence for this review of the battle yet it is kept in line and included with Cooper's report shown above since its description of the Captain's skirmishing parallels data given by reliable Indian informants whose families lived in the Red Fork Settlement long before the Civil War and by early day white settlers who know the traditions of this region.

#### NOVEMBER 15TH IN THE OPOTHLEYAHOLA CAMPAIGN

The Cooper Report and other sources mark November 15 as an important date in the movement of both the Confederate forces and the Union Creeks. The Report states that "on the 15th of November last, the troops . . . in all about 1,400 men, were moved up the Deep Fork of the Canadian towards the supposed camp of Hopoithleyohola's forces."

The movement of all the forces, both Confederate and Creek preparatory to this, was underway by November 5. Colonel Cooper had received the following hurriedly written letter from the commanding officer of the Creek Regiment on the same day it was written:<sup>13</sup>

Camp Porter, Oct. 27, 1761.  
Col. Cooper

Sir The men sent to learn the condition of Hopoithleyohola's party have returned and state that they were disbanded in three parcels.

The 1st under the pretext of hunting were to repair to Council Grove. The 2 parcel pretending to return to their homes were to secure possessions and go out. The 3 parcel took a large lot of Negroes and went from their present encampment north over the waters of the Deep Fork. In substance this is about all

Your Obt Sert D. N. McIntosh  
Comdg Creek Regt

Colonel Cooper left the next day up the North Canadian for Thlophlocco where he arrived the evening of October 29, but was unable to learn anything of Opothleyahola's plans other than that he had left his headquarters at Greenleaf's Town which was about four miles northwest on the North Canadian, and had gone north over "the waters of the Deep Fork."<sup>14</sup> Cooper did get firsthand information however, that one Alexander Warfield had been buying up horses as far west as Santa Fe (New Mexico) in September, and that the horses and some droves of cattle were to be driven east through the Indian Territory to the Texas Road north of Fort Gibson. A drove of 300 horses was to be delivered to Fort Cobb by November 17. Cooper suspicioned that the stock was intended for delivery to the Union forces and, also, that Union troops planned to be at Fort Cobb by the date mentioned.<sup>15</sup> He ordered Colonel John Drew, commanding the

<sup>14</sup> Copy of a letter, D. N. McIntosh to Cooper, Civil War File 1861, Grant Foreman Collection. The "3 parcel" mentioned was Opothleyahola's group. The Negroes were some of his own slaves and others of the Creek slaveholders among his colleagues. There were no doubt run-away slaves among them from other parts of the country since the loss of run-away Negroes owned by some of the McIntosh Creeks as well as prominent Cherokee slaveholders was the cause of trouble that arose in the Creek Nation early in September, 1861. It was reported that 300 Negroes were with the Union Creeks when they moved north. These Negroes were taken north in the van led by Opothleyahola to help rebuild old Fort Arbuckle as well as to assist the throng of women and children and old people, some of them with loaded wagons, when they came to the crossing of the Arkansas near the old post. (Biographical notes on D. N. McIntosh and others of this noted family are in John H. Meserve's "The MacIntoshes," *Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Vol. X, No. 3 (September, 1932), pp. 310-325.)

<sup>15</sup> Original letter of Cooper to Drew, from "Camp near Thlophlocco Square, Creek Nation, October 29, 1861," Civil War File 1861.

<sup>16</sup> Micco Hutka, special emissary of Opothleyahola and his colleague Oklahoma horse Harjo (or Bands), chief of the Union Creeks, was given a letter addressed to the two leaders by E. H. Carruth, U.S. Commissioner in Kansas, dated September 10, 1861, promising aid of troops: "Our Army will go south, and those of your people who are true and loyal to the Government will be treated as friends . . . The Commissioners from the Confederate States have deceived you . . . But the President is still alive . . . His soldiers will soon drive these men who have violated your homes from the land they have treacherously entered."—*Official Records*, Vol. VIII, p. 25.

Cherokee Regiment at Fort Gibson to arrest Warfield and others suspected of communicating with the enemy, if found, and to turn them over to General McCulloch. Cooper returned to his headquarters near Fisher's store, on the Deep Fork.

On November 5, Cooper wrote the following letter to Colonel Drew who was supposed to be on his way north up the Neosho (or Grand) River to the northeastern part of the Cherokee Nation:<sup>16</sup>

Head Quarters Indian Brigade Deep Fork  
Near Fishers Nov. 5th. 1861.

Colonel

Your Regiment having been mustered into the Service, you will march, with the least possible delay, up the Neosho, to support Col. Stand Watie—penetrate Kansas (if possible), and carry into effect the instructions heretofore given you.

I learn, verbally, from Major Clark who brought despatches from Genl. McCulloch & arrived day before yesterday that the Genl. supposed you had already marched for Kansas — Genl. McCulloch having placed at my disposal such of the Texas Regiments now on the march for North Fork Town as may be needed for the defence of the Indian Country I have directed Lt. Wells to dispense with the services of such additional Indian forces as may have offered themselves under my call unless specially required by Genl. McCulloch.

I shall be in the Cherokee Country as soon as possible with the forces under my command, and will Communicate with you — Hopolthlayahola's people are said to be moving towards Walnut Creek.

I am Col'n your Obt. Servt  
Douglas H. Cooper  
Col Comdg Ind Dept

Colon John Drew  
Comdg. Cherokee Regiment  
Camp at (?)

Cooper left his headquarters near Fisher's on a ten day tour of the Confederate camps east, to organize the troops for his expedition northwest. On November 10, he wrote from Camp Pike to Lieut. Colonel W. P. Ross, of the Cherokee Regiment, at Fort Gibson:<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Original letter Cooper to Drew, written near Fisher's Store (about 4 miles north of North Fork Town, on North Canadian) on November 5, 1861.—Civil War File 1861.

<sup>17</sup> Copy of letter, Cooper to W. P. Ross, Civil War File 1861, in the Editorial Department. The heading of this letter shows Camp Pike in the Creek Nation. Camp Pike, however, was a well known Confederate Camp located on the east side of the Canadian River in the Choctaw Nation, about seven or eight miles northwest of present Stigler, in Haskell County, from 1862.

Head Quarters, Indian Dept.  
Camp Pike, Creek Nation,  
Nov. 10, 1861.

Sir,

I have received your communication, dated at Fort Gibson, Nov. 8th, and fully concur in the opinions therein expressed, and have done all in my power, to effect a friendly settlement of the Creek difficulties.

You are mistaken in regard to Hopothlayahola's pacific intentions, as from reliable information, I am perfectly satisfied that he is now meditating an attack upon my camp, in conjunction with Doct. Jamison, and 1000 Jayhawkers, at this time near the Arkansas River. If you can make a rapid march, in the direction of "Coody's," (which I suppose to be on the California road up the Arkansas) and then get in rear of the Kansas force, it would be of material aid to me, and an advisable movement.

Very respectfully, Yr. obt. Servt.  
Douglas H. Cooper  
Col. Comdg. Indn. Dept.

Lt. Col. W. P. Rofs,  
Cherokee Regt.  
Fort Gibson.

From these two letters, it is evident that Cooper did not know the frontier of the Cherokee Nation in 1861, neither the northern along the Verdigris River nor the northwestern along the Arkansas. He supposed that Coodey's Bluff was somewhere on the Arkansas. Instead, it was many miles east up on the Verdigris. Coodey's Bluff is still a well known place about four miles east of the present City of Nowata, in Nowata County. Cooper was not alone in his lack of knowledge of the region since letters written by some of his men show that they were still confused about the location of recent events even after they had scouted and camped around in the region for six weeks.

Colonel Drew arrived and encamped at Coodey's Bluff on November 19, the same day as the Battle of Round Mountain. He had no word from Cooper until November 25 when he received a letter written in Cherokee that there had been a skirmish over on the Red Fork. And after that, no one knew where Opothleyahola was until December 2 when Lee reported his encampment on the north side of the Arkansas, about six miles above the mouth of the Red Fork. Two days later (December 4), Stand Watie (east of Drew's position) was asking, "Where are the discontented Creeks, and Cherokees if any?" One thing is certain in looking back: The letters written in the campaign against the Union Creeks, from about the middle of November to the last of December, and other authentic sources as well as tradition show that Confederate troop activities—the battles, the marching along the trails and moving encampments from one site



to another—took place within a radius of thirty miles of Tulsey Town.

Another point, Cooper's letter written near Fisher's Store, on November 5, 1861, closes with this statement: "Hopothleyahola's people are said to be moving towards Walnut Creek." But where was Walnut Creek? It is doubtful that Cooper himself knew where it was. He received his information on the movements of the Union Creeks translated from their native language, or possibly the Yuchi, than which there is none more difficult to this day. Furthermore, Opothleyahola and his men did resort to ruse if need be. They would give a descriptive name of a specific location known to them without regard to maps and records of a region. Today, the "Walnut River," a branch of the Arkansas just below present Arkansas City near the south line of Kansas, is a well known stream known in Oklahoma history since the 1870's. U.S. Military Maps even several years after the close of the Civil War show this stream as "White Water Creek." The U.S. Military Map of 1875,<sup>14</sup> gives the name of the stream as "Walnut or White Water Creek." It may be that down in the region of the Red Fork, the little creek called "Walnut Creek" on the north side of the Arkansas, about six miles above the mouth of the Red Fork (Cimarron), was not yet named in 1861, though most streams in this part of Cherokee Outlet did have English names at the time. The name of the Walnut River on the Arkansas, near present Arkansas City, apparently did develop locally by the end of the Civil War, as "Walnut Creek." But the little "Walnut Creek" above the mouth of the Red Fork is identifiable in history long before the Civil War. The main trail down the Arkansas from Skiatooka's place to old Fort Arbuckle and Tulsey Town settlement, crossed this Walnut Creek near its mouth, and from here a branch trail went up the east side of the creek and over along the Wild Horse to Shoal (or Hominy) Creek. This Walnut Creek was the center of the finest walnut timber on the Arkansas, and was easily identifiable as the location of the rendezvous for Opothleyahola's forces coming up from the Canadian and the Deep Fork, most of whom had never been in this region before.<sup>15</sup> Their movements in 1861 were

<sup>14</sup> The U.S. Military of 1869, prepared by order of Maj. Gen. J. M. Schofield, show three branches on the east side of the stream now called "Walnut River": Hickory Creek about ten miles above the mouth; Little Walnut Creek, above this, and Walnut Creek still farther north. The 1875 Map was compiled under order of General John Pope. Originals of these two maps are in the National Archives at Washington, D.C. Photostatic copies are in the Oklahoma Historical Society.

held close by the Union Creeks.

The whole movement of the Confederate forces under the command of Colonel Cooper was set by the Union Creeks—its timing, route followed and destination—under the genius and leadership of Opothleyahola, one of the most remarkable organizers in the history of the American Indians.

The Cooper Report briefs the movements of the Confederate troops beginning on November 15, by the statement that on this date they were moved up the Deep Fork. On November 14, he wrote the following letter from Camp McCulloch located some miles northeast of Fort Gibson, in the vicinity of Park Hill:<sup>19</sup>

Headquarters  
Indian Department  
Camp McCulloch, C.N.  
Nov. 14, 1861

Col.

I shall march from this post, tomorrow morning, with all my available force except such as it is necessary to leave as a guard for my train. It will become necessary to move the train as soon as Col. Sims comes up with the balance of his Regt. In consequence of the failure of forage. It will cross the Arkansas when it moves, above Pole Cat, or at Rider Fields', Concharly settlement. I have 500 of the Texas Regt. with me.

Very Respectfully  
Yr. Obt. Servt.  
Douglas H. Cooper, C.S.A.  
Com. of Indian Dept.

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<sup>19</sup> Homes built in early days of Tulsa were of walnut, or had walnut trim brought down the Arkansas from the region a few miles above the mouth of the Red Fork. Showing the finest specimen of walnut timber in the Indian Territory as late as 1904, a solid block of walnut log four feet in diameter was cut in this region and shipped for exhibit in the Indian Territory building at the World's Fair and Columbian Exposition in St. Louis.

See Appendix A at the end of this article, for notes of the life of Douglas H. Cooper and Opothleyahola.

<sup>20</sup> Copy of letter in Civil War File 1861. This Camp McCulloch was the encampment occupied during the recent Cherokee Treaty negotiations carried on by Albert Pike in early October, near Park Hill. The 500 troops of the Texas Cavalry Regiment had been detached from General McCullough's forces northeast near the Missouri line, and had come over to meet Colonel Cooper before he set out on his campaign west.

Col. John Drew, C.S.A.  
Comdg. Cherokee Regt.  
Fort Gibson  
Ch. Nation

By Command  
R. W. Lee  
A. A. Adj. Genl.

Colonel Cooper left Camp McCulloch the next morning (November 15) with the 500 Texas troops, and arrived a few hours later on the same day at Fort Gibson. Evidently, the rest of his forces had not yet arrived from Buck Creek Camp, headquarters and training center for the Choctaw and Chickasaw Regiment down in the Choctaw Nation, nor from Camp Porter, headquarters for Colonel D. N. McIntosh's Creek Regiment near the Creek Council Ground.<sup>21</sup> Cooper left word at Fort Gibson that his headquarters' camp would be at Concharly, a location near present Stone Bluff, in southwestern Wagoner County, about five miles west of the old Choska crossing on the Arkansas River.

A check of early maps and other data shows Cooper's route west from Fort Gibson to the Red Fork on the Arkansas. He traveled approximately 115 miles from the morning of November 15 when he left Camp McCulloch to the morning of November 19. His troops crossed the Arkansas River at Choska, and followed a route west passing the vicinity of present Beggs, in Okmulgee County, then on toward the Deep Fork. It continued up the Little Deep Fork in a northwestern direction to Sell's Store. At or near this place, Cooper was joined with the rest of his expeditionary forces and wagon train. From Sell's Store, the

<sup>21</sup> Wiley Britton and news items of the day printed in Arkansas papers state that Colonel Cooper set out from Fort Gibson on November 15, moving "up the Deep Fork of the Canadian River in search of Hopoethleyahola's camp." Fort Gibson, of course, is nowhere near the Deep Fork. The Choctaw and Chickasaw Regiment, having been delayed in getting forage for their train, came up from Buck Creek Camp, located about five miles northwest of present Panama in LeFlore County, arriving at Fisher's Store too late to make it in good time to Fort Gibson. These troops marched up the North Canadian and the Deep Fork to the vicinity of Camp Porter near the Creek Council ground. Camp Porter was in the prairie at the edge of the timber about six miles from the Council Ground, or High Spring. The site of this ground is in the southeastern part of Okmulgee County, on the hill at the south line of the County, about eight miles south of present Eram. The Confederate Creek troops joined the expeditionary forces, and both were moving up the Deep Fork on November 15.—For Britton's statement, see *The Civil War on the Border, 1891-92* (New York, 1899), Vol. I, p. 166.

road followed was up the Little Deep Fork about four miles to the vicinity of Long Tiger Town of the Yuchi, near present Slick. Here, Confederate scouts brought in word that Opothleyahola had left his camp at Big Pond<sup>22</sup> more than a week before but his trail had been found leading up the Little Deep Fork. This trail was along the *old Dawson Road*.<sup>23</sup> The route continued up the Little Deep Fork to a point a few miles east of present Bristow, and then veered northeastward passing in the vicinity of present Kellyville. The Confederate troops camped on Rock Creek some miles northwest of present Sapulpa, on the night of November 18.

In the meantime, the Union Creeks had moved into the Red Fork Settlement. The trouble facing them in November, 1861, was reported by their Chief (Sand) in a statement read by Sandford Perryman to the U.S. Commissioners in their meeting with all the tribal delegations held at Fort Smith in September, 1865. The report mentions the Confederate Creek Treaty of July 12, 1865, signed by Albert Pike. Excerpts from the statement are as follows:<sup>24</sup>

In signing the above-named treaty, our principal chief had violated our law, and subjected himself to removal from office. Consequently a convention was called on the 5th of August, 1861. Our present chief, Sands, was authorized, under the provision of our law, to act as principal chief of the Creek nation, and his life, and that of others of our leading men, was threatened by the hostile party; and being informed that

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<sup>22</sup> Big Pond was one of a number of large ponds on the north side of the Deep Fork, some six or eight miles southeast of present Dewey, in Creek County. These large ponds covered with water lilies were an unusual sight described by Thomas Nuttall in his book, *Journal of Travels in Arkansas Territory*, on his visit to the Red Fork in 1819.

<sup>23</sup> The note on Sell's Store and other statements on the Opothleyahola Campaign are found in a manuscript in the National Archives, titled "Statement relative to the Exodus of Hopoth-la-yo-ho-la and his followers from the Creek and Cherokee country in the fall and winter of 1861 and 1862." A photostat of this paper is in Civil War File 1861, Editorial Department, and is referred to in subsequent notes in this study of the Cooper Report as the "Exodus Statement." This shows the original paper was signed by the Cherokees—W. P. Adair, R. Fields, J. A. Scales—and the Creeks—D. N. McIntosh, James M. C. Smith, Tim Barnett, (The last named was a Yuchi who sided with the Confederates), and notarized at Washington, D.C., on March 19, 1863. The Exodus Statement was written for some Indian claims, and is prejudiced in favor of the Confederate alignment in the recent war.

<sup>24</sup> Commissioner of Indian Affairs, *Report 1865*, pp. 328-29. In November, 1861, Oktaha-harsee Harjo (Sands) and his party made the long trip through to Washington. They reported the plight of their people, and made a strong plea for armed assistance before U.S. government officials.

there was a large force marching on us for the purpose of pressing us into the rebel service. . . ."

We were not so timid, but stood firm to our old and tried friends and protectors, and were determined to resist even unto blood, and protect the lives of our men and those of our women and children; and, in accordance with a former treaty which we had made, we took measures to so inform our father at Washington. After putting our women and children in charge of the leading men and warriors, our chief and others repaired to Washington, although the journey had to be commenced through an uninhabited country, and this for a distance of some hundreds of miles. On arriving there, face to face, we informed our great father of the situation that our country was in, and were informed by our Great Father that our treaties were and should be respected; and we were further assured that he would send us help as soon as he could; and we think that all of the talk is on the record in Washington. . . ."

We were threatened with entire annihilation, and were compelled to leave our homes and all that we possessed in the world, and travelled north in the hope of meeting our friends from the north. We were followed by a large force of rebel Indians and Texans, commanded by Colonel D. W. Cooper, and being closely pressed, we were compelled to halt and give them battle; and although their forces were far superior to ours, we drove them back, and then resumed our journey north, and crossed the Arkansas, and camped in the Cherokee nation. The above-mentioned fight was known as the Red Fork fight. While we were in the last-named camp, the battle of Bird Creek took place, which ended in Colonel Cooper being again driven off. We were attacked the third time by Generals McIntosh and Standwittie (sic) with a large force of cavalry, and were completely routed and scattered, and a large force of women and children were killed and captured, and we were scattered throughout the country, exposed to all the dangers of the western wilds, and the inclemency of the winter, and travelled to Kansas in blood and snow, not arriving there until the following spring.

Early in May, 1861, some of the Creek leaders had gone west with a delegation of Cherokees, Chickasaws and other tribes to urge neutrality and a united front of all the Indian people in the War between the Northern and the Southern states just begun. They visited the Seminoles at their Council House near present Tribbey, in Pottawatomie County, and contacted the Delawares living at old Camp Arbuckle, in McClain County, where they found that the noted Black Beaver was away guiding all the U.S. Army troops out of the Indian Territory to Kansas, under the command of Colonel William H. Emory. The delegation talked with the Kickapoos in their settlement in the

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<sup>25</sup> This settlement of Kickapoos on the Canadian is mentioned in the article by Dr. A. M. Gibson on the great Peace Council in the Creek Nation, 1845, in this number of *The Chronicles*.

vicinity of present Lexington, in Cleveland County;<sup>25</sup> visited the Comanche villages on the Canadian River, near the Antelope Hill, and other Comanche and Kiowa villages near the Salt Plains, as far northwest as present Harper County; and returned by way of Jesse Chisholm's trading post at Council Grove, on the east side of a bend in the North Canadian River. This site is on the west edge of present Oklahoma City.

When the delegation arrived back at the Creek Council ground the latter part of July, Opothleyahola with Chief Sands were already determined in their stand against the Confederate Creek Treaty. The Council meeting was held on August 5. A month later, bitter war was a reality between the Upper and Lower divisions in the Creek Nation. Consternation spread among all the Creeks when Chief John Ross signed the Confederate Cherokee Treaty with Commissioner Albert Pike, on October 7. On this day at Park Hill, Commissioner Pike wrote a pardon for the Union Creeks, which states in part: "The Confederate States of America hereby offer full pardon to Hopoithle Yahola and to all Creek and other Warriors now under him in arms against the Confederate States and the authorities of the Creek Nation, on condition that they submit and lay down their arms . . ." <sup>25</sup> This paper with its "pardon" was spurned by Opothleyahola. Immediately, bitter feeling between the Creek divisions heightened in the confusion that followed. Sometime after the middle of October, a pitched battle took place when a party of Confederate Creeks attacked the Union Creeks on the North Canadian, near Thlopthlocco.<sup>26</sup> It was this trouble that

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<sup>25</sup> The original of this paper written by Albert Pike is on exhibit in the Museum of the Historical Society.

<sup>26</sup> This fight near Thlopthlocco gave the name to present Battle Creek, a north branch of the North Canadian southeast of Okemah, in Okfuskee County. James Gregory mentions the fight in his interesting account and valuable source of Civil War history on the Creek Nation. In 1901 James Roane Gregory, a mixed blood citizen of the Creek Nation (part Yuchi) was born January 16, 1842, near Coweta on the Arkansas River. His home was one mile south of present Bristolw in 1861. He had been with some Cherokee boys driving a drove of cattle over to Albert's place on Fryor Creek, and had met his father at Concharly on his way home when both were arrested by some Creek Confederates just before the Battle of the Red Fork. His father (age 68 years) soon died from excessive exposure to cold. Both father and son had not taken sides in the War just begun but were trying to protect their property. Later, James R. Gregory joined the Ninth Kansas Cavalry. He had attended the "Koweta Mission School", and in later years after the Civil War he served as Judge of Coweta

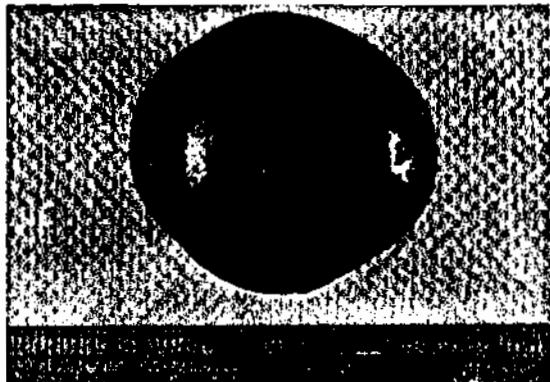
brought Colonel Cooper to Thlopthlocco on October 29, when he wrote his letter to Colonel Drew, in which he remarked: "It is exceedingly vexatious to be detained here by party feuds amongst the Creeks, but it is unavoidable, inasmuch as the Creeks would probably refuse to march northward and leave the matters unsettled at home."<sup>17</sup>

By November 15, Opothleyahola had moved north from his position at Big Pond, and was encamped north of the Red Fork in the hills through which a trail led almost due north to the Osage Crossing near Skiatooka's Place at the Big Bend of the Arkansas. The site of this camp is marked on the Cox Map as "Camp Gouge," and indicated by a flag placed at the edge of the encampment, at a distance of about eight or nine miles northwest of the mouth of the Red Fork. Opothleyahola's position was the advance followed by two large groups of his followers. One group from the southeast, mostly women and children with the old people and their Negro slaves, that had assembled from their tribal "towns" in the region of North Fork Town at Opothleyahola's home near Brush Hill, was on its way northwest up the Deep Fork by November 5. The second group (Creeks, Seminoles, Delawares and Kickapoo) from the southwest set out at the same time from Arbeka communities, traveling northeast toward Long Tiger Town on the Little Deep Fork. As the last of the two groups passed this place, a large party of Yuchi joined them marching up the old Dawson Road toward the crossing on the Arkansas.

The Cox Map shows a detail indicating a division of the march, south of the present site of Keystone: At or near Round Mountain, Opothleyahola and most of his warriors had followed a trail west of Round Mountain leading across Salt Creek and through the prairie to the crossing of the Red Fork, near present Mannford. The rest of the Creeks kept on the road that passed through the prairie east of Round Mountain, surging into the Red Fork Settlement. It took nearly a week for them to make

District, Creek Nation, and also served several terms as Superintendent of Schools. He lived at Inola (present Rogers County) in 1901, when he wrote a reminiscence account on "Creeks in the Civil War," which appeared in the *Galveston News*, November 27, 1901. A photostat of Judge Gregory's account is in the Civil War File 1861. See *Appendix B* for letter of Chief John Ross on the "Creek feuds" in October, 1861.

<sup>17</sup> This remark has reference to the Confederate Creeks whom Cooper planned to organize with his forces in the campaign against Opothleyahola. (Cooper's letter of October 29 has been previously cited.)



Minie Ball excavated in the summer of 1861, during construction work in relocating State Highway 51, about four miles southwest of Keystone. The photograph was taken beside a twelve-inch ruler to indicate the size of the ball which weighs approximately 1 1/4 pounds.

The Minie ball shown above is a cannon ball fired from a prairie cannon that was used by troops in the Civil War. This ball was found by Lloyd Housley, Civil Engineer with the Keystone Corps of Engineers, U.S. Army, about four miles southwest of Keystone on the west side of Salt Creek in Section 16, T. 19 N., R. 9 E. Mr. Housley picked up the object when excavation was being done for the new bridge across Salt Creek, in relocating State Highway 51. The Minie ball was unearthed not far beneath the surface of the ground, about seventy-five yards north, slightly to the west and on the west side of the creek, on top of a bluff covered with scrub oak. The highway runs about twenty-five yards north of the bridge, the creek running north and south at this location. The bluff here forms a natural ambushade on the creek below, and is a fine vantage point overlooking the area to the southwest for anyone approaching. Mr. Housley gave this Minie ball to Mrs. Faunie B. Misch, of Tulsa, who has supplied the above photograph and these notes to the Editorial Department as an exhibit for this study of Colonel D. H. Cooper's Report on the Battle of Round Mountain.

The location on Salt Creek four miles southwest of Keystone where this Civil War relic or Minie ball was found fits in with this writer's research data on Captain Young's skirmish with the Union Creeks the morning of November 19, 1861. This fight is described by Young along a creek (Salt Creek) for several hundred yards. Young says: "We had only 80 men in the squadron, while the enemy had 400 or 500 fighting us with all the advantages of the creek on us and a complete ambushade to protect them." According to Thomas Meagher's notes from Artusse Yehola, the first fighting at Round Mountain was with Little Captain's Yuchi band, other bands of the Union Creeks joining in later. Apparently, the skirmish in the morning was to the west and northwest of Round Mountain, along Salt Creek, and the Minie ball discovered in 1861 on this creek offers some evidence of Young's skirmish a century ago.



the crossing of the Arkansas just below the mouth of the Red Fork. There must have been flat boats here, built and operated by the Negrões to help the people cross the river. The late Thomas Meagher reported information from Artusse Yahola (aged eighty-nine—a son of Opothleyahola) that there were 300 wagons loaded with supplies, in the Creek train—a limited number of wagons considering the more than 3,500 persons on the march.<sup>28</sup> A few of the people rode in wagons, some rode their ponies but the great majority walked. The last parties, mostly the Yuchi, waiting to cross the Arkansas were camped along the road from the present site of Keystone to Round Mountain the night of November 18.

On the morning of November 19, the Confederate troops had marched a few miles from their camp on Rock Creek to a fork in their trail ahead where Cooper sent out a detachment of Texas troops in command of Captain Brinson to follow the road passing to the east of Round Mountain. Cooper himself with his main troops and the wagons kept to the trail on the west side of Round Mountain.<sup>29</sup> According to Thomas Meagher's informant a battle was fought on the south side of Round Mountain, between Cooper's forces and the Union Creeks. Among the latter was a band of 110 Yuchi warriors led by Little Captain, or "Keptene Uchee," with the last parties on their march to the crossing of the Arkansas.<sup>30</sup> This fight seems to be the skirmish

<sup>28</sup> Thomas Meagher was a veteran of the Spanish American War and one-time civil engineer, who was well known as a local historian and writer in Tulsa for many years. Some of his material including several original maps of old localities in the Creek Nation are among the finest documents in the Indian Archives of the Oklahoma Historical Society. In 1939, his story appeared in the *Tulsa Tribune* (November 19, 1939), in which he would prove the site of Cooper's first battle against the Union Creeks at Round Mountain. Meagher had spent much time interviewing some of the old Creeks and Yuchis who had been with their families at the time of the battle with the Confederates in November, 1861. Artusse Yahola was ten years old at this time. Meagher describes the march of the Creeks given by these informants.

<sup>29</sup> These conclusions of the writer are based on the Cox Map, Chief Bands' report in 1865, Gregory's account in 1901, as well as personal interviews with old-time Indians and settlers in the Tulsa region.

<sup>30</sup> Little Captain (Keptene Uchee) is given as "Jon neh," Captain of Company K, Second Indian Homeguard Regiment, Union Army, in the photostatic copy of the Indian Homeguard Regiment lists from the War Department seen in the Library of the Oklahoma Historical Society. There were eighty-seven members in Captain Jon neh's Company K, and all were Yuchi. One of the few English names appearing in the list is that of Sam Brown, later chief of the Yuchi and father of Chief Sam Brown (Jr.). For biographical notes on Chief Sam

described in Captain Young's second letter (q.v) attached to the Cooper Report. Another skirmish has been reported as a battle on the site of Keystone, south of the Cimarron, from information given by William Bruner and Elizabeth Sapulpa in 1951. Chief Sam Brown, (Jr.) of the Yuchi referred to the site of this same battle fought at the "round end of the mountain," the wooded hill on the east side of present Keystone. Brown gave the Creek name of this hill as "Ekyn-hvwoce."<sup>1</sup> To the Indian people who were in the crowd waiting to cross the Arkansas near here, the fight was a real battle. This, of course, was another of the Confederate skirmishes on November 19, doubtless that of Captain Brinson's Texas troops. There were probably other skirmishes in the rough countryside south of Keystone that day.

The second paragraph of Cooper's Report states that on the 19th of November "some of the disaffected party were seen and a few prisoners taken." This briefs the day's troop movements and indicates the skirmishing before crossing the Red Fork, for certainly prisoners were not taken without a struggle. Cooper further states that these prisoners gave the information (translated, of course, from the Creek and very likely Yuchi) "that a portion of Hopothleyohola's party were near the Red Fork of the Arkansas River, on their route to Walnut Creek, where a fort was being erected, and which had for some time been their intended destination in the event of not receiving promised aid from Kansas before being menaced or attacked." The phrase "on their route to Walnut Creek" is parenthetical. Cooper's statement here should read that a portion of the Union Indians was "near the Red Fork of the Arkansas River . . . where a fort is being erected." This corroborates the location of old Fort Arbuckle and its rebuilding (by the Negroes under Opothleyahola's orders) as well as the four caves or dugouts in the sand banks of the deep gulch near the old post ground, reported by William Bruner and Elizabeth Sapulpa, whose relatives were among the Union Creeks. Cooper's mention of *Walnut Creek* in connection with the fort bears out another point

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Brown (Jr., see Carolyn Thomas Foreman, "The Yuchi, Children of the Sun," *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Vol. XXXVII; and Orpha Russell, "Notes on Samuel Brown, Jr., Yuchi Chief."—*Ibid.*)

<sup>1</sup> Depositions of William Bruner and Elizabeth Sapulpa, as well as Chief Sam Brown's statement appear in Orpha Russell's article "Ekyn-hvwoce" in *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Vol. XXXIX, No. 4 (Winter, 1951-52), pp. 461-467.

in relation to the location or appointed rendezvous of the Union Creeks at this time. The nearly 3,500 Indians who crossed the Arkansas below the mouth of the Red Fork during the week before the battle, did not all go to Fort Arbuckle. Some of them followed the trail leading up the north side of the Arkansas toward Skiatook's place until they came to the small creek on their right, in the midst of fine walnut timber. This was their appointed meeting place—*Walnut Creek*. The place fitted the ancient mores of the people that bore the name "Creek," whose "towns", trails, trading houses and even battles had been along the creeks and streams of the South for 400 years in their history.

The detail on the Cox Map showing two crossings of the Red Fork, the one east in the vicinity of present Keystone and the other west, near present Mannford points the way to the final "short but sharp conflict" north of the river. Captain Brinson in command of the Second Squadron of seventy men from Quayle's Texas Cavalry Regiment crossed the Red Fork at the east crossing, and soon afterward, about four o'clock in the afternoon, pushed rapidly forward and charged a deserted camp near which the enemy's scouts had been seen. A mile or more beyond the camp, other scouts were seen. These were followed four miles to a creek, upon which Opothleyahola's encampment was found the next day. (The Indian scouts were a decoy leading the Texans west away from Camp Arbuckle and other Creek camps. The road was up from the old U.S. Crossing on the Arkansas.) While the Texans were hunting the scouts in the woods in the vicinity of the creek, suddenly a large force of the enemy appeared. The Texans succeeded in making a stand for a short time but were finally outflanked and enclosed and had to retreat. They fell back about 2½ miles toward Cooper's command under heavy retreating fire. It was now dark.

Cooper with his command had crossed the Red Fork about dusk, near present Mannford. The firing was heard ahead and the Choctaw and Chickasaw Regiment formed and advanced toward the enemy. A company of Chickasaws was in the rear under the command of Captain R. A. Young. It was now very dark, and difficult to make out the position of the Texans ahead. Brisk gun fire was opened, and "after a short but sharp conflict the firing of the enemy ceased, and under cover of darkness he made good his retreat." Cooper states here that General R. W. Lee with about fifty Choctaws and Texans examined the ravine in front. They found that the enemy had retreated toward their camps. The battle had ended in the darkness.

Captain Young states in his first letter attached to the Report that his company had loaded and fired the third time and silenced the enemy's guns. He continues: "The prairie was on fire on my right, and as we advanced to the attack I could see very distinctly the enemy passing the fire, and I supposed a large body of men (200 or 300), but they were about 300 yards from me and the prairie was burning very rapidly, and I may have taken the motion of the grass for men."

Another report on the battle is found in the account of June Peak. He was seventeen years old, and was with Cooper's wagon train. He says that Opothleyahola's scouts kept him informed on the Confederate movements, and the Creek warriors came up. The story continues:<sup>12</sup>

We met one morning in October [November], at Round Mountain. The day was spent in skirmishing, without any losses or advantage to speak of on either side. We went into camp for the night on a level prairie, covered with sedge grass waist high, beginning to dry considerably. Making a corral of our wagons, we placed our stock within it.

We retired with the understanding that the battle would begin early in the morning. It was a serene night. At 1 o'clock we all of one accord leaped to our feet. The prairie was on fire in hundreds of places around us, and a fierce wind which had sprung up was carrying wisps of blazing grass hundreds of yards and starting new fires. The weird beauty of the landscape revealed by the widespread conflagration was perhaps not wholly lost on even the most fearful of our panic stricken train. Our poor mules gave vent to their distress in sounds that seemed to be compounded of bray, bellow and squeal. In our efforts to save our wagons and teams we had no leisure to return the fire of the enemy who were raining bullets and arrows into our confused rout.

We abandoned the whole of our provisions, and left in our wake a dozen or so wagons, scores of mules, and fifteen or twenty dead and wounded men. Fortunately for us, Opothleyahola did not follow up his advantage. We were more than two hours getting out of the fire . . . .

A detachment of Confederate troops early the next morning (November 20), found Opothleyahola's main camp abandoned. The Report states that on the camp ground were "the chiefs

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<sup>12</sup> *The Dallas Morning News* for July 1, 1923, carried a story by W. S. Adair, "Civil War Repeated in the Indian Territory," in which Captain June Peak gave his reminiscences on the Battle of Round Mountain. Peak's story has always seemed full of errors until this study of Cooper's Report. New data and much research on the subject of the Battle of Round Mountain show Peak's account remarkably accurate and a valuable contribution to history. For his full story told in *The Dallas Morning News*, see the copy in *Oklahoma: A History of the State and Its People* by Thoburn and Wright (New York, 1929), Vol. II, Appendix XXVI-2, p. 836.

buggy, 12 wagons, flour, sugar, coffee, salt, &c., besides many cattle and ponies."<sup>33</sup> The location of this camp ground as shown on the Cox Map determines the general site of the last gun fire in the "Engagement at Round Mountain."

#### THE BATTLE OF ROUND MOUNTAIN: ITS SITE AND NAME

Not long after the Civil War, J. C. Byers came into the Big Bend country of the Cherokee Outlet, and was a well known citizen of Cleveland at the time of his death in recent years. He was an intelligent man, interested in history and highly respected in his community. In talking with friends, he said that in 1876 he discovered old wagon rims and hubs and pieces of rusted iron lying around on a site near Cowskin Creek, on the north side of a high hill in Section 13, Township 20 North, Range 8 East. Mr. Byers always felt sure that this site was on or near the battlefield of the Civil War Battle of Round Mountain.

A meeting of the Payne County Historical Society was held at Stillwater on March 6, 1949, which was attended by Dr. James H. Gardner of Tulsa and Mr. Ola J. Rogers, longtime resident of Cleveland and an old friend of Mr. Byers. Dr. Angie Debo in her article on the Battle of Round Mountain (*The Chronicles of Oklahoma* 1949) states that Mr. Rogers "presented the first evidence of the Keystone site" during the panel discussion at the meeting of the Payne County Society. Dr. Debo further states in her article:

There are numerous "Round Mountains" and creeks in the vicinity of Keystone. Here Mr. Rogers' location is based on the testimony of the late J. C. Byers, who came to the present Osage County in the early 1870's, and who always showed a keen and intelligent interest in local history. In 1876, he said, he found remains of wagons near the high round hill in Section 13, Township 20 North, Range 8 East, and believed it to be the battlefield. Another hill in the vicinity could account for the plural—"Round Mountains"—and a creek fits Cooper's description of the terrain. The location—three miles north and six miles west of Keystone, and northwest of the great loop of the Cimarron

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<sup>33</sup> The writer of this study thinks that "the chief's buggy" mentioned here did not belong to Opothleyahola. He has been described by those who knew him in the summer and fall of 1861 as a man of vigor and fine physique. He was truly the "man on horseback" as he rode back and forth across the Creek Nation, directing his forces. The writer further is inclined to believe that this buggy has a place in the story of the large amount of gold that Opothleyahola had with him and buried somewhere about the time of the Battle of Round Mountain. As a matter of fact, he sent word to Agent Carruth that his money had been stolen from him. The story of Opothleyahola's gold is too long to relate here.

—is far enough up the river to account for the failure of contemporary writers to mention the mouth, and yet close enough to harmonize with the Cox map.

One cannot disregard Byers' testimony simply because it stands alone. . . .

The Creeks fired the woods and the edge of the prairie north of the Red Fork during the battle. The band of warriors assigned this action hurried south, crossed the river, and fired the grass to the south. They headed for Cooper's encampment, and made their attack just as the fire reached there about midnight. The timing for all this is almost perfect for a squad afoot with the work in hand. Peak gives the facts impressed upon him as a boy of seventeen, and his description of the scene at the encampment is fine. The tradition of the fight in the prairie is still told around Mannford, some thinking that this was the real Civil War battle where Cooper's Confederates fought the Union Creeks.<sup>14</sup> It should be added here that it was the prairie fire that ruined Cooper's forces in their first fight against Opothleyahola. Both sides claimed the victory at Round Mountain but the weight of evidence is in favor of the Creeks.

The name of the battle, *Round Mountain*, came from the high, round hill six miles south of Keystone. It was here the first skirmish on November 19, 1861, took place between Cooper's rear guard—Young's Company of Chickasaws—and Little Captain's 110 warriors. Cooper's wagon train could see the high round hill all day on the way as it traveled slowly northwest toward the Red Fork near present Mannford. Brinson's Squadron of seventy Texans set off as a detachment of Colonel William Quayle's Texas Regiment on its detour to the Red Fork crossing at present Keystone and pushing northwest after Opothleyahola's scouts that wound up at Section 13 Hill where the battle began late in the evening of November 19.

Round Mountain was a landmark on the Big Osage War and Hunting Trail from very early days. Dawson in 1934 set one of his markers on top of this high hill. The Creeks called it "Cun-hul-wu-chee" meaning a "low round hill" or "hillock." This term was translated as "Little Mountain" by Artusee Yahola to distinguish the elevation from the higher, rugged hill to its south.

A young Texan who signed his name "Thornton" or "TBM" was in the battle with Cooper's command at the Red Fork when

<sup>14</sup> Information given the writer by Mr. Robert H. Dott of Tulsa.

it had a "short but sharp conflict" near Section 13 Hill after dark, on November 19. He was a stranger in the Red Fork region, and heard the name "Round Mountain" the day of the battle. He wrote a letter from Choska on December 23, 1861, to his mother, saying:<sup>35</sup>

But as we leave this place tomorrow for the purpose of making "finis" of Opothleyhola's army, I came to the conclusion to write tonight. Opothleyhola is a Creek who has for many years been seeking to become a chieftain, but heretofore, his adherents being in the minority, his intriguing has been of but little moment: the Act of Secession served him as a basis upon which he has striven to consummate his long cherished hopes: and by misrepresentations he has induced the most ignorant of his tribe as well as a few of the Cherokees to form an alliance with the Lincoln Government. The (Opothleyhola, or Gouge) has had about four or five thousand warriors; but since suffering two defeats his forces are now reported to be rapidly diminishing. The first battle was fought at Round Mountain, about five miles North of the Red Fork of the Ark.

The *Exodus Statement* gives this account of the battle:

... the Confederate forces moved up Deep Fork to the supposed Camp of Ho-poith-lo-yo-hola, but found it deserted and a large trail leading in a Northwestern direction toward the Red Fork of Arkansas, apparently a week or more old.

This trail was followed, and finally on the 19th day of November 1861, Ho-poith-lo-yo-hola's camp was discovered a few miles North of Red Fork near a place called "Round Mountains" in the Cherokee Country. Here a Company of Texans, without orders, rode after dark into Ho-poith-lo-yo-hola's camp, and were driven out by his men and followed to Colonel Cooper's camp, with the loss of their captain, and several others killed, several wounded and taken prisoners. The hostile Creeks and Seminoles were there repulsed and made their escape under cover of darkness.

The term "Round Mountains" in this statement has always been a matter of notice in the research for this study. The late Dean Trickett, Civil War historian of Tulsa, called attention to the fact that the term appearing in the Statement plainly is first written "Round Mountain" and the "s" is added as an afterthought. The writer and his associates who made the Exodus Statement in 1868 had recalled, after setting down the term on the paper, the many round hills in the vicinity of the one where the battle was fought. This is true. Today, one can stand on the abandoned site of the old "Scrapping Ridge School" of the 1890's, and look toward the south where the high hill stands with its bald top in Section 13, less than a mile away. Off to the southwest, several round, bald hills are a remarkable sight.

<sup>35</sup> Copy of letter in Civil War File 1861.

Gregory makes this statement in his reminiscent account on the "Creeks in the Civil War":<sup>14</sup>

"One body of the Union Creeks was camped on the Arkansas River near the old Skiatook place (then in the Cherokee Nation but now in the Osage Nation) and the other on the North Fork River, above mentioned. Gen. Cooper proceeded with his forces to attack the Creek camp on the North Fork River. The Union Creeks, under the command of Chief Opothleyahola, marched in one-fourth circle around the right flank of Cooper's army to the northeast, attempting to form a junction with the Union Creeks on the Arkansas River. Before the junction was effected Gen. Cooper's army overtook this faction of the Union Creeks, crossing the Cimarron River just at dusk. A battle ensued, which was fought after darkness had set in. After stopping the advance of the Confederates, the Union Creeks proceeded on the same night to form the junction which they had in contemplation on the outset, and which they accomplished the following day. Gen. Cooper did not follow the Union Creeks the next day, but retired toward Choska to wait reinforcement."

Opothleyahola's warriors ceased their gun fire in the darkness during the battle waging in the vicinity of their camp at Section 13 Hill, and left the Confederates in the midst of a roaring, prairie, fire. The warriors immediately went northward, possibly eight miles, crossed the Arkansas and traveled downstream to their point of union on the little creek now known as Walnut Creek. Some of them made it here the same night of the battle, and all came in the next day.

Cooper's troops left the Red Fork the day after the battle, arriving at his Concharly headquarters and wagon train camp on November 24. They had been practically without provisions on their march—many of them on foot—back to the Choska crossing on the Arkansas and Concharly in the vicinity.

#### THE CASE OF THE TWIN MOUNDS BATTLE

The Shawnee Cattle Trail north to Kansas developed in the region of the Twin Mounds after the Civil War. It was a well traveled road for emigrant wagons and Indian tribal groups moving south as well as for herds of cattle driven north to markets in Kansas through a period of over thirty years after the War. An old battle site near the Twin Mounds became a

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<sup>14</sup> It seems Cooper's command crossed the Red Fork near present Mannford about six o'clock in the evening, November 19, and bivouaced for the night, a little over a mile north of the river. Captain Young in his first letter attached to the Report states, "On the 19th instant, a little after nightfall, we were ordered to saddle up and mount our horses, and the order was given to march."



favorite camping ground on this Trail. A cave near these Mounds was said to be the hiding place for early day outlaws. After the battle against the outlaws at Ingalls in 1894, some miles away in the same region of present Payne County, the legend of outlaw gold buried near the Twin Mounds developed. Some people said that an Indian whose name was something like "Opothyahola" had come in from Texas with a large amount of gold during the Civil War, and buried it here. Through all these stories, the site of an old battle at the Twin Mounds created interest, and tales about it and the buried gold nearby persisted. The Payne County Historical Society developed its theory that Cooper's Confederate forces fought the first Civil War battle against the Union Creeks in the Indian Territory on this old battlefield at the Twin Mounds. This theory has been supported by the discovery of camp debris on this site—broken chinaware, iron stove lids, pieces of iron, powder flasks, etc.

Evidently, history and legend about the Twin Mounds had aroused discussion among early day settlers in 1897. The writer in searching the old newspaper files in the Historical Society a few years ago came across an item about the Twin Mounds battle, appearing in *The Cushing Herald* (Weekly) published at Cushing, Oklahoma Territory, on Friday, June 11, 1897. This piece apparently was written by W. J. Rendall, Editor, and appears on the editorial page (page 2), in the column "Territorial Squibs":<sup>37</sup>

The battle of the Twin Mounds, Payne county, fought near the close of the war between Texas Rangers and some northern men, when about thirty were killed and wounded, was not so much a skirmish between Unionists and Rebels as between certain Texas cattlemen who were trying to recapture their large number of steers that had been confiscated by a band of daredavils from somewhere up-north. That battle put a stop to the occasional wholesale stealing of large herds of marketable beefs.

The proponents of the Twin Mounds site would change the name of the Battle of Round Mountain to "Battle of Round Mountains," basing this new name on the Exodus Statement and accounting for the plural of "mountain" for the two mounds in Payne County. This change in the name does not hold true. The term "round mountains" is certainly a misapplication in giving the description of the Twin Mounds. They are remarkable for their flat, mesa-like tops, and are almost identical in height and

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<sup>37</sup> This item on the Twin Mounds Battle was copied by *The El Reno News* in its issue of June 25, 1897, p. 6, col. 3.

appearance. Furthermore, the Twin Mounds form a topographical feature that stands alone.

Walter R. Smith read a paper "Some Legends of Oklahoma", before the Oklahoma Education Association in 1926, published in *Chronicles of Oklahoma* (Vol. 4, p. 53) in which the following story appears:

Just west of the town of Jennings, Oklahoma, are a couple of low, rock strewn hills which bear a marked resemblance to each other. Around these centers a legend of buried treasure.

With a cavalry escort a government paymaster on his way to Fort Sill camped for the night between these Twin Hills. Rumors of Indian troubles which had caused the escort to be sent along were confirmed when the camp was suddenly attacked that night by a band of Indians. A defense was hurriedly formed in the rocks on the hills and the party prepared to hold out until a messenger could break through and bring help. All efforts to slip by the Indians were unsuccessful and the diminishing party was forced to the decision that the only chance for anyone lay in a bold dash through the approaching circle of savages.

The money, \$11,000 in gold, was hastily buried where it could be found by those who should escape, and then the dash for freedom was made. Only five of the entire party succeeded in breaking through the net drawn about the camp, but when they returned with the party which came in pursuit of the Indians, they were unable to find a mark which revealed the location of the buried money. Appearances indicated that the money had not been discovered by the Indians, and it is said that it has never been found.

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#### APPENDIX A

Brief Biographies of Douglas H. Cooper, Commander of the Indian Department, C.S.A., and Opothleyahola, leader of the "Loyal Creek" aligned with the Union.

Douglas H. Cooper, member of an old southern family and native of Mississippi, was early identified with the progressive interests of railroad building and development of the South. He fought in the Mexican War as an officer in the U. S. Army, and was identified with Jefferson Davis in the beginning of the State Rights movement. He was appointed Choctaw Agent in 1853, and was assigned the command of the Indian Department, C.S.A., in the field, under Gen. Ben McCulloch, in 1861. He was not a military man in the strict sense of the word but was one of great personal magnetism and a leader beloved by his men. He was held in high regard by the Choctaws, and the Chickasaws (acting as their Agent, also, before the War). He knew well the Choctaw and the Chickasaw country clear across present Oklahoma from Arkansas to the 100th Meridian but was unacquainted with the Indian country north of the Arkansas and the Canadian rivers before 1861. As an officer, he served loyally the Indian interests in the Con-

federate Army throughout the Civil War, and died at old Fort Washita in the Chickasaw Nation, in 1878.—A biography of General Cooper, by Muriel H. Wright is found in *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Vol. XXXII, No. 2 (Spring, 1963), pp. 146-184.

Opothleyahola, born about 1798, was a member of Tukabahchee Town, the leading center of the Upper Creek Division, so called because it was made up of the tribal groups living on the upper courses of the Chattahoochee River in Alabama and Georgia. The tribal groups living on the lower course of this river were known as the Lower Creek Division, of which Coweta was the leading tribal "town," with members of the McIntosh family (of Creek-Scot descent) serving as chief from time to time. Opothleyahola was never a chief but he early showed his great ability and powers as an orator in the Creek council meetings. Before the Treaty of Indian Springs, Georgia, in 1825, as the speaker for the Little Prince, Chief of the whole Creek Nation, he warned Chief Wm. McIntosh not to sign this treaty that would give up the Creek lands in Georgia. Soon afterward, Wm. McIntosh was killed for signing the treaty, over which bitter feeling developed between the two tribal divisions that as late as the time of the Civil War marked their alignment—the Upper Creeks generally siding with the Union, and the Lower, with the McIntoshes still as leaders, on the side of the Confederate States. Opothleyahola made his home after coming to the Indian Territory near Brush Hill, on the Deep Fork about six or eight miles southwest of present Checotah, in McIntosh County. He became wealthy as a Negro slaveholder in cattle raising and farming the river bottom lands. He was shrewd in partnership with trading interests, and it was in this that he was nicknamed "Gouge." He led the opposition in the great council at North Fork Town with Commissioner Albert Pike, and withdrew from the meeting a few days before the signing of the Confederate Treaty on July 10, 1861. A large part of the Council also withdrew with Opothleyahola, representing one-third of the whole Creek Nation (population in 1861, counted at about 14,500). Both his friends and his enemies among the Creeks who attended this Council at North Fork Town long remembered Opothleyahola's impassioned oratory and his great personality in this meeting when he led the forces to hold the tide in favor of the old treaties with the United States. After the battles against the Union Creeks in 1861 and their final withdrawal from the Indian Territory, Opothleyahola remained in Kansas always active with Union officers, always seeking reunion and the organization of all his people in their home country, the Creek Nation. He died in 1863 at the age of 65 years, and was buried in a woodland burial ground on a hill, beside the grave of his daughter, near Belmont, Kansas.—For notes on the life of Opothleyahola see Angie Debo, *The Road to Disappearance*, (Norman, 1941); and Muriel H. Wright, *A Guide to the Indian Tribes of Oklahoma* (Norman, 1952).

#### APPENDIX B

Original letter of Chief John Ross, in Civil War File  
1861,

Executive Department, C. N.  
Park Hill, Oct. 20th, 1861.

To Col. John Drew  
and Lt. Col. Wm. P. Rofs  
Gentlemen—

I drop you this line in great haste and enclose you a Communication for the Chiefs of the Creek Nation, which you will peruse, to understand our views on the Subject of the Creek feuds! And which I desire should also be brought before the attention of Col. Cooper if he should be there in Command, in the absence of Genl. Pike.

I most sincerely regret the State of confusion and excitement growing out of the Creek affair, which might have been amicably adjusted, without all the trouble it has Created if a prudent and wise course had been pursued by the Creek Authorities — Our Northern & northwestern frontiers, should, by all means be guarded without delay — if it was, the danger of a Northern invasion and the movements of emmisaries would be cut off, and the existing Creek feuds would be more readily checked & silenced without a Conflict of arms between them — these remarks are called forth in consequence of the suspense and intense feeling of anxiety beginning to be manifested by our people on the subject, especially by the inhabitants of our frontier Districts — and I do hope that your duty at the Creek council may be speedily dispensed with, as the interests of our People and Governmental affairs requires your attention in our own Dear Country!

Yours very respectfully

Jno. Rofs, Prinl. Chief.

# Payne County Historical Society

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Payne County Historical Society is organized in order to bring together people interested in history and especially the history of Payne County, Oklahoma. The Society's major function is to discover and collect any materials that may help to establish or illustrate the history of the area.

Membership in the Payne County Historical Society is open to anyone interested in the collection and preservation of Payne County history. Membership dues are: annual individual, \$10.00; annual family, \$15.00; annual contributing, \$25.00; institutional, \$20.00; sustaining, \$50.00; life, \$100.00 paid in one year. Membership applications and dues should be sent to the treasurer.

All members receive copies of the *Review* free. In addition, the Society sponsors informative meetings and historical outings several times during the year.

Payne County Historical Society  
P.O. Box 194  
Waynesville, NC 27586