

Slavery in the Cherokee Nation

*The Keetoowah Society and the Defining
of a People 1855-1867*



Patrick N. Mingos

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SLAVERY IN THE
CHEROKEE NATION

The Keetoowah Society and the
Defining of a People 1855–1867

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*Dedicated to the memory of
James Melvin Washington
scholar, mentor, friend*

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Acknowledgments

All books begin somewhere. This book began on the road to my birthplace. When I was young, my mom used to take us to her, and my, birthplace in the mountains of North Carolina not very far from a location that plays an important role in this book. On the way, a stop at the Cherokee Indian Reservation was the highlight of the trip. Though the Cherokee of my youth lived in a teepee and wore a headdress of multicolored feathers, I soon realized that their presence in my life would be a strong one. It is an easy thing to say that all of my days were spent in preparation of this project; in many ways, this is the absolute truth. Bringing it to fruition is the first step on my way back home.

Not far from where I was born, another young man grew up to be a talented young minister, a gifted scholar, and a person of tremendous intellectual and moral courage. His name was James Melvin Washington and his path took him from Tennessee to Yale, Harvard, and eventually to Union Theological Seminary where he became a professor of American Religious History. It was there that our paths crossed and he encouraged me to take my interests in history and make something of them and of myself. His confidence in me and my capabilities as a scholar gave me the inspiration to pursue this project and the insight to transform it from an ill-formed idea to an actual physical reality. Tragically, on the very day that I presented him with the first draft of this work, he had a stroke and within a few days was called home to his final reward. The world lost a great soul on that day. This book is dedicated to his memory.

The seed of this book was planted when I happened to pick up Craig Gaines' *The Confederate Cherokees* at a bookstore in Charlotte, N.C. In the third chapter of this work, he mentions the Keetoowah Society as being a secret organization of fullbloods founded by Baptist abolitionist preachers to oppose the Blue Lodge and the Knights of the Golden Circle. Being both a Baptist and a member of the Blue Lodge, it was hard for me to ignore such fertile ground as this. Along the way, the seed was watered by Wilma Mankiller who in her autobiography noted the presence of persons of African descent on the "Trail of Tears" and lamented, "We rarely hear of those black people who also suffered." When I read this, I decided to try to unearth this missing chapter of Cherokee history.

The only thing more complicated than Cherokee history is Cherokee politics and unfortunately, the two are inextricably linked. Taking any position on Cherokee history inevitably leads to two probabilities: a) you are wrong and b) somebody will let you know it about it in no uncertain terms. Numerous Cherokee have been extremely generous in both their advice and their friendship over the years and have made significant contributions to this work. Without belaboring the specifics, I would like to thank Ken Martin, David Cornsilk, Linda Hoxit Raxter, Richard Allen, Joyce Vincent, Talmadge Davis, Wilma Mankiller, Jonathan Hook, Ima J. Stephens, and Jack Baker. Outside of the Cherokee Nation, I have received support and encouragement from William Harjo Longfist, Robert Warrior, Terry and Shawna Adams, Melinda Maynor, Angela Walton, and Valerie Phillips. A special thanks goes to the Oklahoma Masonic Indian Degree and the Akdar Shrine Indian Dance Unit.

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Introduction

It is a civil rights case deluxe that should pique their interest, but because it is operating in a microcosm, they fail to see the power of the issues being litigated. One black attorney from Washington, D.C., a very intelligent gent, said “Why would I want to change races now? I’m happy being black.” When I told him about the issue of citizenship, he just couldn’t perceive of a Nation within a Nation, in which he had a vested interest. His ancestors, nearly all of them, are on the Cherokee and Creek Freedmen rolls.

David Cornsilk¹

On June 12, 1998, an appeal was filed before the Judicial Appeals Tribunal of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma on behalf of Bernice Riggs, a descendent of Cherokee Freedmen. The appeal sought the restoration of the terms of an 1866 treaty allowing descendants of former slaves and free persons of color in the Cherokee Nation to be treated as Cherokee citizens entitled to all the rights and privileges of such including the right to vote in national elections.² The action in this suit dates back to a letter of complaint first filed with the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice claiming that the Cherokee Nation had violated the civil rights of its Freedmen.³ In June, 1984, sixteen people filed a class-action lawsuit in U.S. District Court in Tulsa, Oklahoma against officials of both the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma and the federal government. They claimed that the rights of citizenship of the Cherokee Nation’s black freedmen have been continually ignored in spite of the precedent established by the 1866 treaty.⁴ The struggle for an inclusive Cherokee Nation which these lawsuits represent is not a new one; the Treaty of 1866 was signed following the bitter struggle of the Civil War in the Indian Territory—a war in which the Indian Territory paid a higher price than nearly any other state in the union.⁵ One of the people participating in the Riggs lawsuit is David Cornsilk, a Cherokee Nationalist, and a lifelong member of a traditionalist secret society among the Cherokee Indians entitled the Keetoowah Society. In supporting the Riggs lawsuit before the J.A.T., Cornsilk battles for the ideals established by his ancestors in the Keetoowah Society. Formed in the mid-nineteenth century among “fullbloods” in the Cherokee Nation, the Keetoowah Society helped frame the ideal of a Cherokee identity rooted in traditional religion and culture as opposed to the ideology of “race.”

Many Keetoowah gave their lives for this ideal in the Civil War, and their survivors established the terms of the Treaty of 1866 that guaranteed citizenship to persons of African descent within the Cherokee Nation.⁶ That David Cornsilk continues the struggle of his forbearers speaks to the continuing importance of these values and the continuing struggle for justice in the Cherokee Nation. This work is an attempt to tell that story.

The issue of what it means to be a “Cherokee,” or moreover what it means to be an “Indian,” is one of the most controversial and pivotal issues that confront Native Americans today.⁷ It is more than just an academic discussion when people assume Cherokee identity in order to reap the economic advantages of tribal membership, the religious deliverance offered by Native American spirituality, or the artistic merits of being an indigenous artist. In the twentieth century, the issue of “blood politics” has come to dominate discussions of identity and the delineations among blood, color, and race have become hopelessly obfuscated by racial ideology and identity politics. Even the Seminole Nation, which has traditionally embraced persons of African descent, has moved to restrict identity along “blood” lines thereby disenfranchising persons of African/Native descent.⁸ However, this emphasis upon the ideological construct of “race” as derivative of percent of Cherokee “blood” is a recent phenomenon in the Cherokee Nation.⁹ Before the nineteenth century, it was hardly even an issue. In the middle of the nineteenth century, it became the issue for the Cherokee Nation.

The question of what it means to be a Cherokee was perhaps the critical issue in the Civil War within the Indian Territory. The “civilization” program of the federal government carried out by federal agents and missionaries sought to redefine Cherokee identity in terms of acculturation to European concepts of civility and humanity. Many of the Cherokee accepted “civilization” and began to define themselves in the terms of white culture and its corresponding values, educated their children in Christian missions, and adopted plantation agriculture. Others resisted accommodation and clung to time-honored culture and values that found expression in Cherokee language and worldview, traditional religious practices, hereditary social structures, and conservative political formations. From the beginning of the eighteenth century to the middle of the nineteenth century, these values were held in subtle tension by the syncretic and inclusive nature of traditional society. It was the issue of slavery that shattered this fragile balance and dragged the Cherokee Nation into a maelstrom from which it barely emerged intact.

Slavery represented the quintessential evil of European culture. Many Native Americans having formerly been slaves themselves, they had developed a particular disaffection for the “peculiar institution.” The Cherokee had also seen the destructive influence that the Indian slave trade had played upon their own economic and social institutions in the latter half of the seventeenth and early eighteenth century. That “civilization” in the

United States was being built upon a system of racial codification and disenfranchisement and the implications of such for the Cherokee people was inescapable. When persons of their own culture began to abandon traditional teachings and embrace this alien and threatening ideology and all of its social, economic, and political trappings, it set in motion forces that could not be constrained. These forces came to a cataclysmic collision in the years 1861–1865.

The Civil War in the Indian Territory was a component of the larger struggle for national unity that helped define this United States, yet the causes that motivated the partisans within the Indian Territory were quite different. These had their roots in an historic struggle for the leadership of the Cherokee people as well as the larger national agenda of establishing a political identity for the Cherokee Nation. While history often details the struggle for the preservation of the United States from this divisive and pernicious ideology of inequality, it seldom explores the powerful conflict for national sovereignty that was made manifest on the faraway plains of what is now Oklahoma. Though the battles were yet few, the losses were as great and the price paid as high as any other participant in the Civil War. Playing a decisive role in this struggle were African American troops, many of whom were members of the Five Nations of the Southeastern United States. Though the Fifty Fourth Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry gets the “glory” for being the first blacks to see combat in the Civil War, the honor actually goes to these First Kansas Colored Volunteers.

This is also a history of the Cherokee people that attempts to capture the complexity of religious forces that shaped the Cherokee Nation in this critical period of its history. As the Baptist churches arose within communities of “fullblood” Indians and African Americans, these churches were from the onset composed of multiracial congregants. These Baptist churches served as a rallying point for organized resistance to the “civilization” program and recruitment and training centers for those opposed to the institution of slavery. Out of these communities of resistance came the forces that turned the tide of the Civil War in the Indian Territory. Race and religion were dynamically interrelated forces in the Indian Territory in the nineteenth century; together they worked to create a tremendous impetus for political and social change.

At the center of the conflict that resulted in the Civil War in the Indian Territory were two secret societies, each influenced by Freemasonic lodges that arose within the Indian Territory as early as the late eighteen forties. The “progressives” organized the Knights of the Golden Circle, a movement closely affiliated with ideology of the white supremacist George W.L. Bickley. The “progressives” dedicated the organization to promoting the interests of slavery and punishing abolitionists within the Cherokee Nation. The “conservatives” organized and founded, in a Baptist church, the traditionalist Keetoowah Society that committed itself to the preservation of the “old ways” and the abolition of slavery. It was within the Baptist

churches and through the mechanisms of the underground movement within the Baptist missionary outreach that the Keetoowah Society carried out its political mobilization. These two secret societies, both composed of former members of Masonic lodges, fought on opposite sides in the Civil War. From the first shots at Wilson's Creek to the defining moments of the reconstruction of the Cherokee Nation, these secret societies stood at odds with each other over the nature and constitution of Cherokee identity.

And when it was over, the Cherokee Nation healed its tattered soul and arose from the catastrophe of the Civil War as a unified political entity. Through the power of the "old ways" and the traditional ethic of harmony, former enemies put aside their ancient hatreds that the Cherokee people might once again stand tall in the face of continued aggression. At the center of the rebirth of the Cherokee Nation after the Civil War was the Keetoowah Society. Throughout the history of the Cherokee Nation during the turbulent years of the mid-nineteenth century, the Keetoowah Society fought for the preservation of the "old ways" and the perpetuation of a national unity rooted in traditional culture. When some in the Cherokee Nation lost their souls to the false idolatry of race, class, and a foreign culture, the Keetoowah clung to that which brought unity, community, and religious transcendence.

A critical component of the Civil War in the Indian Territory was the idea that persons of African descent are entitled to all of the rights and privileges of membership in the Cherokee Nation. After five years of desolation the Cherokee emerged from the war with their numbers reduced from 21,000 to 14,000 and their whole nation in ashes. Some 2,200 Cherokee fought on the Union side; as many as eight hundred lost their lives. Even as early as 1863, one-third of the adult women in the Nation were widows and one-fourth of the children were orphans. The Treaty of 1866 granted freedom for all former slaves, abolished slavery forever, and granted African Americans all of the rights of native Cherokee. In spite of this, African American Cherokee are even now denied many of the rights of Cherokee citizenship that the Keetoowah and their forefathers fought and died for. Until this historic injustice is corrected, their losses will have been in vain. It is towards that end that this work is dedicated.

CHAPTER ONE

Red, White, and Black in the Old South

In truth, sacred bonds between blacks and Native Americans, bonds of blood and metaphysical kinship, cannot be documented solely by factual evidence confirming extensive interaction and intermingling—they are also matters of the heart. These ties are best addressed by those who are not simply concerned with the cold data of history, but who have “history written in the hearts of our people,” who then feel for history, not just because it offers facts but because it awakens and sustains connections, renews and nourishes current relations. Before that which is in our hearts can be spoken, remembered with passion and love, we must discuss the myriad ways white supremacy works to impose forgetfulness, creating estrangement between red and black peoples, who though different lived as One.¹

—bell hooks, *Black Looks: Race and Representation*

MATTERS OF THE HEART

As she approached the bank of the river, their eyes met for the first time. She, the “Queen” of Cofitachiqui, was seated upon pillows, borne upon a royal vessel, and surrounded by the canoes of her principal men. He, the slave of Andre de Vasconcelos, was a follower of Hernando De Soto and the Spanish expedition to explore and exploit the natural resources of the American Southeast. Another of De Soto’s followers described this first encounter, “She was a young girl of fine bearing...and she spoke to the governor quite gracefully and at her ease.”² She placed pearls upon the neck of De Soto and declared that she would, “with sincerest and purest goodwill tender you my person, my lands, my people, and make you these small gifts.”³

Without a doubt, the “Queen” had heard of De Soto’s coming. When her fellow countrymen refused to show De Soto to her village, he burned them alive. When a misguided warrior challenged De Soto to a manly duel of skill, the Spaniard set his huge Mastiffs upon him and they tore him to pieces. Word spread quickly of the coming of these dark men. In this first encounter, the Beloved Woman of Cofitachiqui knew that she was reckoning with an overwhelming force of power and that her steps must be delicate.

If De Soto attracted the lady’s attention, she was also distracted by a different person—the African slave standing only a short distance from the

main party. She had perhaps encountered Africans before and her people most certainly had, but there was something particularly captivating about this one. Their eyes met and spoke a language beyond words. In a matter of seconds, the vast expanse that had once separated the “old world” and the “new world” was bridged and former matters of state had become matters of the heart. Over the next couple a days, it was an attraction she could not resist.

On the third day, the Queen disappeared. De Soto sent his guards to find her, but to no avail...she did not wish to be found. Taking advantage of her absence, De Soto entered one of the ancient temple mounds that were scattered about the town of Talimico, the religious and political center of Cofitachiqui. The mound was one hundred feet long and forty feet wide with massive doors; as he entered the doors, he encountered paired rows of immense wooden statues with diamond shaped heads. The guardians of the sacred world bore first batons, then knives, and lastly bows and arrows.⁴ Like the ancient pyramids of Egypt, these temple mounds contained statues of notable persons of antiquity and chests filled with the remains of the elders. Scattered about the temples were bundles of fur, breastplates, and weapons—tools for the next life—covered with pearls, colored leather, and “something green like an emerald.”⁵

De Soto and his men quickly plundered the ancient temple mound. Among the booty were items of a European make, “Biscayan axes or iron and rosaries with their crosses.”⁶ De Soto and his men determined that these materials were the remnants of the earlier expedition of Lucas Vazquez de Ayllon and his aborted settlement on the Carolina coast. Just as with De Soto’s expedition, African slaves had accompanied de Ayllon’s settlement colony on the Peedee River in 1526. When there was a crisis over leadership, the colony fell into disarray. In the midst of this crisis, a slave revolt further ripped the settlement apart. With the colony in shambles, many of the African slaves fled to live among the nearby native people.⁷ According to De Soto, these refugees must have lived among the Cofitachiqui and taught them the craftwork of the Europeans.⁸

When the Lady of Cofitachiqui finally returned, De Soto seized her and forced her to tell him where more wealth such as had been found in the temple was to be gained. She said that there were greater riches further inland. De Soto and his men set out in search of this land carrying with them the “woman chief” of Cofitachiqui “in return for the good treatment they had received from her.”⁹ After seven days of travel over the lofty ridges of the Appalachians Mountains in the Western Carolinas, the party arrived at the “province of Chalaque.”¹⁰ After staying a few days in Xuala, the party set out for the further lands near “Guaxule” where “there were more indications that there were gold mines.”¹¹

As they were making their way on their journey, the Lady of Cofitachiqui “left the road, with the excuse of going in the thicket, where, deceiving them, she so concealed herself that for all their search she could not be found.”¹² De

Soto, all the more frustrated because the Beloved Woman had fled with a box of “unbored pearls” of great value, decided to move on to Guaxule.¹³ However, it seems that the Lady had made other plans and had arranged for a rendezvous with other members from De Soto’s party. These included an “Indian slave boy from Cuba,” a “slave belonging to Don Carlos, a Berber, well versed in Spanish,” and “Gomez, a negro belonging to Vasco Goncalvez who spoke good Spanish.”¹⁴ Alimamos, a horseman sent by De Soto to find the fugitives, “got lost,” and happened upon the refugee slaves. He “labored with the slaves to make leave of their evil designs.” Two of the slaves did just that and returned to De Soto but “when they arrived, the Governor wished to hang them.”¹⁵

However, the horseman Alimamos reported yet another story that was something altogether shocking. He stated that “The *Cacica* remained in Xuala, with a slave of Andre de Vasconcelas, who would not come with him (Alimamos), and that it was very very sure that they lived together as man and wife, and were to go together to Cutafichiqui.”¹⁶ In an effort that would be repeated countless times over the next three hundred years, refugee slaves fled from their masters to the sanctuary villages of the Cherokee and Mvskoke and were thus given welcome and protected by friendly Indians. Equally important to our collective history, the “Queen of Cofitachiqui” and the “slave of Andre de Vasconcelas” returned to their “village of the dogwoods” on the banks of the Savannah River near Silver Bluff, S.C. where they would begin a life together in what would become a prominent Aframerindian community.¹⁷

EARLY POINTS OF CONTACT

When the enslaved Africans of De Allyon and De Soto’s expeditions fled their Spanish masters, they found refuge among the native peoples of the American Southeast. In so doing, they found a people not unlike themselves. The indigenous peoples of West Africa and the American Southeast possessed similar worldviews rooted in their historic relationship to the subtropical coastlands of the middle Atlantic.¹⁸ Physical appearance aside, these runaway African slaves found that the similarities between themselves and those who provided them sanctuary far outweighed their differences.

There is every possibility that the relationship between Africans and Native Americans stretches much further back than many historians are willing to acknowledge. Though it is a highly controversial topic, it seems possible that the first contact between Africans and Indians did not occur in the early sixteenth century as is commonly assumed. This possibility has been underscored by the discovery in Brazil of a “Negroid” skull dating back some 11,500 years. “Luzia,” as she has been called, could transform thinking about the peopling of the Americas.¹⁹ “We can no longer say that the first colonizers of the Americas came from North of Asia, as previous models have proposed,” says Dr. Walter Neves, discoverer of the skull.²⁰

Most texts detailing red/black relations in North America begin with Africans among the explorations of de Ayllon, de Soto, Ponce de Leon, and Panfilo Narvaez. However, in his work *Africans and Native Americans: The Language of Race and the Evolution of Red-Black Peoples*, Jack Forbes cites myths from South America that feature a close cooperative relationship between the spirit-powers of Africa and of the Americas. He concludes his discussion of this relationship with the statement, “Thus in spiritual as well as secular sense, the American and African peoples have interacted with each other in a variety of settings and situations. These interactions may well have begun in very early times.”²¹

Long before Christopher Columbus, Africans may have been using favorable sea currents and small boats to come to the Americas.²² One of the reasons Columbus was sent return voyages to the new world was “a report of the Indians of this Espaniola who said that there had come to Espaniola from the south and south-east, a black people who have the tops of their spears made of a metal which they call ‘guanin’ (gold).”²³ The Canary Current, which runs off the coast of Senegal and then turns into the Atlantic to the Caribbean, is strong enough to carry vessels from Africa to the Americas.²⁴ Thor Heyerdahl, in his *RA* expeditions, proved that even the smallest boats could make the passage from Africa to the Caribbean.²⁵

There are also other indications of pre-Columbian contact with Africans in a variety of settings in the Americas. Megalithic heads carved by the ancient Olmec bear distinctly African facial features; similarities between African pyramids and reed boats and their counterparts in the Americas, and pictographic/linguistic similarities between Northern African and Native American cultures all offer evidence to support the idea of ancient contact.²⁶ Upon observing the Olmec sculptures in Mexico in 1869, Dr. Jose Melgar y Serrana reported, “As a work of art, it is without exaggeration a magnificent sculpture, but what astonished me was the Ethiopic type represented. I reflect that there had undoubtedly been Negroes in this country.”²⁷ William Bartram, an early botanist who spent time among the Southeastern Indians, also noted “great pyramidal, or Conical Mounds of Earth, Tetragon Terraces & Cubican Yards.”²⁸ James Adair, an early trader among the Creek and Cherokee, described these “state houses and temples” as “following the Jerusalem copy in a suprizing manner” and having a “strong imitation of Solomon’s temple.”²⁹

Dr. Leo Wiener has proposed that African traders from Guinea founded a colony near Mexico City from which they exerted a cultural and commercial influence extending north to Canada and south to Peru. He also suggested that indigenous cultures, including the Maya, Aztec, and Inca civilizations, were strongly influenced through contact with African civilization.³⁰ Historians and scientists from Augustus Le Plongeon in the nineteenth century to Barry Fell in the latter half of the twentieth century have asserted possible African contact with ancient America.³¹ Whatever the truth is, it is certain that along the coastal rim of the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico,

early explorers encountered numerous African-Indians and tri-racial mixtures.³²

When the indigenous peoples of the American Southeast first encountered Africans seeking refuge from the Spanish, they surely saw these people as being different from themselves but they did not perceive these differences in terms of “race.” There was not an understanding of the concept of “race” within the indigenous worldview.³³ William McLoughlin has stressed the importance of clan relationships or larger collective identities (e.g., Ani-Yunwiya, Ani-Tsalagi, Ani-Kituhwagi) within Southeastern societies as being the critical components in their interactions with others.³⁴ Claudio Saunt agrees that it was foreignness and not race that was a key determinant in perception, “Like most Southeastern Indians, they often believed that outsiders, whether European, African, or Native American were the equivalent of ‘dunghill fowl.’”³⁵

In her pivotal work, *Slavery and the Evolution of Cherokee Society 1540–1866*, Theda Perdue states that the Cherokee regarded Africans “simply as other human beings,” and, “since the concept of race did not exist among Indians and since the Cherokees nearly always encountered Africans in the company of Europeans, one supposes that the Cherokee equated the two and failed to distinguish sharply between the races.”³⁶ Another historian, Kenneth Wiggins Porter, agrees with this conclusion: “[we have] no evidence that the northern Indian made any distinction between Negro and white on the basis of skin color, at least, not in the early period and when uninfluenced by white settlers.”³⁷

Early ethnologist James Adair noted that among the Southeastern Indians, “their own traditions record...no variegation of colour in human beings; and they are entirely ignorant which was the first or primitive color.”³⁸ In Cherokee cosmology, there is no mention of race; in fact, the myth of Selu and Kana’ti—the first humans—is the story of a common human origin. Only many years later, following the introduction of Christian traditions and the ideology of race as a component within human interactions, would a Cherokee myth of multiple origins be developed. In the early eighteenth century, the Cherokees adapted their traditional color symbolism to create categories of difference that they linked to racial characteristics. Their main intent seemed to be to accommodate the influence of developing European racial hierarchy.³⁹

Within the “old ways” of Cherokee traditional culture, there were great affinities with West African traditional culture and religion. Each emphasized the powerful nature of sacred relationships—both with the environment and within one’s community; each stressed the importance of sacred order and the power of ritual to affect and overcome disorder; each attached great significance to kinship in their social organization; and each were rooted in a communal economy based on subsistence agriculture.⁴⁰ West Africans and Cherokees both placed a premium on harmony and “ideal balance”—“the ideal for them has been...‘conformity to the life led by one’s

fellows, seeking to gain little or no wealth or position' in a carefully egalitarian world where personal gain above the level of the accepted norm would be a source of unhappiness or danger, since exceptional achievement could be only at the expense of one's neighbors."⁴¹

In addition, order in African traditional culture came from structured community:

...social order and peace are recognized by African peoples as essential and sacred. Where the sense of corporate life is so deep, it is inevitable that the solidarity of the community must be maintained, otherwise there is disintegration and destruction. This order is conceived of primarily in terms of kinship relationship, which simultaneously produces many situations of tension since everyone is related to everybody else and deepens these sense of damage caused by the strain of such tensions.⁴²

Kinship was also very important to African society, "Indeed, this sense of kinship binds together the entire life of the 'tribe,' and is even extended to cover animals, plants, and non-living objects through the 'totemic' system."⁴³ According to religious scholar John Mbiti, kinship is one of the strongest forces in traditional African life.⁴⁴

Within African traditional culture, relationships of power were structured within the interactions between the individual and the community's respective kinship groups. Where kinship rules determined personal identity as well as social location, the lack of kinship ties was a distinct liability.⁴⁵ Persons without kinship ties remained on the periphery of society; they were not enfranchised into the political and social structures of the tribe. In a very real sense, they were rootless. Many times, these persons lived as "slaves." "Slavery" existed within Africa, but it was never permanent nor transgenerational; most often it was the result of conflict between peoples of different nations.⁴⁶ It was dramatically different than that which they were to encounter when Europeans entered upon the scene in Africa.⁴⁷

When the Indians of the Southeastern United States first encountered these runaway Spanish slaves, they did so within the similar framework of a traditional worldview. Slavery as a phenomenon was not unknown to them, but it was distinctively different than that practiced by the Spanish. Rudi Halliburton, in his *Red Over Black*, concludes that "slavery, as an institution, did not exist among the Cherokees before the arrival of Europeans."⁴⁸ Booker T. Washington took a similar viewpoint, "The Indians who first met the white man on his continent do not seem to have held slaves until they first learned to do so from him."⁴⁹ Though it is not exactly correct to say that the Cherokee did not hold slaves, it is correct to say that the "institution of slavery" did not exist within the Cherokee Nation.⁵⁰

The Cherokee *atsi nahtsa'i*, or "captives without clans,"⁵¹ were individuals captured through warfare and often given to clans who had lost members in the conflict.⁵² Women were in control of the system of

indigenous slavery prior to contact with European society.⁵³ It was up to the “beloved women” of the nation to decide the fate of these individuals; they could “by the wave of a swan’s wing, deliver a wretch condemned by the council, and already tied to the stake.”⁵⁴ Once rescued, these persons owed their life to the Cherokee Nation. If accepted into clan to replace lost members, they gained identity and protection through the clan and citizenship in the nation. If not, these individuals existed outside of the clan structure and on the periphery of Cherokee society. Though not members of the Cherokee Nation, neither were they considered to be a commodity.⁵⁵

In “slavery” according to the traditions of the “old ways,” questions of social equality did not determine the relationship of the master and the slave. Among the Southern indigenous peoples, slaves often dressed better than their owners and were allowed to marry among themselves. Their children were considered free and in every way equal to their parent’s masters.⁵⁶ Most importantly, slavery played little role in the economic well being of the person, the community, or the society.

On the eve of contact with Europeans, the Cherokee inhabited nearly forty thousand square miles of the Southeastern United States—most of the southern Appalachian mountain system and parts of the central portions of the Appalachian valleys into the Piedmont plateau.⁵⁷ James Mooney gives an estimate of their population in the seventeenth century at 22,000.⁵⁸ For thousands of years the Cherokee and their neighbors in the Southeastern United States lived in sacred relationship with the land and with the other inhabitants in their environment.

The indigenous peoples of the American Southeast defined themselves in accord with ancient traditions that provided structure for their community and meaning for their individual existence.⁵⁹ This center of this web of identity was a system of interdependent relationships. Integral to the Southeastern worldview was a relationship with the land, “...like a mother, it shapes and teaches our species and according to the particularity of the area, produces certain basic forms of personality and social identity that could not be produced in any other way...To find a ‘southern’ identity without understanding the unique characteristics of the southeastern lands is to vest in the memories of our species a shaping ability that does not exist.”⁶⁰ Mvskoke Jean Chaudhuri agrees with this perspective, “The relationship between nature and culture is very deeply interconnected in the Muscogee Creek world...the important connections between Creek conceptions of nature and culture are clearly evident in what we know of their history and in the core elements of contemporary traditional values.”⁶¹

In addition, this relationship of mutual responsibility extended to others that share their immediate environment including non-human species. Mutually dependant relationships are partnerships of equality; the respect given to each creature’s contribution imbues a profound recognition of the dignity of even the smallest of creations. This dignity demands an ethical response from each of the participants in the relationship; the ethical

response should be commensurate to the partner's expectation. This is the core of the traditional relationship with the environment.⁶² Once again, Jean Chaudhuri, "Obeying the laws means following and showing reverence for principles of energy at work in the universe. Energy flows continuously, constantly sharing, exchanging, and transforming. The nature/culture nexus is also the place at which exchange and transformation of energy takes place."⁶³

Just as with the Mvskoke, the center of Cherokee existence was "harmony"—a balance and order created from an interconnected network of mutuality.⁶⁴ Robert K. Thomas, an Eastern Cherokee, describes the Cherokee "harmony ethic" as one's "trying to maintain harmonious interpersonal relationships with his fellow Cherokee by avoiding giving offense on the negative side, and by giving of himself to his fellow Cherokee in regard to his time and his material goods on the positive side."⁶⁵ Conservative Cherokee also understand themselves as "being oriented" rather than "becoming oriented" and see themselves in proper relationship with all things in their immediate environment. They recognize that all situations that confront them are a part of the natural order.⁶⁶ According to John Loftin, "the natural rhythms and forms of their world point beyond themselves to levels of ultimacy and transcendence. Their land, their life, and their religion are one."⁶⁷

A structured system of dynamically interactive relationships lie at the basis of the Cherokee worldview and promoted a cohesive social system, an inclusive political structure, an egalitarian economic commonwealth, and an environmentally sound relationship with nature. Identity came from knowing one's place in this network of dynamically interconnected web of life and understanding one's role and contributions to the enhancement and advancement of the cycles of existence. Existence outside of the network is anomie; disruption of this system of order creates chaos and destruction leading to the end of the cycle.⁶⁸ According to some prophecies, if we do not live in natural and cultural harmony, destruction by fire and flood is likely.⁶⁹

The interconnected network of of mutuality and the recognition of the need of harmonious intercourse all worked to promote a collective worldview that is known among the Cherokee as the "old ways." At the root of this collective identity was an integrative culture that centered upon the land, the family, language, spirituality, community, and ultimately upon *Ani-Kituhwagi*—the Cherokee people as a "beloved community."⁷⁰ Its leaders were known as "beloved men" and "beloved women." At the dawn of contact with "civilization," to be an *Ani-Kituhwagi* was to be one whose identity rested in their ties to the "old ways." In the holistic worldview of the Cherokee people, the term *Ani-Kituhwagi* is more than just a political or national identity; it is also a sacred one. At the root of this sacred Cherokee identity are the "old ways."

THE “OLD WAYS”

The “old ways” are a series of structured relationships woven together to create a cohesive worldview and a sacred order rooted in the harmonious interactions of interdependent actors and activities. Based upon their observations of the workings of nature, the Cherokee built their society upon inclusivity and complementarity⁷¹ as well as “modes of interrelatedness across categories of meaning, never losing sight of an ultimate wholeness.”⁷² Cherokee Marilou Awiakta best describes the “old ways” as: “the pattern of survival is in the poetics of primal space. Balance, harmony, inclusiveness, cooperation—life regenerating within a parameter of order... Continuance in the midsts of change, cardinal dynamics that sustain the universe... The Cherokee have used these poetics for survival.”⁷³

The pattern of complementarity and harmonious interrelationships that forms the core of Cherokee culture begins at birth. The situation of one’s birth was a critical factor in determining one’s place in the social order and gender roles were very important to the structure of Cherokee society.⁷⁴ The Cherokee social world revolved around the interaction of gender roles, almost to the point of creating separate worlds.⁷⁵ These gender roles have their roots in the Cherokee primal myth of the original beings—Selu, the “corn mother,” represents the relationship of women to the cycles of nature and agricultural production, and Kana’ ti, the “lucky hunter,” signifies the relationship of men with the forests and the harvest of game.⁷⁶ As Cherokee society was primarily horticultural, women were responsible for the fields which raised corn, beans, squash, and peas.⁷⁷ After harvest, they gathered semi-cultivated plants such as berries, wild rice, potatoes, nuts and mushrooms.⁷⁸

Critical elements within the “old ways” of Cherokee culture were the collective stewardship of the land, communal responsibility for the working of the soil, and the mutual benefit from the wealth of the lands.⁷⁹ As women were tied by sacred legend to the domain of agriculture, they exercised tremendous power over agricultural production and in the market economy of Cherokee culture. Sarah Hill, in her *Weaving New Worlds: Southeastern Cherokee Women and their Baskets* divides the woman’s agricultural domain into *a-wi-sv-di-yi*, the garden, and *ga-gesi*, the field.⁸⁰ The garden was usually close to the home with “large and small beans, peas, and the smaller sort of Indian corn” and was usually enclosed by a small fence to protect it from animals.⁸¹ This small garden of “Corn, Rice, Squashes, &c, which, by early planting & closer closer attention, affords an earlier supply than their distant plantations.”⁸²

In addition to the garden, each community had a “Town Plantation, where every Family or Citizen has his parcel or share, according to desire or conveniency.”⁸³ James Adair described what the Cherokee referred to as the *gadugi*, or work detail, used by the Southeastern Indians to tend these collective fields:

Among several nations of Indians, each town usually works together. Previous thereto, an old beloved man warns the inhabitants to be ready to plant on a prefixed day. At the dawn of it, one by order goes aloft, and whoops to them with shrill calls, "that the new year is far advanced—that he expects to eat, must work, and that he who will not work, must agree to pay the fine according to the old custom, or leave the town, as they will not sweat themselves for an healthy idle waster." At such times, may be seen the war-chieftains working in common with the people...thus they proceed from field to field til their seed is sewn.⁸⁴

When the harvest was done, the same procession was repeated to bring in the crops and each person reaped their share from participation in the collective effort.⁸⁵ A certain portion of the collective's effort was set-aside for the "Publick Granary."⁸⁶ This granary being for the "wisest & best of purposes" was "A Store, or Resource, to repair to in cases of necessity;—as when a family's falls short, or is destroyed by accidents or otherwise. He has an equal right of assistance and supply from the Publick Granary.... And it furnishes aid to neighboring Towns should they be in want."⁸⁷ In his 1954 work, *Southern Indians: The Story of the Civilized Tribes before Removal*, R.S. Cotterill referred to this aspect of Cherokee society as "communism."⁸⁸ As the Cherokee were soon to find out, their practice of "communism" would be as great a threat to the American way of life in 1754 as it would be in 1954.⁸⁹

The Indians of the Southeast did not pursue "agriculture" as Europeans understood it and this proved to be a great impediment to the mutual understanding. The Indians hoed their fields and gardens with a dipple stick or stone mattock and to the colonists, their fields seemed hardly tended to at all, "They dig their holes and plant. Grass grows up around the spot, and they weed out what is close enough to the plant to harm it directly...seeing the fields that result, one would not believe that they had been cultivated at all."⁹⁰ Both Timberlake and Adair credit the success of Cherokee agriculture resting solely with the virtue of the land, "They commonly have pretty good crops, which is owing to the richness of the soil; for they often let the weeds outgrow the corn."⁹¹

If the women worked the gardens and the fields in the summer and fall, the men harvested the woods and the streams in the winter and spring.⁹² From the very first contacts, European explorers noted the skills of the Southeastern Indians, "The Indians never lacked meat. With arrows they get abundance of deer, turkeys, rabbits, and other wild animals, being very skillful in killing game, which the Christians are not."⁹³ In fact, the Europeans believed that Indians were lazy because they myopically saw hunting and fishing as leisure activities, "The Indians have all their work done by women...The man smokes peacefully while the woman grinds corn in a mortar."⁹⁴ This was an assertion that explorer William Bartram was quick to reject, "The Indians are by no means that lazy slothful sleepy people so commonly reported to be."⁹⁵

Men provided meat from fishing and from hunting deer, wild turkey, and other animals. Hunting parties were primarily male.⁹⁶ John Gerar William De Brahm, the British Crown's Surveyor General, noted that "...the Cherokee, like unto the rest of all Northern Indians, are expert in and fit for nothing but hunting."⁹⁷ The Cherokee understood their relationship to the animals of the forests in the same contexts as the Europeans did their livestock, "The great God of Nature has placed us in different situations... He has given each their lands...he has stocked yours with cows, ours with buffaloe; yours with hog, ours with bear; yours with sheep, ours with deer."⁹⁸

The men were also responsible for the protection of the village from enemies both foreign and domestic; the Cherokee were constantly at war with the Shawnee, the Iroquois, and the Mvskoke. Once again, their ways of war were unusual to the Europeans, "These chiefs command the army and direct the main operations, but there are many private expeditions to pillage houses or isolated farms. In their armies, the warriors stay, go, and return just as they please; no one cares. Their ways of war are fierce; they rarely take prisoners."⁹⁹ When taken, prisoners were subjected to terrifying torture.¹⁰⁰ Status was achieved in male society by being victorious at war.¹⁰¹

Warfare was considered a great honor and a great responsibility; it was indicative of the highest form of patriotism to the Cherokee Nation, "They are all equal—the only precedence any gain is by superior virtue, oratory, or prowess; they esteem themselves bound to live and die in defence of their country... Warriors are to protect all, but not to molest or injure the meanest... The reason they are more earnest than the rest of mankind, in maintaining that divine law of equal freedom and justice...is the notion...of the divine theocracy, and that inexpressible abhorrence of slavery."¹⁰² Warfare was such a powerful responsibility for the male gender that it was forbidden for them to have sexual contact with females before battle; the results of such contact would result in the failure in their endeavors.¹⁰³

That is not to say that women did not have a place in warfare. Women would occasionally accompany men to war and if they were successful in their encounters, they would be raised to the "Dignity of War Woman."¹⁰⁴ The "War Woman" held a status which no man could share, not even "Emperor, Kings, or Warriors" and "there are but few towns in which is a War Woman."¹⁰⁵ All prisoners must be delivered alive to her for her to decide their fate, "if she can come near enough to the Prisoner as to put her hand on him, and say, this is my Slave, the Warriors (tho with the greatest Reluctancy) must deliver him up to her."¹⁰⁶ In his travels through Cherokee country, naturalist William Bartram came upon "Warwoman's Crick" that was so named for the "valour and stragem of an Indian Woman that was present & who afterwards was raised to the dignity of Queen of Chief of the Nation as a reward of her superior virtues & abilities."¹⁰⁷

Scholars often see traditional society as bipolar and understood it in the negative sense of being oppositional, "The Southeastern Indians had very little choice about what they wanted to be in life. Basically, they could either

be a man or a woman.”¹⁰⁸ However, the bipolar structure of Cherokee society was critical to the social order shaping both social and personal identity and creating a balance between individual enterprise and social benefit. Thus, polarity must be understood as complementarity rather than opposition.¹⁰⁹ The same is true in Mvskoke society, “The balance of male and female principles permeates all Creek thinking. The balances, therefore, involve the division of various powers, functions, and privileges. The purpose of these divisions is not rooted in any suspicion of evil, “witchcraft,” or female inferiority, but in the complementarity of their potential contributions to cosmic and social harmony.”¹¹⁰

The Cherokee Nation in the early colonial period was a much decentralized and often distant collection of independent and interrelated people. It was divided into several bands living in specific geographic locations speaking a common language, yet with different dialects. Each band functioned politically separate from others and even within the particular bands; the towns functioned as separate political entities.¹¹¹ According to Henry Timberlake, it was hardly a government at all, “Their government, if I may call it government,...is neither laws nor power to support it...there is no laws or compulsion on those who refuse to follow.”¹¹² In addition, women played a much more prominent role in Cherokee society than European, “The reader will not be a little surprised to find the story of the Amazons not so great a fable as we imagined, many of the Indian women being as famous in war, as powerful in the council.”¹¹³

What connected this loose confederation of people into a nation were the ties of kinship. Patterns of kinship expressed through clan relationships transcended ties to community and shaped the social order and political stability of the Cherokee. Through the clan came one’s sense of place within the plethora of relationships that made up the worldview of the Cherokee people.¹¹⁴ Even the political system was rooted in the clan structure, “the national council is composed of chiefs from each clan, some sending more some less, regard being held for the population of each.”¹¹⁵

Citizenship in the Cherokee Nation, itself, was tied to bonds of kinship defined by membership in one of the seven clans that made up the Cherokee Nation.¹¹⁶ Traditionally, people belonged to the clan of their mother; their only relatives were those who could be traced through her.¹¹⁷ When a man married a Cherokee woman, he moved in with her family and their offspring belonged to the mother’s clan. An individual’s “blood” relatives were not those related to them on both sides of the family, but only those relatives on their mother’s side. The clan was the most important social entity to which a person belonged.¹¹⁸ When one traveled, room and board as well as family ties could always be found in the homes of one’s clan.¹¹⁹

Ties to clan were so critical to the Cherokee worldview that they became the foundation of all relationships within their environment. Vine Deloria, in his article “Native American Spirituality” articulates the role of kinship within the traditional worldview, “With respect to other life forms, this atti

tude manifests itself in what one could call “kinship” cycles of responsibility that exist between our species and other species...For the responsibility of our species is to perform responsible tasks with respect to each form of life that we encounter learning from them the basic structure of the universe, and ensuring that they receive in return the dignity accorded them.”¹²⁰

Kinship terms were also used to describe relationships with other political entities with which the Cherokee had forged treaties and other political and trade partnerships. The term “grandfather” was used not just in a kinship sense, but also to confer respect to one in a superior position whether by age or dignity.¹²¹ These terms were also used to express bonds of relationship other than blood; “brother” was used to describe familiarity; “elder brother” implied a relationship of dependence; “father” was term of respect for paternal oversight.¹²² Bonds of word between family members were ties of a sacred nature; so important were ties of kinship that they even found expression in Cherokee descriptions of the sacred order.¹²³

Existence outside of the bonds of clan was a precarious one indeed. The central principle of the Cherokee justice system was the practice of “blood oaths” to avenge the harm or death of a fellow clan member. The system of “blood oaths” was so severe that even the accidental death of a clan member necessitated some measure of retribution upon the guilty party. Having no clan ties meant one was at the mercy of ill-will. The Cherokee may have regarded someone without ties of kinship as being less than a person.¹²⁴ As Theda Perdue notes in her *Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700–1835*: “Only those who belonged to Cherokee clans—regardless of language, residence, or even race were Cherokee; only those who had Cherokee mothers were the *Ani-Yunwiya*, the Real People.”¹²⁵

Ani-Yunwiya, which means the “real people” or “principal people,” is the name by which the Cherokee refer to themselves and they do so in the third person. When De Soto first encountered people from “the province of Chalaque,”¹²⁶ his Mvskoke guides informed him that these people were the *tciloki* or “people of a different speech,” referring to the Iroquoian nature of the Cherokee language.¹²⁷ Some say that the name Cherokee comes from the Choctaw word *chiluk ki* meaning “cave people” referring the Cherokee’s residence in the highlands of the Appalachian mountains of the Southeastern United States.¹²⁸ James Adair states that the name came from the Cherokee word *Cheera-tabge* meaning “people of the divine fire.”¹²⁹ Most likely, the word Cherokee is a transliteration of the word *tsa-la-gi* by which the Cherokee distinguish themselves from other native people.¹³⁰

However, another phrase used by the Cherokee to distinguish themselves from their neighboring peoples is “*Ani-Kituhwagi*.” James Mooney describes this term as being used most often on ceremonial occasions. It referred to an ancient settlement known as a “mother-town” on the Tuckasegee River near present day Bryson City, N.C. Originally describing the original nucleus of the Cherokee Nation, it came to indicate a body of people who spoke the Kituwhan variant of the Cherokee language. These

people exerted a considerable influence over all the other towns along the Tuckasegee and the upper Little Tennessee River Valley. As this band of Cherokee lived along the Northern border of the nation and provided a buffer from the sometimes aggressive Iroquois, the name Kituwah became synonymous among them for the Cherokee.¹³¹

The name "*Ani-Kituhwagi*" is more than just a descriptive term; it is a term with both political and religious significance. If, as James Adair suggests, the Cherokee were known as "people of the divine fire,"¹³² it is because fire played such an important part of their religious traditions.¹³³ According to Cherokee legends, the middle world in which we live was created from the lower world and the Thunders sent lightning from the upper world striking a large tree on a deserted island and creating the first fire. After a series of councils and a number of efforts by the biggest and the bravest of the animals, only the tiny water spider was able to bring the fire from its island resting place by carrying it in a web on her back.¹³⁴ The sacred fire was appointed by the sun to take care of her people and it serves as the nearest representative of the sun in the middle world; when fire burns, its smoke returns to the upper world.¹³⁵ Among the Hitchiti people of the Mvskoke confederation, it is said that when Indians received knowledge, "it was through the fire that they received it."¹³⁶

The Cherokee Ayunini told James Mooney a story entitled "the old sacred things;" in this story, the divine fire is closely related to the temple mounds in Western North Carolina. The early *Ani-Kituhwagi* built the great temple mounds at *Nikwasi* and *Kituwaha* to protect and store the *atsi'la gulunkw'tiyu*, "the honored or sacred fire."¹³⁷ In all of the Cherokee towns, the sacred fire was kept in the central townhouse, "They venerate Fire. And have some mysterious rites and ceremonies which I could never perfectly comprehend. They seem to keep the Eternal Fire in the Great Rotunda, which is guarded by the priests None but a priest can carry any fore forth."¹³⁸ William Richardson, one of the earliest missionaries to the Cherokee, also noted the importance of fire at a religious ceremony he attended in 1759, "I took it for some religious ceremony paid to the fire as they frequently bowed to it."¹³⁹

The Cherokee also had periodic gatherings to celebrate their relationship to the cycles of nature. One of the most important of these religious holidays was the Green Corn Ceremony or "Festival of First Fruits."¹⁴⁰ The Green Corn Ceremony was a ritual of propitiation that featured the ritual cleansing of the community by getting rid of all old and useless things. This included grievances and even blood feuds; all were to be forgiven or settled during this great festival held in early fall. All of these ineffectual and worthless things, "they cast together in one common heap, and consume it with fire."¹⁴¹ The people then fasted for three days and drank the "black drink;"¹⁴² on the fourth day, the high priest "produces new fire in the public square, from whence every habitation in the town is supplied with a new and pure flame."¹⁴³ With the new flame, the people feast, rejoice and dance for three

more days. At the end of the busk, a very curious thing occurs; the participants paint themselves white and form a solemn procession:

In this manner, the procession moves along, singing Aleluiah to YO He WaH, &c, till they get to the water, which is generally contiguous, when the *Archi magus* jumps into it and all the holy train follow him... Having purified themselves, or washed away their sins, they come out with joyful hearts, believing themselves out of the reach of temporal evil, for their past vicious conduct; and they return in the same religious cheerful manner, into the middle of the holy ground, where having made a few circles, singing and dancing round the altar, they thus finish their annual great festival, and depart in joy and peace.¹⁴⁴

The ritual of “going to water,” in which the emergent arises cleansed of impurities is a significant element in Cherokee religious life and culture.¹⁴⁵ In nearly every important event in Cherokee life, the activity was preceded by the ritual act of “going to water” by immersing oneself into the fingers of *Yunwi Gunahita*, the Long Person. De Brahms noted that “The first and principal Exercise of the Indians is bathing and swimming... Every morning, both in Summer and in Winter, coming out of their Hot houses, they take their babes under their arms, and lead their children to the Rivers which they enter be it ever so cold.”¹⁴⁶ The Cherokee believed that water was sacred because it led to the underworld—a world of mythic and powerful beings whose magic powers affected humanity.¹⁴⁷

One of the times that “going to water” was also important was before the ritual of “ball play,” another important religious tradition held at community gatherings. “Ball play” allowed Cherokee warriors an opportunity to prove themselves in a traditionally accepted but less threatening manner; it was known by as the function it served, “the little war.”¹⁴⁸ In the old days, it was a very fierce and dangerous battle in which participants were even known to lose their lives. There were often huge wagers and if one community’s team beat another community’s three times, the loser was absorbed into the victor’s town.¹⁴⁹ In later times, “ball play” became much less serious, but it maintained its ritual importance and preserved aspects of traditional social organization in which clan and town figured prominently.¹⁵⁰

This was also true for periodic “stomp dances” in which the sacred fire was the center of the ritual, but in which clan relationships as well as traditional gender roles were celebrated. The seven clans were each called to dance around the fire and each smoked from the sacred pipe. The men and women danced both collectively and separately. The women wore rattles made of turtle shells around the lower part of their legs; the rhythmic sounds from the shells corresponded to the drums of the men.

In the midst of every Cherokee ceremony, whether stomp dance or “ball play,” was to be found the storyteller or orator. The power and presence of

the oratorical tradition is a fundamental element of traditional society. Linking together past with present and thus providing for a common future, the Cherokee storyteller was the tie that bound the beloved community of the Cherokee Nation. As much as the historian is the keeper of the collective memory in western traditions, the storyteller is the keeper of the records within the traditional worldview.¹⁵¹

On the eve of contact with the European explorers, the realm of the Cherokee spread over some forty thousand square miles and contained nearly twenty-five thousand people. Primarily an agriculturally-based society, it was noted for its radical democracy, its egalitarian social structures, its communitarian values, and its strong sense of identity rooted in the ideal of community. In comparison with European “civilization,” Cherokee society stood on its own, “As moral men they certainly stand in no need of European civilization. They are just, honest, liberal and hospitable to strangers, loving and affectionate to their wives and relations; fond of their children; industrious, frugal, temperate and persevering; charitable and forbearing...In this case they stand as examples of reproof to the most civilized nations, as not being defective in justice, gratitude, and a good understanding.”¹⁵²

CONTACT AND CONQUEST IN EARLY AMERICA

When Christopher Columbus arrived on the shores of the New World, he did so propelled by an apocalyptic vision that saw his voyage as the fulfillment of biblical prophecy.¹⁵³ Though pushed by his devotion to the evangelical mission, he was also guided by motives seemingly inseparable from religious ones, “Let Christ rejoice upon earth as he rejoices in heaven, as he foresees that so many souls of so many people heretofore lost are to be saved; and let us be glad not only for the exaltation of our faith, but also for the increase of temporal prosperity, in which not only Spain, but all Christendom is about to share.”¹⁵⁴ In his letters, Columbus addressed this “increase of temporal prosperity,” “...If I am supported by some little assistance from them, I will give them as much gold as they have need of, and, in addition spices, cotton, and mastic, which is found only in chios, and as much aloes-wood, and *as many heathen slaves as their majesty may choose to demand...*”¹⁵⁵ (italics mine)

From the very beginning of their explorations in the New World, the Spanish were driven by mixed motives.¹⁵⁶ In 1486, Pope Innocent IV granted the Bull of Grenada to Ferdinand and Isabella that spelled out the terms of the mission, “For the more precarious that freely embraced combat for the sake of immortal God, the greater their insistence on diligent and expert pressing of the contest and the better they realize that, beyond the salvation of their souls, the Apostolic See grants them the most abundant recompense.”¹⁵⁷ Ponce de Leon’s 1512 patent provided that any Indians

discovered in the Americas should be divided among his expedition that they should “derive whatever advantage might be secured thereby.”¹⁵⁸ Lucas Vasquez de Ayllon’s 1523 *cedula* authorized him to “purchase prisoners of war held as slaves held by the natives, to employ them on his farms and export them as he saw fit, without the payment of any duty whatsoever upon them.”¹⁵⁹

The first recorded contact between Cherokee and Europeans was with the Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto. When De Soto landed in Florida in 1539, he brought with him soldiers, chains, and iron collars for the acquisition and exportation of Indian slaves.¹⁶⁰ Hundreds of men, women and children were captured by de Soto and transported from the interior to the coasts for shipment to the Caribbean and to Spain.¹⁶¹ A Cherokee from Oklahoma remembered his father’s tale of the Spanish slave trade, “At an early state the Spanish engaged in the slave trade on this continent and in so doing kidnapped hundreds of thousands of the Indians from the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts to work their mines in the West Indies.”¹⁶²

The “old ways” of Cherokee society embraced a social and political system rooted in harmony, equality, and promotion of the common welfare. However, now the Cherokee faced a grave threat from Europeans who believed themselves both racially and religiously superior. Racism and religious intolerance were critical components in the European dispossession and enslavement of Native Americans in the colonial period.¹⁶³ Originating in the Aristotelian notion of “natural rights,” the sixteenth century concept of “white supremacy” was rooted in the classic traditions of philosophical idolatry.¹⁶⁴ As opposed to the ideals of “balance” and “reciprocity” central to the Cherokee worldview, Europeans posited hierarchy as the basic nature of humanity and the enslavement of the inferior as the result of that natural hierarchy, “Those, therefore, who are as much inferior to others as are the body to the soul and beasts to men, are by nature slaves. He is by nature born slave who...shares in reason to the extent of apprehending it without possessing it.”¹⁶⁵

In 1555, there was a disputation in Valladolid, Spain, to determine the disposition of the peoples of the New World. Juan Gines de Sepulveda—a theologian steeped in the tradition of John Major—debated Bartholomeo de las Casas—the anointed “champion of the Indians.” Sepulveda argued the superiority of the Spaniard to the indigenous people, “In wisdom, skill, virtue and humanity, these people are as inferior to the Spaniards as children are to adults and women to men; there is a great a difference between savagery and forebearance, between violence and moderation, almost—I am inclined to say—as between monkeys and men.”¹⁶⁶

Bartholomeo de Las Casas argued against this pernicious ideology, “They [the Indians] are not ignorant, inhuman, or bestial. Rather, long before they had heard the word Spaniard they had properly organized states, wisely ordered by excellent laws, religions, and customs. They cultivated friendship, and bound together in common fellowship, lived in populous

cities in which they wisely administered the affairs of both peace and war justly and equitably, truly governed by laws that at very many points surpass ours, and could have won the admiration of the sages of Athens.”¹⁶⁷ When the disputation was over, Las Casas had won the day in Valladolid. However, the moral argument of Las Casas was soon swept aside by a European continent facing a vast world with countless treasures, inhabited by a people who could, themselves, become a commodity in the open market.¹⁶⁸

What was originally the “black legend” of Spanish ethnocentrism and genocidal cruelty quickly became common practice as European political, economic, and religious competition fueled colonial expansion.¹⁶⁹ Though initially shocked by Sir John Hawkins’ first slavery venture in 1562–1563, Queen Elizabeth quickly changed her mind, “not only did she forgive him but she became a shareholder in his second slaving voyage.”¹⁷⁰ By the middle of the seventeenth century, the traffic in slaves from Europe, Africa, and the Americas had become a mainstay of the colonial economic enterprise. Behind the mercantile enterprise was the moral sanction of the pervasive ideology of conquest and colonialism, “The law of moral obligation sanctioned behavior on only one side of that chasm...the Christian Caucasians of Europe are not only holy and white but also *civilized*, while the pigmented heathens of distant lands are not only idolatrous and dark but *savage*. Thus the absolutes of predator and prey have been preserved, and the grandeur of invasion and massacre has kept its sanguinary radiance.”¹⁷¹

THE BIRTH OF A NATION

With the founding of Charleston in April 1670, the colony entered into the commercial slave exchange in a manner that was to establish the city as the center of the slave trade for two centuries.¹⁷² For the next hundred years, the Carolinians cited Indian “savagery” and “depredations” as justification for “Indian wars” against the Yamasee, the Tuscarora, the Westo and finally the Cherokee and the Mvskoke.¹⁷³ The term “Indian war” was quite simply a rhetorical exercise to cover not only the seizure of Native American land and wealth, but also the enslavement of the indigenous peoples of the Americas.¹⁷⁴

Indigenous peoples throughout the Southeast were played one against another in an orgy of slave dealing that decimated entire peoples. During the latter half of the seventeenth century, Carolina was more active than any other colony in the exportation of Indian slaves.¹⁷⁵ The Indian slave trade in the Carolinas, with Charleston as its center, rapidly took on all of the characteristics of the African slave trade. The Carolinians formed alliances with coastal native groups, armed them, and encouraged them to make war on weaker tribes deeper in the Carolina interior.¹⁷⁶

By the late years of the seventeenth century, caravans of Indian slaves made their way from the Carolina backcountry to forts on the coast just as caravans of African slaves were doing on the African continent. The trade in

Indian slaves became an essential element in the Carolina economy.¹⁷⁷ Once in Charleston, the captives were loaded on ships for the “middle passage” to the West Indies or other colonies such as New Amsterdam or New England.¹⁷⁸ Many of the Indian slaves were kept at home and worked on the plantations of South Carolina; by 1708, the number of Indian slaves in the Carolinas was nearly half that of African slaves.¹⁷⁹

These “Indian wars” took their toll on the indigenous peoples of the Carolinas. In three years of slaving operations against the Westo Indians, all but fifty of the Westo were reduced to slavery or killed.¹⁸⁰ The English and the Indian allies reached far out into the Spanish empire in the South; some 10,000 to 12,000 Timicuas, Guales, and Apalachees were taken to Charleston, sold into slavery, and shipped throughout the vast English empire. When the Savannah grew sick of their mercenary occupation and dissolved their trading partnership with the English, South Carolina Governor John Archdale cited the “Necessity of thinning the barbarous Indian Nations; and therefore since Cruelty is not the Instrument thereof, it pleases God to send, as I may say, an Assyrian Angel to do it himself.”¹⁸¹ By 1710, the Savannah had gone the way of the Westo.¹⁸²

When the Tuscarora Indians of North Carolina rebelled against being driven from their land, they were attacked by a force of thirty English settlers and five hundred Yamasee warriors led by Colonel John Barnwell. Even after King Hancock of the Tuscarora signed a treaty, Barnwell continued to enslave the Tuscarora; the Tuscarora considered this a breach of the treaty and reinitiated the war. In 1713, another group of settlers and one thousand Indian allies (including 200 Cherokee) led by Colonel James Moore routed the Tuscarora. Those who survived the battle were sold into slavery to finance the campaign.¹⁸³

In 1715, the Yamasee rebelled against the English after they had begun to seize Yamasee women and children for the slave market in payment of trade debts that the Indians had assumed. William Anews, missionary for the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, reported to his superiors that the English were “abusing the Indians with drink and then cheate them in Trading with them and Stealing Even their Children away and carry them off to other places and sell them for slaves.”¹⁸⁴ Governor Charles Craven organized the South Carolina militia and set out against the Yamasee. Another Anglican clergyman described what happened, “Many of the Yammonses and Creek Indians were against the war all along; But our Military Men are bent upon revenge, and so desirous to enrich themselves, by making all the Indians Slaves that fall into their hands.”¹⁸⁵ The Yamasee were almost exterminated; what survivors there were fled to Florida to live among the Spanish missionaries.¹⁸⁶

Soon, even the Cherokee would become an object of the slave trade. As early as 1681, a permit was issued for the export of two “Seraquii slaves” from Charleston.¹⁸⁷ By 1693, the situation had become so bad that the Cherokee sent a tribal delegation to the Royal Governor of South Carolina

to ask for protection from Congaree, Catawba, and Savannah slave-catchers.¹⁸⁸ In 1705, the Cherokee accused the colonial governor of granting “commissions” to slave-catchers to “set upon, assault, kill, destroy, and take captive” Cherokee citizens to be “sold into slavery for his and their profit.”¹⁸⁹ The Cherokee slave trade had become so serious that it eclipsed the trade for furs and skins and became the primary source of commerce between the English and the people of Southern Carolina.¹⁹⁰

In the early 1760s, the Cherokee Nation allied with the French against the British in the French and Indian War. They did so in exchange for protection from their traditional enemies, the Iroquois and the Mvskoke, as well as their newfound enemy, the British colonists. North Carolina, in its provision for raising troops against the Cherokee, offered to anyone who took captive “an enemy Indian” the right to hold them as a slave.¹⁹¹ The conflict lasted two years until an army of Carolina Rangers, British light infantry, and Royal Scots set out against the Cherokee. In applying a scorched earth policy against the Cherokee, they decimated the people, burning crops and towns as they moved west. The Cherokee finally agreed to a peace pact that ceded the largest portion of their hereditary land to the English and established a line of separation between whites and Cherokee.¹⁹²

THE BUILDING OF A NEW WORLD

With the arrival of twenty indentured Africans bearing Spanish surnames aboard a Dutch man-of-war in Virginia in 1619, the face of American slavery began to change from the “tawny” Indian to the “blackamoor” African.¹⁹³ Though the issue is complex, the unsuitability of the Native American for the labor-intensive agricultural practices, their susceptibility to European diseases, the proximity of avenues of escape for Native Americans, and the lucrative nature of the African slave trade led to a transition to an African-based institution of slavery.¹⁹⁴ In spite of a later tendency in the Southern United States to differentiate the African slave from the Indian, the institution of African slavery was in actuality imposed on top of a pre-existing system of Indian slavery.¹⁹⁵ In North America, the two never diverged as distinctive institutions.¹⁹⁶

During the transitional period from 1650 to 1750, Africans and Native Americans shared the common experience of enslavement.¹⁹⁷ In addition to working together in the fields, they often lived together in communal living quarters. They told stories of their homelands and the traditions that brought meaning to life. They revealed to each other the foods of the fields and forests that provided sustenance and the herbs and remedies that brought healing. This sharing of lives often led to marriage. The intermarriage of Africans and Native Americans was facilitated by the disproportionate numbers of African male slaves to females (two to one) and the decimation of Native American males by disease, enslavement, and prolonged war against the colonists.¹⁹⁸

During the intertribal wars encouraged by the English in order to produce slaves, women and children were the largest majority of those enslaved in accordance with historic patterns of warfare among Native Americans.¹⁹⁹ Therefore, Indians slaves in the early Southeast were disproportionately women; there were as many as three to five times more Native women than men enslaved.²⁰⁰ Slave owners often desired African men to work the fields paired with Native American women to help around the house. John Norris, a South Carolina planter estimated the costs of setting up a plantation:

Imprimis; Fifteen good Negro Men at 45 lb each	675 lb.
Item: Fifteen Indian Women to work in the Field at 18 lb each, comes to	270 lb.
Item, Three Indian Women as cooks for the Slaves and other Household Business	55 lb. ²⁰¹

J. Leitch Wright suggests that the presence of so many women slaves from the Southeastern Indian nations where matrilineal kinship was the norm helps to explain the prominent role of women in slave culture.²⁰²

As Native American societies in the Southeast were primarily matrilineal, African males who married Indian women often became members of the wife's clan and citizens of the respective nation. As relationships grew, the lines of racial distinction began to blur and the evolution of red-black people began to pursue its own course. Many of the people known as slaves, free people of color, Africans, or Indians were most often the product of integrating cultures.²⁰³ Some aspects of African American culture, including handicrafts, music, and folklore, may be of Indian rather than African in origin. The cultures of Africans and Natives often intertwined in complex ways in the early Southeast, and the emerging culture reflected the blending of these two peoples.²⁰⁴

As the Cherokee accepted African Americans from the very earliest points of contact, the European colonial powers feared an alliance between the mountain Indians and runaway blacks as existed in Jamaica and Haiti. On the eve of the Revolutionary War, Cherokee traditional leader Attakullakulla spoke of how within the Cherokee Nation, there was a house of cultural accommodation in which blacks had a room of their own.²⁰⁵ Among the people of the Chickamauga region of the Cherokee Nation and those who spoke the Kituwhan dialect, there was a particular "ethnic openness," and the people were "more receptive to racial diversity within their towns than the mainstream Cherokees."²⁰⁶ Within the Chickamauga region, there was the largest population of African Americans than in any portion of the nation; many of these were slaves who had been stolen in raids on American settlements.²⁰⁷

In areas such as Southeastern Virginia, the "Low Country" of the Carolinas, and near Savannah, Georgia, communities of Afro-Indians began to arise. The term "mustee" came to distinguish between those who shared

African and Native American ancestry from those who were European and African. Even after 1720, African and Indian Carolinians continued to share slave quarters and intimate lives; many wills continued to refer to “all my Slaves, whether Negroes, Indians, Mustees, Or Molattoes.”²⁰⁸ The depth and complexity of this intermixture was revealed in a 1740 slave code in South Carolina that ruled, “...all negroes and Indians, (free Indians in amity with this government, and negroes, mulattoes, and mustezoes, who are now free, excepted) mulattoes or mustezoes who are now, or shall hereafter be in this province, and all their issue and offspring...shall be and they are hereby declared to be, and remain hereafter absolute slaves.”²⁰⁹ Considering the historical circumstances, the relationships between Indians and persons of African descent was much more extensive and enduring than even perhaps most contemporary observers acknowledged.

In the latter part of the eighteenth century, white colonists began to recognize that in areas such as South Carolina and Georgia where Africans and Indians outnumbered whites three to one, a great need existed “to make Indians & Negro’s a checque upon each other least by their Vastly Superior Numbers, we should be crushed by one or the other.”²¹⁰ In 1775, British official John Stuart complained “nothing can be more alarming to the Carolinians then the idea of an attack from Indians and Negroes;” he further believed that “any intercourse between Indians and Negroes in my opinion ought to be prevented as much as possible.”²¹¹ William Willis, in his “Divide and Rule: Red, White, and Black in the Southeast,” believed that one of the main reasons that Indian slavery was curtailed in the colonies were white fears of an alliance between Native Americans and African immigrants.²¹²

The colonists’ fears were not without basis. Indians and Africans began to form alliances and African runaways followed traditional pathways to Native America.²¹³ Nearby maroon communities and renegades from the Spanish territory harassed isolated settlers; the threat of violence became real as slave revolts spread throughout the Carolina frontier.²¹⁴ Though the Stono Rebellion of 1739 is often described as a slave revolt, there is little doubt that many of those enslaved at Stono were Native Americans.²¹⁵ The very name Stono, itself, comes from a Native American people enslaved by the Carolinians in what was known as the “Stono War.”²¹⁶

A 1759 insurrection plot in South Carolina was of particular note. It was inspired by Philip Johns, a free mulatto, and coordinated among the Cherokee, the Mvskoke and local blacks. It seems that Johns was possessed by a particularly apocalyptic religious vision and had been energized by an enthusiastic Anglican clergy “of much learning but of an overheated imagination.”²¹⁷ Johns carried with him a peculiar note, which detailed the plans for the rebellion, “...a written paper and charged them to carry it to all Negroes and show it to them...[which said] that the 17th day of June was fixed upon for killing the Buckraas [whites], but afterwards told him that it was agreed to wait til the corn was turn’d down and the Indians were then to be sent to and they would come and assist in killing all Buckraas.”²¹⁸ In

1768, another revolt occurred near Charleston led by “a numerous collection of outcast mulattoes, mustees, and free negroes.”²¹⁹

Various mechanisms were developed throughout the colonies to drive a wedge between the imported African and the indigenous Americans. Thomas Jefferson articulated a difference between the two in his *Notes on the State of Virginia*, “[the Indian could] astonish you with strokes of the most sublime oratory; such as to prove their reason and sentiment strong, their imagination glowing and elevated,” but that “never yet could I find that a black had uttered a thought above the level of plain narration; never see even an elementary trait of painting or sculpture...[they are] inferior to the whites in the endowments both of body and mind.”²²⁰ South Carolina Governor James Glen believed that security depended upon creating hatred between these two peoples, as “it has always been the policy of this govert to creat an aversion in them [Indians] to Negroes.”²²¹ By 1721, most Native Americans were prohibited from entry into English settlements; within the next ten years, provisions were passed fining persons one hundred pounds for taking Africans into Native American territory.²²²

The colonies began to pass miscegenation laws that discouraged the union of people from different races. “Interracial sexual union” was prohibited in Massachusetts in 1705, North Carolina in 1715, South Carolina 1717, and Georgia in 1750.²²³ A law from North Carolina that attempted to prevent “that abominable mixture and spurious issue...by white men and women intermarrying with Indians, Negros, Mulattoes, or Mustees” provided that any white person who married “an Indian, Negro, mustee, or mulatto man or woman, or any person of mixed blood, to the third generation” would be fined fifty pounds.²²⁴ Slave codes began to distinguish among the peoples of different races. From North Carolina the curious language of “free persons of color” arose to define a whole class of people who lay on the periphery of the racial constructs of early America.²²⁵

The colonists began to use African slaves against “Indian uprisings” and Africans served extensively with the South Carolinians in their wars with the Yamasee, the Spanish in Florida, and the Cherokee.²²⁶ At the same time, Indians were used to quell slave revolts and the Carolinians offered bounties to Native Americans for catching and returning runaway slaves.²²⁷ The policy of fostering hatred among the races became an enduring element in the relationships among the varied peoples of the South. It was codified by the Virginia Supreme Court in 1814 when it made provisions related to the natural rights of white persons and Native Americans, “but entirely disapproving, thereof, so far as the same relates to native Africans and their descendants.”²²⁸

The Europeans brought with them a vision of America that distinctly contrasted with the “old ways” of the indigenous peoples. In the early stages of colonial history, many resisted the tendency to engage in the commerce of human commodity. The Cherokee consistently refused to negotiate contracts and treaties with whites that required them to return runaway slaves and

even when they did sign them, they seldom lived up to the agreement. A headman of the Cherokee while negotiating with the English stated his position: "This small rope we show you is all we have to bind our slaves with, and may be broken, but you have iron chains for yours; however if we catch your slaves, we shall bind them as we can, and deliver them to our friends again, and have no pay for it."²²⁹

Native Americans began to understand that there was, indeed, a profound chasm between themselves and the Europeans; increasingly, they came to understand this difference in terms of "race."²³⁰ They also soon discovered that the Europeans would use this understanding of self based on "race" to enforce a social hierarchy and enslave an entire population.²³¹ Being first themselves enslaved and then seeing others enslaved, the followers of the "old ways" came to understand the concept of "natural rights" as it extended to all people of color:

Your laws extend not into our country, nor ever did. You talk of the law of nature and the law of nations and they are both against you. Indeed, much has been advanced on what you term civilization among the Indians; and many proposals have been made to make us adopt your laws, your religion, your manners and your customs. But, we confess that we do not yet see the propriety, or practicability, of such a reformation, and should be better pleased with beholding the good effects of these doctrines in your own practices than with hearing you talk about them... The great God of Nature has placed us in different situations. It is true that he has endowed you with many superior advantages; but he has not created us to be your slaves.²³²

CHAPTER TWO

“Civilization” and Its Discontents

My mother had Indian in her. She would fight. She was the pet of the people. When she was out, the pateroles would whip her because she didn't have a pass. She has shored me scars that were on her even till the day that she died. She was whipped because she was out without a pass. She could have had a pass any time for the asking, but she was too proud to ask. She never wanted to do things by permission.¹

Joseph Samuel Badgett
Works Progress Administration
Arkansas Writers Project

THE FIRST AWAKENING

In the late 1760s a young black musician with a french horn tucked under his arm made his way to a performance in Charleston, S.C. As he passed by a large meetinghouse, there was a commotion because a “crazy man was halloing there.” The musician might have ignored the event, but his companion dared him to “blow the french horn among them” and disrupt the meeting. Hoping to have some fun, John Marrant lifted his horn to his lips. Suddenly, the “crazy man”—evangelist George Whitefield²—cast an eye upon him, pointed his finger, and uttered these words, “Prepare to Meet Thy God, O Israel!” Marrant was struck down for some thirty minutes and upon recovering, the esteemed Reverend Whitefield ministered to him for several days. On the third day, Marrant was “born again” and dedicated his life to the propagation of the gospel.³

He first witnessed to members of his family and when they rejected his newfound evangelical spirit, Marrant fled to the wilderness seeking solace among the beasts of the woods. He soon encountered a Cherokee deer hunter and they spent ten weeks together hunting deer by day and making brush arbors to provide sanctuary for themselves by night. Becoming fast friends by the end of the hunting season, the hunter and the missionary returned to the hunter's village. However, when he attempted to pass the outer guard at the Cherokee village, they seized him and placed him in prison.⁴ It was not Marrant's blackness that troubled the Cherokee; it was more likely his dressing in the manner of a European colonist that was the

source of his trouble. The Carolina frontier was, at this time, the scene of constant siege between colonists and Indians.

When threatened with death by the Cherokee king, Marrant witnessed to the Cherokee in their native tongue that he had learned from his companion, "I cried again, and He was entreated. He said, 'Be it as thou wilt;' the Lord appeared most lovely and glorious; the king himself was awakened, and the others set at liberty. A great change took place among the people; the King's house became God's house; the soldiers were ordered away; and the poor condemned prisoner had perfect liberty and was treated like a prince. Now the Lord made all my enemies become my great friends."⁵ The Cherokee King freed Marrant and granted him permission to evangelize among the Cherokee and he did so at great liberty for some nine weeks.

At the king's bidding and with some fifty Cherokee accompanying him, he later set out on a mission to the "less savingly wrought upon" people of the Southeastern region. He spent some months among the Mvskoke confederation. Marrant was, as Arthur Schomburg notes, "A Negro in America [like] the Jesuits of old, who spread the seed of Christianity among the American Indians before the birth of the American Republic."⁶ Some months later after returning from his mission to the Mvskoke, he returned to his family "in the Indian style." They mistook him for "a savage" and refused to recognize him.⁷ After repeated pleas, he was finally recognized and reunited with his family. Marrant returned to his place in colonial society.

Shortly after leaving the Cherokee, John Marrant settled upon another mission. Being a "free carpenter," he contracted to work on a plantation just outside of Charleston. As with the Cherokee, Marrant set about bringing to the slaves on the plantation the word of the holy gospel. However, the mistress of the plantations was less than pleased at Marrant's efforts. Being shocked to find her slaves at prayer, she told her husband to round up a posse and raid the prayer meeting. "As the poor creatures came out they caught them, and tied them together with cords," Marrant reported, "till the next morning, when all the caught, men, women, and children, were strip'd naked and tied, their feet to a stake, their hands to the arm of a tree, and so severely flogged that the blood ran from their backs and sides to the floor, to make them promise they would leave off praying."⁸ Marrant warned the slave owners "that the blood of these poor negroes that he had spilt that morning would be required by God at his hands."⁹

When the Revolutionary War began, Marrant became a "black loyalist" and joined the British navy; he lived in England for a short time following the war. On May 15, 1785, he was ordained to the Christian ministry under the patronage of the Countess of Huntingdon. Huntingdon was also the patron of George Whitfield, African American poet Phyllis Wheatley¹⁰ and Samson Occom, the "father" of modern Native American literature.¹¹ It was around this same time that Marrant also became a friend and follower of another Methodist minister by the name of Prince Hall.

Prince Hall, a former slave and "person of color" from Barbados, believed that all persons possessed "a natural and unalienable right to that freedom that the great Parent of the Universe hath bestowed equally on all mankind."¹² Toward that end, Hall petitioned the government of Massachusetts for the abolition of slavery in 1777.¹³ In 1782, Hall once again petitioned the Massachusetts legislature; this time he sought to establish an African colony that was to become the modern African state of Liberia. He later petitioned the legislature for the education of colored children and founded such a school in 1796. In the same year, he founded the African Benevolent Society to help "persons of color" to become worthy, self-supporting citizens.¹⁴ He was not only an ardent abolitionist, but he advocated full citizenship for blacks and equality before the law. He opposed all forms of racial or class discrimination and was insistent on the protection of his people from social insult and indignity.

However, it was the founding of another institution that was to be Prince Hall's most significant contribution. On March 6, 1775, Prince Hall and fourteen men of color were made members of Freemasonic Lodge #441 of the Irish Registry attached to the 38th British Foot Infantry stationed at Castle William Island in Boston Harbor, Massachusetts. This marked the first time that persons of African descent were made masons in what would become the United States of America. On July 3, 1776, an African lodge was formed with Prince Hall as the worshipful master and before long, this lodge received an additional "permit" to walk in procession on St. John's Day. On September 29, 1784, The Grand Lodge of England issued a charter to African Lodge #459 and it became the first lodge of Black Freemasons in the United States.¹⁵

Prince Hall Freemasonry is one of the fundamental independent institutions in the African-American community and served as the training ground for a host of African American leaders. Early members of Prince Hall Masonry were poet Jupiter Hammon and abolitionists James Forten and Prince Saunders, the latter being the Attorney General of Haiti.¹⁶ Richard Allen and Absalom Jones founded a mutual aid society dedicated to the promotion of racial solidarity and the abolition of slavery by the name of the Free African Society of Philadelphia in 1786.¹⁷ Richard Allen later founded the African Methodist Episcopal Church; Absalom Jones was ordained as minister of African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas in Philadelphia.¹⁸ Members of Free African Lodge #459 formed a part of the funeral procession of President George Washington, one of the most famous of Masonic presidents.¹⁹ The alliance between Prince Hall Freemasonry and African-American church life is a critical and often underexplored factor in the African American religious experience.²⁰

On the 24th day of June in the year 1789, African Lodge #459 held its annual St. John's Day celebration. John Marrant, the Chaplain of African Lodge #459, delivered the St. John's Day sermon to the assembled brethren. He beseeched them to "present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy,

acceptable to God...let love be without dissimulation, abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good. These and many other duties are required of us as christians, every one of which are like so many links of a chain.”²¹ Marrant told his audience that a black exodus to Africa and the restoration of a pure and covenanted black community to their Zion was also an element of God’s providential design. Marrant preached that this restoration would be as a benevolent overruling of the sins of the slave traders and slaveholders.²² Marrant spoke strongest against those that would “despise their fellow men, as tho’ they were not of the same species with themselves, and would in their power deprive them of the blessings and comforts of life which God in his bountiful goodness hath freely given to all his creatures to improve and enjoy. Surely such monsters never came out of the hand of God in such a forlorn condition.”²³

THE BEGINNINGS OF “CIVILIZATION”

John Marrant recorded the events of his mission to the Cherokee and published it as *A Narrative of the Life of John Marrant*. This “captivity narrative” became one of the most popular of this genre in the post-Revolutionary period, and provides a critical reflection on race and religion in colonial America.²⁴ Marrant’s missionary work among the Cherokee and his successes among them, as opposed to the “less savingly wrought upon” Indians farther in the interior, promoted the idea that the Cherokee offered a unique opportunity for missionary work. The colonists thus singled out Cherokee for “civilization” and “salvation” in a manner unlike any other indigenous people in the Americas; the costs of such a special place in the Americans’ hearts were to be quite dear for the Cherokee Nation.

At the same time, the fact that the Cherokee and several of their neighbors aligned themselves with the British during the Revolutionary War provided a different kind of impetus for an assault upon the Southeastern indigenous nations. Though there was often conflict with the Cherokee before the war, the effects of the frontier warfare upon the isolated settlers and settlements during the Revolutionary War were chilling. David Ramsey described the situation in his *History of South Carolina*, “An Indian war commenced, and was carried on with its usual barbarity. The massacres caused a general alarm. It was known that the Indians were excited by royal agents and aided by some of the Tories.”²⁵ The result of the Cherokee’s political alliance with the British was that when the war was over, the Cherokee paid a particularly high price for their perceived transgression: “the results of the war were to break the power of a major Southern tribe.”²⁶

With the settlement of hostilities following the Revolutionary War, the newly established federal government inaugurated its “program to promote civilization among the friendly Indian tribes.”²⁷ In a letter to George Washington, Secretary of War Henry Knox²⁸ put forward a plan for

“civilization” of the American Indians, “That the civilization of the Indians would be an operation of complicated difficulty; that it would require the highest knowledge of the human character, and a steady perseverance in a wise system for a series of years, cannot be doubted. Were it possible to introduce among the Indian tribes a love for exclusive property, it would be a happy commencement of the business.”²⁹

In order for the Cherokee to be “reduced to civilization,”³⁰ the “old ways” must die. A critical element in the “civilization” program would be the shift from the low-intensity agricultural collective that had been at the center of Cherokee society to the European model of an individually owned labor-intensive farm. It was the government’s belief that if the Indians adopted the concept of private property, it would be a great advance towards “civilization.” In addition, it would also free up millions of acres of property previously held collectively by the Southeastern Indians.

As mentioned earlier, Cherokee society at the time of European contact was dramatically different from that of the European. Like the Iroquoian society further north with respect to agricultural practices and gender-based roles within the society, the world was divided into the complimentary roles of forest and clearing. The former became the domain of men as hunters and warriors; the latter was the domain of women as providers and clan matrons.³¹ Cherokee society was matrilineal and matrilocal; women held the property, including the dwelling and the garden, and maintained the economic system rooted in the well-being of the collective. There were communal fields and clan gardens worked with a hoe and dibble stick; surplus grain and vegetables were stored in a communal reserve from which all could draw when needed and in private granaries. The Cherokee forsook the plow until the nineteenth century because they believed that it would lead to a technological unemployment and starvation for those unable to compete in a market economy.³²

However, by the end of the eighteenth century there were dramatic changes in Cherokee culture and society. Beginning with the deer trade and evolving into the slave trade, commerce had become an increasingly important element in Cherokee society. As men were responsible for hunting and warfare, the trade in pelts and slaves became a dominant element and consumer items produced by Europeans became a critical factor in the Cherokee economy. When conflict with the Europeans escalated, warfare and diplomacy became increasingly more important and Europeans granted status to those “leaders” whom they thought to be the “chiefs” of the Cherokee. Increasingly, the Cherokee “leadership” moved away from the “old ways” and began to adopt European patterns of governmental and legal systems.³³ European leaders were men who only valued the social roles of other men; thus, they equated the traditional culture of the Cherokee as indicative of savagery.³⁴ Of this “savagery” the Cherokee must be redeemed.

At this time in American history, most people believed that the conquered nations of the Southeast had little choice but to give up the vast tracts of

lands they claimed to possess and settle for the security of small farms and an agrarian lifestyle. The federal government under Henry Knox initiated a policy designed to make farmers of the former “woodsmen” and acculturate them into white society.³⁵ The Treaty of Holston, signed July 2, 1791, stated, “That the Cherokee nation may be led to a greater degree of civilization, and to become herdsman and cultivators, instead of remaining in a state of hunters, the United States will, from time to time, furnish gratuitously the said nation with the implements of husbandry.”³⁶ However, this dramatic shift in the culture of the peoples of the Southeast could not be accommodated without first altering the social, political, and religious structures of traditional societies. Toward this end, the missionaries of the Christian churches would prove quite effective.³⁷

From the very beginning of United States’ policy toward the Indians, missionaries—often acting as government agents—were to play a critical role in the civilization/christianization of the Southeastern Indian peoples and especially the Cherokee.³⁸ The Indian policy of George Washington stated, “missionaries of excellent moral character should be appointed to reside in their nation who should be well supplied with all the implements of husbandry and the necessary stock for a farm.”³⁹ It went further: “It is particularly important that something of this nature should be attempted with the Southern nations of Indians, whose confined situation might render them proper subjects for the experiment.”⁴⁰ Thomas Jefferson increased the investment of the federal government in Indian “civilization,” believing that farmers could become good Christians, while hunters were “unfavorable to the regular exercise of some duties essential to the Christian character.”⁴¹ Jefferson believed that the Cherokee could be made to “enter on a regular life of agriculture, familiarize them with the practice and value of the arts, attach them to property, lead them, of necessity, and without delay, to the establishment of laws and government, and thus make a great and important advance towards assimilating their condition to ours.”⁴²

The missionaries and government agents, believing that a stable plantation society promoted both a self-sustaining church and orderly civil government, introduced European agricultural practices to the Indians by giving plows, livestock, and gristmills to the men and cloth and spinning tools to the women. For some of the Cherokee who had been slaves on colonial plantations and introduced to European agricultural methods through this practice, the transition was not difficult.⁴³ The missionaries also provided agricultural instruction to the men and homemaking skills to the women; the children were encouraged and educated by the missionaries to assume gender roles complementary to white society.⁴⁴

Cherokee society, having already undergone significant changes because of contact with European colonists, was dramatically altered during this period by the increase in intermarriage with whites. Many Cherokee men took white wives and the matrilineal nature of Cherokee society began to be undermined. Missionaries and government agents asserted that a dominant

part of the civilization program should be a shift from the "old ways" that centered upon matrilineal ties of kinship. In 1808, the Cherokee National Council passed a law that gave "protection to children as heirs of the father's property."⁴⁵ By 1825, the Cherokee passed another law that granted rights "as equal" to the children of white mothers as that of Cherokee mothers.⁴⁶ This shift in the nature and makeup of Cherokee society was also being reflected in its political leadership; many Cherokee of mixed blood rose to prominence in Cherokee affairs. One by one, the "old ways" were being supplanted.⁴⁷

With the establishment of the first model farms and missions among the Five Nations of the Southeastern United States, a key element in the "civilization" process was the use of African slaves as laborers in the building and operation of these structures and institutions.⁴⁸ At this point, the missionaries took no position on the issue of the use of African slaves. They saw the issue of slavery as a political question and not one to which they were bound to respond religiously. As the missionaries were quick to point out, it was not their fault, "Some have supposed that it had its origin among the Cherokees no farther back than the Revolutionary War; when a large number of Tories, holding slaves, fled from the Southern States, and took refuge among this people... And it is not unlikely that the evil began with white men, who settled in the nation, and married Cherokee women."⁴⁹

With the founding of the American Board for Foreign and Christian Missions in 1810, Henry Knox's vision from a generation earlier attained the instrument to achieve its goals under the auspices of James Madison's "Civilization Fund." In 1817, the American Board sent Cyrus Kingsbury to begin a system of missions among the Cherokee. With the encouragement of a young Cherokee named John Ross and a Tennessee friend of the Cherokee by the name of General Andrew Jackson,⁵⁰ he was able to secure permission from the Cherokee Council and built the Brainerd Mission in Tennessee and the Eliot Mission in Georgia. The American Board established the Brainerd Mission near Chickamauga on land acquired from a former Tory; it featured a model farm to teach the Indian boys husbandry and the Indian girls domestic manufactures.⁵¹

In 1818, Andrew Jackson pondered the "Indian question" and concluded that one of two things must be done with the Indians, "either that those sons of the forest should be moralized or exterminated. Humanity would rejoice at the former, but shrink with horror from the latter."⁵² He decided that "civilization" was their only hope and that it would "put into their children the primer and the hoe, and they will naturally, in time, take hold of the plow; and, as their minds become enlightened and expand, the Bible will be their book, and they will grow in habits of morality and industry, leave the chase to those whose minds are less cultivated, and become useful members of society."⁵³

With the help of the churches, Jackson's plan came slowly to fruition. By 1820, the missions among the Five Nations were among the most successful in

the country. Conversions were numerous and the federal government considered the Cherokee Nation, itself, a most fertile ground for civilization: "the Cherokees, we think, are fast advancing towards civilized life. They generally manifest an ardent desire for literary and religious instruction."⁵⁴ Many members of prominent Cherokee families, such as the Ridges, the Boudinots, and the Waties, were educated in Protestant missions. The missionaries sent some of the better scholars to boarding school in Cornwall, Connecticut.⁵⁵

Farms grew into plantations and buildings grew into towns. As the program of civilization pursued its goals, the institution of chattel slavery spread. Individuals who held positions of power and land began to grow wealthy and to buy black slaves to extend their fields and tend to their livestock.⁵⁶ Intermarriage among the natives and the whites who served among them continued to increase. The marriages of John Ridge and Elias Boudinot to white women at the Cornwall mission created great controversy among whites and seriously affected the missionary effort.⁵⁷ This intermarriage radically affected Cherokee matrilineality and communalism; it first introduced real economic inequality into Cherokee society.⁵⁸

Progressive natives who spoke English began to adopt the social and cultural patterns of the missionaries and white farmers that surrounded them.⁵⁹ Gradually, the Cherokee Nation developed a landed elite and a small group of large farm owners, shopkeepers, and entrepreneurs formed a bourgeois element that became dominant in national affairs. It was among this group of the rich and powerful, the acculturated peoples of the Five Nations, that slavery became most accepted.⁶⁰ In a letter to the Bureau of Indian Affairs in 1826, Cherokee John Ridge noted, "the Africans are mostly held by half breeds & full blooded Indians of [distinguished] talents. The valuable portion of property is retained in this class [and their farms are conducted in the same style with southern white farmers of equal ability in point of property]."⁶¹ While only one-fifth of the Cherokee claimed European ancestry in 1835, over three-quarters of the Cherokee slaveholders did.⁶²

The missionaries did not, themselves, own slaves except "with a view towards emancipation" and only used slaves rented or borrowed from Native American slave owners. However, they were reticent to preach against the evil of slavery among its practitioners in the Five Nations because they often considered these persons as their most successful converts.⁶³ Conversely, the missionaries were not averse to preaching to the African slaves who were among their most eager and willing converts, and often translated the gospel to the Cherokee.⁶⁴ In order to accommodate slavery, some of the missionaries began to teach a new message concerning the origins of humanity that began to influence Cherokee mythology. A new creation myth arose among the Cherokee that spoke of a common origin for humanity but a specific curse upon the black race that ordained "that the negro must work for the red and white man, and it has been so ever since."⁶⁵

Most missionaries believed that the most important goal was to first convert the heathen and then attempt to deal with the "sin" of slavery.⁶⁶

Many of their most ardent supporters were slave owners and they and the local government agents would oppose them should they choose to espouse the cause of abolition. In fact, some government agents attributed the progress made by the "Five Civilized Tribes" to the growth of the practice of slavery among them.⁶⁷ George Butler, federal agent stated it quite clearly, "I am clearly of the opinion that the rapid advancement of the Cherokees is owing in part to the fact of their being slave holders."⁶⁸

In addition, the missionaries' governing boards did not want to jeopardize contributions from wealthy persons who disliked abolition.⁶⁹ Selah B. Treat appealed to the American Board for Foreign and Christian Missions to understand the southern predicament in his annual report, "In defence of their policy in this respect, past and present, they make their appeal, first of all, to the Bible, as showing the only condition of church membership. This, they say, is evidence of a change of heart; and when such evidence is furnished, there is no law for excluding the candidate from the privileges of Christ's house. They also say, that the adoption of a different rule in regard to slaveholders would have been fatal to the prosperity of the mission."⁷⁰ The missionaries established a basic position of neutrality and, as the Bible did not explicitly condemn slavery, they accepted all to their communion who gave evidence on profession of faith.

RELIGION AND RESISTANCE

In the early part of the nineteenth century, several dynamic phenomena drew many of the missionaries away from their positions of neutrality and cast the "Five Civilized Tribes" into a crisis that would have devastating effects upon them for the next hundred years. The first was a decisive split that occurred within the nations as to those who pursued the path of acculturation—commonly referred to as "progressives"—and those who clung to traditional religious, social, and political values—the "conservatives."⁷¹ Especially in the light of a pan-Indian religious awakening inspired by Tenskwatawa and his brother Tecumseh, a Freemason,⁷² that spread among the nations in the East in the early nineteenth century, many of the conservative members of the Southeastern nations rebelled against acculturation by reasserting the "old ways."⁷³ This left little room for colonial institutions, including slavery, among large populations of the conservative members of the Southeastern Indians who resisted plantation agriculture and mercantile capitalism.⁷⁴

Another important phenomenon was a growing African presence within the traditional communities of the Five Nations. From the earliest periods of the institution of slavery to well into the nineteenth century, African slaves fled slavery and repression along the same routes that their native forebears had used in earlier times.⁷⁵ As Ohio Congressman Joshua Giddings⁷⁶ described it some one hundred years later, it was rite of passage, "The efforts of the Carolinians to enslave the Indians, brought with them the natural and

appropriate penalties. The Indians began to make their escape from slavery to the Indian Country. Their example was soon followed by the African Slaves, who also fled to the Indian Country, and, in order to secure themselves from pursuit continued their journey.”⁷⁷ Because of intermarriage between Africans and Indians during their collective enslavement, many indigenous escapees would return to their former plantations to free their spouses and children still held in captivity. Michael Roethler, in his essay *Negro Slavery Among the Cherokee Indians 1540–1866*, states that the Cherokee considered it “just retribution” that those who had been enslaved helped others to flee their persecutors in the Carolinas.⁷⁸

The Mvskoke, and especially the Seminoles (a corruption of the Spanish word *cimarron* meaning “wild”⁷⁹) of Florida, accepted these runaways and incorporated them into their nations because the African Americans were well skilled in languages, agriculture, technical skills, and warfare.⁸⁰ Just as the “underground railroad” provided freedom in the North in later years, this Underground Railroad ran south to “freedom on the border.”⁸¹ The Mvskoke and the Seminole granted the Africans great freedom, even though they referred to them as “slaves.”⁸² The blacks lived set apart to themselves, managing their own stocks and crops and paid only tributes to their “owners.” The Africans could own property, moved about with freedom, and allowed to arm themselves.⁸³ According to contemporary sources, the Seminole “would almost sooner sell his child as his slave,”⁸⁴ and that “there exists a law among Seminoles, forbidding individuals from selling their negroes to white people.”⁸⁵

This opposition to enslavement ran deep in Mvskoke and Seminole culture. According to Jean Chaudhuri, “The root of the love is compassion, because the spirit of Hasagedemesse, the breath-giver, is everywhere. Race, ethnicity, or gender, cannot block the path of the universal energy. The exchange of energy is life—the blockage of energy is death.... The opposition to bondage and any form of slavery provided one of the reasons for clashes with white society. From the full-blood Creek and Seminole stand-point, the enslavement of blacks was wrong, and so full-blood Creeks and Seminoles often provided safe havens to runaway black slaves. The traditional Creek and Seminole views on slavery arose from their feelings for all human beings. In short, both the inclusiveness of Creek values and the corollary of human freedom provided the core of the Creek full-blood attitude towards blacks.”⁸⁶

The Africans were more than just the laborers and technicians for the Mvskoke and Seminole; they became their diplomats, their warriors, and even their religious leaders. A prophetic Christianity spread among African Americans, witnessed by Francis LeJau as early as 1710, prompting him to question whether “Negroes and Indians shou’d indifferently be admitted to learn to read.”⁸⁷ In these areas, as in many areas throughout the South, the Indians were continually exposed to an apocalyptic religious tradition that promoted resistance to white oppression. On the frontier, there were constant rumblings of insurrections by blacks and Indians coming up from Florida to

attack planters and to rescue enslaved Africans.⁸⁸ In his work *Sacred Revolt*, Joel Martin posits that African-american prophetic Christianity may have contributed to the emergence of the “Redstick” movement among the Mvskoke in the early nineteenth century, “for at the heart of African American Christianity was a spiritually inspired critical view of Anglo-American civilization.”⁸⁹ However, it is equally likely that Indian spiritual resistance influenced African-american religious consciousness; having “indian blood” meant something in the enslaved society.⁹⁰

Throughout the Southeastern United States, there existed independent Afro-Indian communities led by African and mixed-blood religio/political leaders such as Asi Yahola (Osceola), Black Factor, Luis Pacheco, Mulatto King, and Chief Wildcat.⁹¹ Kenneth Wiggins Porter described the importance of these Africans among the Seminole in Florida, “But not only were there chiefs of mixed Indian and Negro Blood among the Seminoles, and free negroes acting as principal counselors and war-captains, but...the position of the very slaves was so influential that the Seminole nation might present to students of political science an interesting and perhaps almost unique example of a very close approach to a doulocracy, or government by slaves.”⁹²

The presence of such refuges and spiritual centers so close to colonial plantations, especially in the light of slave rebellions in Haiti and the American, proved to be a great threat to the institution of slavery.⁹³ General Andrew Jackson, believing that the Afro-Indian settlements in Florida were established by “villains for the purpose of rapine and phmder,”⁹⁴ attempted to destroy them in the First and Second Creek Wars and the First Seminole War. Congressman Joshua Giddings noted there was but one effort in Jackson’s wars: “the bloody Seminole War of 1816–17 and –18 arose from the efforts of our government to sustain the interests of slavery, or that our troops were employed to murder women and children because their ancestors had once been held bondage, and to seize and carry back to toil and suffering those who had escaped death.”⁹⁵

It is important to note at this point that Aframerindians were not just religious leaders among the “exile” communities of Mvskoke and Seminole; the same also existed within the more “civilized” nations of the Cherokee, Choctaw, and Chickasaw. Many of the early records of the missionaries note that among their first converts to Christianity were the enslaved African Americans that existed within Native American communities.⁹⁶ Among the most successful of the early missions to the South was that of Reverend Samuel Thomas of Goose Creek Parish of South Carolina, whose twenty black interpreters helped him with his church of nearly one thousand communicants.⁹⁷

Records from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in South Carolina repeatedly mention the membership of its early missions and churches as being equally mixed with “negro and indian slaves.” The records also state that the S.P.G. had no qualms about baptizing “the heathen slaves also (Indians and negroes).”⁹⁸ However, many of their owners did have some

problems with that idea, “If the masters were but good Christians themselves and would concur with the Ministers, we should have good hopes of the conversion and salvation at least of some of their Negro and Indian slaves. But too many of them rather oppose than concur with us and are angry with us.”⁹⁹

Even as late as 1818, the missionaries referred to their “Sabbath schools” as “our Black Schools” because of the presence of Africans as both students and teachers.¹⁰⁰ As few missionaries spoke the native languages, the Africans played intermediary roles as teachers and (of necessity) preachers.¹⁰¹ Many of the earliest black ministers in the missions of the Baptist Church were former river-cult priests sold into slavery in great numbers;¹⁰² the river-cult and ritual bathing were also important components in traditional Cherokee religion.¹⁰³ According to early missionary Daniel Buttrick, as many African Americans as Native Americans attended the worship services of the American Board.¹⁰⁴ One of the most fascinating accounts of the African presence in the early Native American church comes from Cornelia Pelham, an 1821 visitor to a mission in the Chickasaw Nation:

About two thirds of the members of the church are of African descent; these mostly understand English; and on that account are more accessible than the Chickasaws. The black people manifest the most ardent desire for religious instruction, and often travel a great many miles to obtain it. Two or three years ago, a black man who belonged to the mission church, opened his little cabin for prayer, on the evening of every Wednesday, which was usually attended by half a dozen colored persons. This spring, the number suddenly increased, till more than fifty assembled at once, many of whom were full Indians. The meetings, were conducted wholly by Christian slaves, in the Chickasaw language.¹⁰⁵

In August 1818, the missionaries at the Brainerd Mission of Chickamauga discovered a Cherokee among those seeking admission who was “able to spell correctly in words of 4 & 5 letters. He had been taught solely by black people who had received their instruction in our Sunday School.”¹⁰⁶

Within the cultural nexus of this integrated community, a unique synthesis grew in which African and Native American people shared a common religious experience.¹⁰⁷ Not only did Africans share with Native Americans, the process of sharing cultural traditions went both ways. From the slave narratives, we learn of the role that Native American religious traditions played in African American society:

Dat busk was justa little busk. Dey wasn’t enough men around to have a good one. But I seen lots of big ones. Ones where dey all had de different kinds of “banga.” Dey call all de dances some kind of banga. De chicken dance is de “Tolosabanga”, and de Istifanibanga is de one whar dey make lak dey is skeletons and raw heads coming to git you. De

“Hadjobanga” is de crazy dance, and dat is a funny one. Dey all dance crazy and make up funny songs to go wid de dance. Everybody think up funny songs to sing and everybody whoop and laugh all de time.¹⁰⁸

When I wuz a boy, dere wuz lotsa Indians livin’ about six miles from the plantation on which I wuz a slave. De Indians allus held a big dance ever’ few months, an’ all de niggers would try to attend.... As soon as it gets dark, we quietly slips outen de quarters, one by one, so as not to disturb de guards. Arrivin at de dance, we jined in the festivities wid a will.¹⁰⁹

Slaves “mixed and mingled and danced together” with the Indians. The indigenous people of the Five Nations welcomed new dances including those from their African counterparts.¹¹⁰ Sacred bonds of blood and metaphysical kinship came to exist between the two peoples and a “history written in the hearts of our people” became manifest.¹¹¹

Native Americans also played roles in the development of the African churches through supporting the “invisible institution.” The “hush harbors” or brush arbors, which were hastily constructed “churches” made of a leanto of tree limbs and branches, had long been a prominent part of the South-eastern traditional religion. Native Americans supported the invisible institution: “Master Frank wasn’t no Christian but he would help build brush arbors fer us to have church under and we sho would have big meetings I’ll tell you.”¹¹² The brush arbor architecture that became a critical part of the “camp-meetings” of the religious revivals of the Second Great Awakening was borrowed from the architecture of the “stomp ground” of South-eastern traditional religious practices.¹¹³

These brush arbors grew into churches. The first “Negro Baptist Church” was established at a site known as “Galphintown” near Silver Bluff, South Carolina on the banks of the Savannah River. This place was, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, a center for trade with the Five Nations.¹¹⁴ George Galphin, the owner of the settlement, was a gregarious Irishman who had at least four wives, including Metawney, the daughter of a Creek headman, and two Africans, the “Negro Sappho” and the “Negro Mina.”¹¹⁵ The area around the “Negro Baptist Church” was a region in the eighteenth century where the three races converged; members of Galphin’s family were patrons of the Negro Baptist Church at Silver Bluff.¹¹⁶ Jesse (Peter) Galphin was one of the founders of the Silver Bluff Baptist Church and revived the church following the Revolutionary War.¹¹⁷

Naturalist William Bartram visited Silver Bluff on several occasions and stayed with his friend and supporter George Galphin. He described Silver Bluff, “Silver Bluff is a very celebrated place; [one can] discover various monuments and vestiges of the residence of the ancients, as Indian conical mounds, terraces, areas, &c. as well as remains or traces of fortresses of regular formation, as if constructed after the modes of European military

architects, and are supposed to be ancient camps of the Spaniards who formerly fixed themselves at this place in hopes of finding silver.”¹¹⁸ James Mooney was also familiar with the town and traced its roots back to the Cofitachiqui, a branch of the Yuchi Nation of the Mvskoke Confederation, “The town was probably the ancient capital of the Uchee Indians, who, before their absorption by the Creeks, held or claimed most of the territory on both banks of the Savannah river from the Cherokee border to within about forty miles of Savannah and westward to the Ogeechee and Cannouchee rivers. The country was already on the decline in 1540 from a recent fatal epidemic, but was yet populous and wealthy, and was ruled by a woman chief whose authority extended for a considerable distance.”¹¹⁹

In their study entitled *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence Mamiya studied the history of the black church in the United States. In their work, they made the following notation, “The oldest church in the study was the Silver Bluff Baptist Church of Beech Island, South Carolina, which on its cornerstone claimed a founding date of 1750. It is generally regarded as the first known black church.”¹²⁰ In his work entitled *Slave Religion: The “Invisible Institution” in the Antebellum South*, Albert Raboteau makes the following assertion: “The distinction of being the first separate black church in the South (and North), however, belonged to the Baptist church founded between 1773 and 1775 in Silver Bluff, S.C. across the Savannah River from Georgia. The importance of the Silver Bluff Church lies not only in its chronological priority but in its role as mother church of several far-flung Baptist missions.”¹²¹

A slave by the name of David George organized and pastored Silver Bluff Baptist Church after he inherited a small congregation from an itinerant white Baptist preacher by the name of (Wait) Palmer.¹²² The members of this congregation were eight slaves of George Galphin converted and baptized by Palmer at Galphin’s mill; these were David George, George’s wife, Jesse Galphin and five other slaves. David George and Jesse Galphin were encouraged to assume the pastoral leadership of the tiny slave congregation by George Liele, a slave of Henry Sharpe, a deacon at the Buckhead Creek Church. Henry Sharpe freed Liele to preach and the Buckhead Creek Church ordained him in accord with the practice of Baptists to invest congregations with such power.¹²³

David George, older than George Liele, had befriended Liele as a child when both were slaves in Essex County, Virginia.¹²⁴ David George’s parents were born in Africa and enslaved by a master whose brutality was such that George fled the plantation and began traveling throughout the South. Mechal Sobel, in her *Trabelin on: the Slave Journey to an Afro-Baptist Faith*, describes what happened next, “Extraordinary adventures took him to the Creek and ‘Nautchee’ Indian peoples, where he was a well-treated chattel servant. He eventually became the possession of George Galphin, a ‘very kind’ man who owned a plantation and trading station at Silver Bluff,

South Carolina, some twelve miles from Augusta Georgia.”¹²⁵ In the years leading up to the Revolutionary War, George Liele and David George preached to the congregation at Silver Bluff Baptist Church “till the church ...increased to thirty or more, and till the British came to the city of Savannah and took it.”¹²⁶

Not far away from the Silver Bluff Baptist Church lies one of the oldest Freemasonic lodges in the country. In 1734, Governor James Oglethorpe was made the first Grand Master of Savannah’s Solomon Lodge #1.¹²⁷ In his second tour of the colonies in 1739, evangelist George Whitefield spoke before the assembled brotherhood of Solomon Lodge #1.¹²⁸ Whitefield and the brothers from the lodge funded and founded the Bethesda Orphanage, the oldest continually running social service institution in the United States, just across the river from Savannah.¹²⁹ George Whitefield and Brother John Habersham of Solomon’s Lodge #1 also succeeded in getting the trustees of the colony of Georgia to pass a law demanding humane treatment of slaves.¹³⁰

When the British did seize Savannah in 1778 and then shortly afterward Galphin’s trading post, George Galphin and his family fled the area to escape the military turmoil.¹³¹ Around Savannah, the high number of loyalists resulted in what some described as a “civil war.”¹³² In 1779, French Admiral D’Estaing sailed from Haiti to Savannah with several battalions of black and mulatto troops in an effort to break up the British siege of Savannah. These troops, numbering at least six hundred included among their ranks many leaders of Haiti’s fight for freedom.¹³³ Civil war historians in both Georgia and Haiti assert that Toussaint L’Ouverture was among these soldiers.¹³⁴

Fleeing the conflict, Jesse Galphin left Silver Bluff for Augusta where he and some forty-eight other members of the Silver Bluff Baptist Church formed First African Baptist Church.¹³⁵ Among the first ministers of the First African Baptist Church of Savannah was a former slave by the name of Henry Francis, a minister ordained by the Silver Bluff Baptist Church. Though a slave and considered a “black pastor” of the Third African Baptist Church, Henry Francis had no known African ancestry. Andrew Bryan, pioneer Black Baptist, spoke of the importance of Henry Francis to his church:

Henry Francis, lately a slave to the widow of the late Colonel Leroy Hammond, of Augusta, has been purchased by a few humane gentlemen of this place, and liberated to exercise the handsome ministerial gifts he possesses amongst us, and teach our youth to read and write. He is a strong man about forty-nine years of age, whose mother was white and whose father was an Indian. His wife and only son are slaves. Brother Francis has been in the ministry fifteen years, and will soon receive ordination, and will probably become the pastor of a branch of my large church...it will take the rank and title of the 3rd Baptist Church of Savannah.¹³⁶

It is apparent that a “close neighborly feeling”¹³⁷ existed between the indigenous peoples of the South and the persons of African descent within their midst. Even as slave owners, Indians were particularly noted for their kindness and refusal to implement even their own national laws with respect to slavery; some aspects of the “old ways” persisted into this new era.¹³⁸ According to one Southern visitor to the nation, “The Indian masters treated their slaves with great liberality and upon terms approaching perfect equality, with the exception that the owner of the slave generally does more work than the slave himself.”¹³⁹ Daniel Buttrick, a Congregational missionary among the Cherokee, noted, “I am of the opinion that they are treated with more attention than many, if not most of the domestics, in Northern cities.”¹⁴⁰ Even among the nations, the slaves noted the differences, “We all live around on them little farms, and we didn’t have to be under any overseer like the Cherokee Negroes had lots of times. We didn’t have to work if there wasn’t no work to do... Old Chief (Rolley MacIntosh) treated all the Negroes like they was just hired hands, and I was a big girl before I knowed very much about belonging to him.”¹⁴¹

Within the Cherokee Nation, there was also great variation; New Thompson noted that among the Cherokee, “the only negroes that have to work hard were the ones who belonged to the half-breeds. As the Indian didn’t do work he didn’t expect his slaves to do much work.”¹⁴² Within the conservative elements of the Five Nations, more than just a “close neighborly feeling” existed. Cudjo, the slave of Chief Yonaguska¹⁴³ of North Carolina, described their relationship: “He never allowed himself to be called ‘master,’ for he said Cudjo was his brother, and not his slave.”¹⁴⁴

In 1821, the Baptist missionary Evan Jones settled among the conservative Cherokee in the mountainous “Valley Towns” region near the Hiwassee River in western North Carolina.¹⁴⁵ Coming originally from Wales, Jones and his family’s first home in America was near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, but they lived there only a short while before they set out upon their mission to the Cherokee in the rugged North Carolina mountains. According to historian William McLoughlin, “Jones and his whole family volunteered. He never explained why. No doubt he was caught up in the general spirit of the movement that included many others from his church.... The decision would cost Jones the lives of his wife and four of his children in the years ahead.”¹⁴⁶

Among these conservative Cherokee, the “old ways” were very strong. Out of Jones’s congregations came a new breed of Cherokee ministers such as Jesse Bushyhead, John Timson, and Kaneeda (John Wickliffe).¹⁴⁷ These native Baptist ministers, fluent in Cherokee, fused the evangelical zeal of Baptist preaching, its musical inspiration, and its camp meetings with traditional methods of oratory, song, and worship to create a prophetic ministry similar to that which existed within the “invisible institution.” They preached to a poorer class of Cherokee society who owned little property and poorly adapted to the “dominant culture.”¹⁴⁸ There were great affinities

between the Baptist mission to the traditionalist Cherokee and that to the transplanted African. In spite of the fact that there were few persons of African descent in the mountains of North Carolina, the churches were composed of mixed congregations.¹⁴⁹ In focusing their ministry upon the “mountain Indians, who are ignorant, and but slightly progressed in moral and intellectual improvement”¹⁵⁰ the missionary work of Evan Jones was to play a critical role in the history of the Cherokee Nation.

That is not to say that his task was an easy one. Evan Jones consistently notes in his journals the resistance he encountered among the “conjurers.” The “conjurers” told the people that the Europeans sent the Bible among them to lead them astray from the old religion. They collected up Jones’s prayer books and hymnals and returned them to the mission. At times, they even threatened bodily harm to Jones. One elder introduced a bill before the Cherokee Council to stop Evan Jones from preaching against the “old ways.” However, an interesting thing happened. As time went on, an aged *adonisgi* took Jones under his wing and they discussed the “old ways” at length and the “theological” differences between Cherokee traditional religion and the Baptist faith. Soon, the *adonisgi* even allowed Jones to witness Cherokee traditional rituals. Eventually, Jones’s position towards the “old ways” seemed to soften.¹⁵¹

The mountains of the Carolinas and Tennessee were settled by a breed of people different from those lowlanders who built large plantations and adopted the institutions of slavery. Many of the frontiersmen were descendants of indentured servitude and had little affection for slavery; others were dissenters from Europe, fleeing persecution, who held strong ties to freedom, equality, and democratic institutions. The highlanders resented their aristocratic brethren from the tidewater areas and saw them as bent upon establishing a political system as oppressive as the ones they had left in Europe. They saw slavery as the main cause of their trouble, and in the early Southern frontier there was more prejudice against the slaveholder than against the slave.¹⁵²

Among the Baptists of the highlands, an “Emancipating Baptist” movement began in Kentucky in the early nineteenth century and spread throughout the mountains in the years from 1817–1830. Baptist evangelical David Barrow led the movement and he linked the emerging nineteenth century abolitionism with the revolutionary rhetoric of the eighteenth century struggle for freedom.¹⁵³ The movement maintained that there was to be no fellowship with slaveholders, but it never became an organization because of the peculiar nature of Baptist polity.¹⁵⁴ Among the more devout Calvinists of the Scotch-Irish stock, the anti-slavery element tried to prohibit slavery from the State constitution of Kentucky. As the movement spread, its followers were physically assaulted and they were threatened with imprisonment under the Alien and Sedition Laws.¹⁵⁵ David Barrow was expelled from the North District Baptist Association of Kentucky in 1806 for his antislavery activity.

However, Barrow's influence lived on under the guise of Quaker abolitionist Benjamin Lundy, founder of The Manumission Society of Tennessee.¹⁵⁶ Lundy belonged to the American Convention of Abolition Society and a young abolitionist by the name of William Lloyd Garrison coedited Lundy's abolitionist newspaper, *The Genius of Universal Emancipation*. Garrison later split with Lundy and moved to Boston to found his own newspaper, *The Liberator*.¹⁵⁷ It was the followers of Lundy and Garrison along with other highlander abolitionists that established the "Under-ground Railroad" running through the Appalachian highlands from the Deep South into Pennsylvania.¹⁵⁸

To the east of the Cherokee lay a large population of Quakers who helped found the North Carolina Manumission Society. The Society had over forty branches, including several associations of women, extending into some of the most populous regions in the state.¹⁵⁹ The society denounced the slave trade, purchased slaves for manumission, and enacted a principle that upon reaching a certain age all persons should be declared free.¹⁶⁰ Between 1824–1826, nearly two thousand slaves were manumitted in North Carolina; however, as North Carolina law restricted manumission, there was a gradual movement towards colonization.¹⁶¹ In 1830, the society published *An Address to the People of North Carolina on the Evils of Slavery* stating that slavery "is contrary to the plain and simple maxims of the Christian Revelation, or religion of Christ."¹⁶²

In the late 1820s, the abolitionist movement spread to the Cherokee Nation in the mountains of North Carolina. The Cherokee American Colonization Society was formed in 1828 as an auxiliary of the African Colonization Society.¹⁶³ Reverend David Brown, a Cherokee preacher, spoke for many Cherokee in 1825 when he said, "There are some Africans among us ... they are generally well treated and they much prefer living in the nation as a residence in the United States... The presumption is that the Cherokees will, at no distant date, cooperate with the humane efforts of those who are liberating and sending this prescribed race to the land of their fathers."¹⁶⁴

Ironically, at about this same time, there was a different kind of colonization movement sweeping through the land. Henry Schoolcraft, in a chapter entitled "Plan of Colonization West of the Mississippi," made the following observation regarding "colonization" of the Indians from the American Southeast, "Two diverse states of society, it is observed, cannot prosperously exist together; the stronger type must inevitably absorb or destroy the weaker."¹⁶⁵ "Colonization" of the Cherokee, or "removal" as it would later be called, was not a new idea; it had its precedent in the mind of Thomas Jefferson who appropriated fifteen thousand dollars for such efforts even as early as 1803.¹⁶⁶ "Colonization" and "removal" would become inextricably linked within abolitionist rhetoric over the next fifty years.¹⁶⁷

There is little doubt that the conservative Cherokee among Evan Jones's missions were exposed to abolitionist rhetoric subsequent to removal. They had refused to lease mission lands to slaveholders. There is also little doubt

that for these conservatives, the abolitionist message rang true both within the “old ways” of Cherokee traditional religion and within the affirmation of the Baptist faith. For whatever reasons, the number of slaves among the Cherokee in North Carolina in 1835 was less than a tenth in number of any surrounding state.¹⁶⁸ Among the conservatives of the Cherokee Nation, an older notion of what it meant to be a member Cherokee was reasserting itself; it was one that was clearly in conflict with the developing concept of white supremacy.

A LAND OF THEIR OWN

In 1827, the “leaders” of the Cherokee people took their final steps towards “civilization” with the establishment of a constitution, a bicameral legislature, and a judicial system.¹⁶⁹ In their “first” electoral process, they elected John Ross as principal chief.¹⁷⁰ The Cherokee Constitution, however, was shaped by the progressives and displayed their interests in pursuing the course of civilization based upon the economic, social, and political institutions of the dominant culture. The Cherokee Constitution delineating what it meant to be a Cherokee in the following terms:

No person shall be eligible to a seat in the General Council but a free Cherokee male citizen who shall have attained to the age of twenty-five years; the descendants of Cherokee men by all free women except [of] the African race, whose parents may be or have been living together as man and wife according to the customs and laws of this nation, shall be entitled to all the rights and privileges of this nation as well as the posterity of Cherokee women by all free men. No person who is of negro or mullatage parentage, either by the father or mother’s side shall be eligible to hold any office of profit, honor, or trust under this government.¹⁷¹

In a powerful strike against the “old ways” of Cherokee culture, the General Council, dominated by the progressive Cherokee, disenfranchised both women and blacks in the Cherokee Nation.¹⁷² In so doing, they set into motion forces among the traditionalists that would profoundly affect Cherokee history for the next hundred years.¹⁷³ The progressive Cherokee had finally gotten out from under a “government of petticoats,”¹⁷⁴ yet little did they realize the implications of what they had done.¹⁷⁵ In a symbolic gesture of resistance, the famed and beloved Nancy Ward resigned as advisor to the Cherokee Council and “thus renounced her high office as Beloved Woman.”¹⁷⁶

The following year, the people of the United States elected noted Indian fighter and slaveholder Andrew Jackson to the presidency of the United States. In his first message to Congress, he set forth his “benevolent policy” for “the removal of the Indians:” “The consequences of a speedy removal will be important to the United States, to individual States, and to the

Indians themselves. The pecuniary advantages which it Promises to the Govern ment are the least of its recommendations... It will separate the Indians from immediate contact with settlements of whites; free them from the power of the States; enable them to pursue happiness in their own way and under their own rude institutions; will retard the progress of decay, which is lessening their numbers, and perhaps cause them gradually, under the protection of the Government and through the influence of good counsels, to cast off their savage habits and become an interesting, civilized, and Christian community.”¹⁷⁷

Eleven days after Jackson’s message to Congress, the state of Georgia (bolstered by “their man in the White House”) nullified all Cherokee laws, prohibited the Cherokee government from meeting, and ordered the arrest of anyone opposing emigration westward.¹⁷⁸ The Cherokee were eloquent in their struggle against removal and they believed that having made significant progress towards “civilization,” they would be spared removal.¹⁷⁹ However, when Chief Justice John Marshall and the Supreme Court of the United States sided with the Cherokee Nation, President Andrew Jackson is reported to have responded to the actions of brother Marshall thusly, “John Marshall has rendered his decision; now let him enforce it.”¹⁸⁰

In the minds of most of the people of the United States and especially among those inhabitants of the Southeast, the issues of slavery and removal were indissolubly linked.¹⁸¹ Among the reasons for removal of the Mvskoke and the Seminole was the presence of “another class” of citizens of those nations—the African Americans who posed a significant threat to the whites and opportunity for runaway slaves.¹⁸² Moreover, the presence of missionaries who seemed not only to be preaching a message of equality, but also manifesting one in their missions, was a tremendous threat to the institution of chattel slavery.¹⁸³ Indicative of the nature of the problem was the attitude of missionary Sophia Sawyer, who, when asked in 1832 by the Georgia Guard to remove to African boys from her classroom replied, “...until the Supreme Court of the United States declares the Cherokee Nation to be a part of the State of Georgia I will obey Cherokee laws, which are just laws, not Georgia laws.”¹⁸⁴

Sophie Sawyer’s position was symbolic of a greater resistance.¹⁸⁵ Opposition to removal of the Indians was a potent force among those religious bodies working with the Indians for so many years.¹⁸⁶ An organized opposition to removal began among women’s groups in towns and communities across the nation; women who were not empowered politically became empowered socially and an unprecedented national women’s petition drive against Indian removal was initiated. Many future leaders of the abolitionist movement such as Angelina Grimke, Theodore Weld, Arthur Tappan, Catharine Beecher, Benjamin Lundy, and William Lloyd Garrison cut their political teeth in the antiremoval debate. It was the irony of opposing Indian colonization and yet calling for African colonization that led to the development of the “immediatist” movement among American

abolitionists. In the first issue of Garrison’s *The Liberator*, the path to the slave auction block was littered with copies of trampled Indian treaties, “from the Indian to the Negro, the transition was easy and natural...the suffering of the Negro flowed from the same bitter fountain.”¹⁸⁷

The relationship between slavery and removal was neither lost upon the Cherokee though their understanding of the situation was propelled by a different focus. Sawyer reported that, following a sermon by Evan Jones in one of his churches on “If Providence does not favor a nation, it cannot prosper,” a discussion ensued regarding what sins could have turned God’s face away from the Cherokee Nation. “God cannot be pleased with slavery,” said one of the Cherokees. There followed “some discussion respecting the expediency of setting slaves at liberty.” When one of those present noted that freeing the slaves might cause more harm than good, a Native Baptist preacher replied, “I never heard tell of any hurt coming from doing right.”¹⁸⁸

In 1835, a movement to free the African slaves in the Cherokee Nation was put into motion by several “influential men” of the nation; they arranged to emancipate slaves and receive them as Cherokee citizens. The following December, the progressive “Treaty Party” Cherokee signed the Treaty of New Echota, relinquishing all lands east of the Mississippi and agreeing to migrate to the Cherokee lands beyond the Mississippi.¹⁸⁹ According to missionary Elizur Butler, the Treaty of New Echota prevented the abolition of slavery within the Cherokee Nation. Though the signers of this treaty were ultimately punished for treason, the impact of this treaty upon the Cherokee Nation would be enduring.¹⁹⁰

On the eve of the forced displacement of the Five Nations, the African-American presence among the Cherokees was estimated at approximately ten to fifteen percent of the Nation.¹⁹¹ Taking into account that free blacks and maroons of outlying communities were seldom counted and the strong presence of Africans among the Mvskoke and Seminole, we can assume the number to be much higher. Tales were used to support the emigration of the Five Nations, “they told em they was hogs runnin’ around already barbecued with a knife and fork in their back. Told em cotton grewed so tall you had to put little chaps up the stalk to get the top bolls.”¹⁹² In spite of this enticement, the people were reluctant to leave their ancestral homelands.

In the spring of 1838, the forced removal of the Cherokee people began. An African American member of the community described the process:

The weeks that followed General Scott’s order to remove the Cherokees were filled with horror and suffering for the unfortunate Cherokees and their slaves. The women and children were driven from their homes, sometimes with blows and close on the heels of the retreating Indians came greedy whites to pillage the Indian’s homes, drive off their cattle, horses, and pigs, and they even rifled the graves for any jewelry, or other ornaments that might have been buried with the dead. The Cherokees, after having been driven from their homes, were divided into detachments of nearly equal size and late in October, 1838,

the first detachment started, the others following one by one. The aged, sick and young children rode in the wagons, which carried provisions and bedding, while others went on foot. The trip was made in the dead of winter and many died from exposure from sleet and snow, and all who lived to make this trip, or had parents who made it, will long remember it, as a bitter memory.¹⁹³

A Cherokee woman described the process in almost similar terms:

The soldiers gathered them up, all up, and put them in camps. They hunted them and ran them down until they got all of them. Even before they were loaded in wagons, many of them got sick and died. They were all grief stricken they lost all on earth they had. White men even robbed their dead's graves to get their jewelry and other little trinkets. They saw to stay was impossible and Cherokees told Gen. Scott they would go without further trouble and the long journey started. They did not all come at once. First one batch and then another. The sick, old, and babies rode on the grub and household wagons. The rest rode a horse, if they had one. Most of them walked. Many of them died along the way. They buried them where they died, in unmarked graves. It was a bitter dose and lingered in the mind of Mrs. Watts' Grandparents and parents until death took them. The road they traveled, history calls the "Trail of Tears." This trail was more than tears. It was death, sorrow, hunger, exposure, and humiliation to a civilized people as were the Cherokees.¹⁹⁴

Resistance among the Cherokee was high; many were bound before being brought out.¹⁹⁵ Others never knew what hit them:

Families at dinner were startled by the sudden gleam of bayonets in the doorway and rose up to be driven with blows or oaths along the weary miles of trail that led to the stockade. Men were seized from their fields or going along the road, women were taken from their wheels and children from their play. In many cases, on turning for last look as they crossed the ridge, they saw their home in flames fired by the lawless rabble that followed on the heels of the soldiers. So keen were these outlaws on the scent that in some instances they were driving off the cattle and other stock almost before the soldiers had fairly started their owners in the other direction. The same men made systematic hunts for Indian graves to rob them of the silver pendants and other valuables deposited with the dead. A Georgia volunteer, afterward a colonel in the Confederate service said: "I fought through the Civil War and have seen men shot to pieces and slaughtered by thousands, but the Cherokee removal was the cruelest work I ever knew."¹⁹⁶

In July 1838, Evan Jones wrote to his Board on the state of his parishioners, "The overthrow of the Cherokee Nation is completed. The Cherokee population are made prisoners. The work of war in time of peace, was commenced in the Georgia part of the Nation, and was executed in most

cases in an unfeeling and brutal manner."¹⁹⁷ All of the members of the Cherokee Nation were rounded up into "concentration camps"¹⁹⁸ where they were kept as "pigs in a sty."¹⁹⁹ Starvation and disease were so rampant among those forcibly rounded up that missionary Daniel Buttrick commented, "We are almost becoming familiar with death."²⁰⁰ A month later, he was to say that the government might more mercifully have put to death everyone under a year or over sixty; rather it had chosen "a most expensive and painful way of exterminating these poor people."²⁰¹

The "Trail Where We Cried" fell hardest upon those least able to withstand the forced march from their ancestral homelands to the Indian Territory in the dead of winter into Indian Territory.²⁰² Contemporary newspapers reported a "peaceful and deathless trek of the Cherokees,"²⁰³ but missionary Elizur Butler estimated that over 4,600 died on that nine-month march. Estimates that are more recent put the number of deaths at nearly 8,000, people who died as a more or less direct result of the Cherokee Trail of Tears.²⁰⁴ A soldier who was forced to accompany the Cherokee could not believe his eyes, "Murder is murder and somebody must answer. Somebody must explain the streams of blood that flowed in the Indian Country in the Summer of 1838. Somebody must explain the four thousand silent graves that mark the trail of the Cherokee in their exile."²⁰⁵

Among the Mvskoke and Seminole where Africans played prominent roles in their society, the question of removal was deadly serious.²⁰⁶ The Africans knew that they were considered the property of men from whom they, or their ancestors, had fled, that the burden of proof lay upon them, and that their surrender to the United States government meant they would become the property of whoever claimed them.²⁰⁷ In 1836, the United States government, seeking to remove the Mvskoke and their relatives from their homelands in the Deep South, initiated simultaneous assaults upon the Mvskoke and Seminole. The process was not completed until some ten years later with the commitment of nearly forty thousand troops, forty million dollars, and fifteen hundred soldiers' lives later. The removal of the Creek, Seminole, and their African counterparts was the costliest war in American history until the Civil War.

Let us make no mistake about the nature of this endeavor. As General Jessup, the leader of the campaign, stated in 1836, "This, you may be assured, is a negro, not an Indian war: and if it be not speedily put down, the South will feel the effects of it on their slave population before the end of the next season."²⁰⁸ Joshua Giddings saw the war in a similar light; the Second Seminole War "on our part had not been commenced for the attainment of any high or noble purpose Our national influence and military power had been put forth to reenslave our fellow men: to transform immortal beings into chattels; and to make them to property of slave holders; to oppose the rights of human nature; and the legitimate fruits of this policy were gathered in a plentiful harvest of crime, bloodshed, and individual suffering."²⁰⁹

The war was finally brought to a conclusion and the people began the long trek to a distant homeland. As they were proceeding west upon the trail watered by their own tears and sanctified by the many gravestones of their children and elders, many of the Mvskoke Indians began to sing the spiritual "We are going home."²¹⁰ The words "We are going home to our homes and land; there is one who is above and ever watches over us" rang true to those nurtured in a Christian religion birthed in the cauldron of oppression. It also rang true to those traditionalists among the Mvskoke who believed that they had emerged from caves in the West and come east to settle in the Southeast.²¹¹

African Americans blazed the Cherokee route to the Indian Territory: "my grandparents were helped and protected by very faithful Negro slaves who ...went ahead of the wagons and killed any wild beast who came along."²¹² In spite of the fact that they were given the responsibility to guard with "axes and guns" the caravans at night, few of the slaves made their escape. However, what for the Cherokee became known as "the Trail Where We Cried" was for the Africans an exodus.²¹³ Large numbers of slaves and free Africans fled with the Cherokee and the Mvskoke to Indian Territory; they realized that as rough as life on the trail could be, there could be no life for them in what was once their adopted homeland. By the outbreak of the Civil War, the African American population within the Cherokee Nation would amount to about twenty percent of the Nation.²¹⁴

The missionaries were with the Cherokee through the struggle in the homelands, the concentration camps, and the agony of the journey; they were also with many of the Cherokee at their deaths. A revival swept through the camps.²¹⁵ Evan Jones described this new mission, "They never relaxed from their evangelical labors, but preached constantly in the fort. They had church meetings, received ten members, and one Sabbath, June 17, by permission of the officer in command, went down to the river and baptized them (five males and females). They were guarded to the river and back. Some whites present affirm it to have been the most solemn and impressive religious service they ever witnessed."²¹⁶

The ministers Evan Jones, Jesse Bushyhead, and Stephen Foreman of the American Board led contingencies heading west; the records of the Trail of Tears show that along the way the churches themselves were allowed to congregate and express their faith.²¹⁷ Reverend Jesse Bushyhead expressed his thanks that they were able "to continue, amidst the toil and sufferings of the journey, their accustomed religious services;"²¹⁸ he described worship amidst the travail, "There were 66 members of the church in the Baptist connection in the detachment. Out of this number, we selected two brethren to keep up regular worship during our travel; to wit Tsusuwala, and Foster, who has lately joined the Baptist Church, quite an active and useful man On the 3rd of February, three members were received by the church, and were baptized, and on the 10th, we collected together, in the midst of our camps, and surrounded the Lord's table. The brethren and sisters apparently enjoyed

the presence of God. Several came forward for prayer. In the many deaths which have taken place on the road, several of the members of the church were called from time to eternity, and some evidently died in the full triumph of faith.”²¹⁹

We can rest assured that whenever faces gathered around the campfire, there were African faces in the firelight. When there were dances to celebrate, lost children to mourn, or seasons passing to be marked, there were Africans present. When songs of praise were carried forth on wings to heaven, they were surely borne by black angels. Lastly, we must never forget that on the “trail where we cried,” there were also African tears.

CHAPTER THREE

The Birth and Growth of the Keetoowah Society

In the long run, it was the slavery issue that brought a new ethnic identity of the full-blood majority to organizational unity—a unity in which the traditionalists and Christians shared a common definition of who was a true Cherokee and what those qualities were that should unify the Nation and inform its policies. When that time came, after 1855, the organizational strength and experience of the Northern Baptist Christians and the leadership abilities and charisma of the native Baptist preachers provided the guidance for the full-blood effort to drive the mixed bloods from their influential role in Cherokee affairs. Only then was it clear how powerful the revitalization of Cherokee religious life had become.¹

William Gerald McLoughlin, *The Cherokees and Christianity, 1794–1870: Essays on Acculturation and Cultural Persistence*

INDIAN PIONEERS

Once the Cherokee were in the “Indian Territory” of Oklahoma, the dissension that had led up to the removal of the nation continued with a vengeance. When Major Ridge, leader of the “Treaty Party,” signed the Treaty of New Echota on December 29, 1835, he said, “I may yet die some day by the hand of some poor infatuated Indian, deluded by the counsels of Ross and his minions:... I am resigned to my fate, whatever it may be.”² Less than six months after the arrival of the anti-removal Cherokee in Indian Territory, Ridge’s prophecy came true. Elias Boudinot, Major Ridge, and his son John Ridge were ambushed by parties of armed Cherokee and executed for their participation in what was considered an act of treason.³

Following these killings, a factional dispute ripped through the Cherokee Nation, with the killings on both sides being so great as to bring the nation to the brink of civil war.⁴ Chaney Richardson, an ex-slave from the Cherokee Nation, described the Cherokee “troubles” during this period:

My master and all the rest of the folks was Cherokees, and they’d been killing each other off in the feud ever since long before I was borned, and

jest because old Master have a big farm and three-four families of Negroes them other Cherokees keep on pestering his stuff all the time. Us children was always afear'd to go any place less'n some of the grown folks was along. We didn't know what we was afear'd of, but we heard the Master and Mistress keep talking 'bout "another Party Killing" and we stick pretty close to the place... When I was about 10 years old that feud got so bad the Indians was always talking about getting their horses and cattle killed and their slaves harmed. I was too little to know how bad it was until one morning my own mammy went off somewhere down the road to git some stuff to dye cloth and she didnt come back.⁵

So great was the lawlessness and so weak the ability of government officials to stop the killings that a reign of terror arose and the ancient law of blood vengeance returned to the land. John Candy, in a letter to Stand Watie, reported that, "Murders in the country have been so frequent until the people care as little about hearing these things as they would hear of the death of a common dog."⁶ In July of 1846, Sarah Watie wrote to her husband of the desperateness of the situation, "I am so perfectly sick of the world... Many times have I retired to myself and wept in bitterness of my heart over my troubles but it does not lessen them any. I don't think only that my best earthly friends have left me to self but I fear God himself has said let her alone; she is joined to her idol."⁷

Though the dispute was largely between the progressives and the conservatives, the factionalism also broke down quite evenly among those "ardent and enterprising" Cherokee who owned ninety percent of the nation's slaves and those "ignorant and but slightly progressed in moral and intellectual improvement"⁸ who owned but few, if any, slaves.⁹ At the center of much of the "troubles" was a notorious gang by the name of the "Starr Boys" who spread a reign of terror throughout the Cherokee Nation. The "Starr Boys" targeted not only enemies associated with the Ross Party, but also engaged in frequent slave stealing and the random murder of African-American members of the Cherokee Nation.¹⁰ In the years 1845–1846, there were at least thirty-four politically related murders carried out within the Cherokee Nation.¹¹

As the post-removal "troubles" swept the Cherokee Nation, another problem asserted itself among the slave-owning population. In 1842, there was a major slave uprising within the Canadian District of the Cherokee Nation. The slaves of several large plantations fled their masters, joined with fugitives from the Mvskoke Nation, and attempted to reach a settlement of free blacks in Texas.¹² The cause of the problem was perceived to be "missionaries from Boston and other abolition centers [who] were devoting far more effort to inculcate among the slaves the doctrine of freedom than that of salvation."¹³ The Cherokee Council sent John Drew and a hundred Cherokee horsemen to capture and return the slaves. When the Cherokee horsemen caught up with them, the desperate and starving slaves were reportedly glad to see them; the militiamen cared for them "liberally" and

returned them to their masters without punishment.¹⁴ Because of this attempt, the Cherokee Council passed a fugitive slave act that severely punished anyone found guilty of aiding or participating in a slave escape.¹⁵

A few years later, another group of Cherokee slaves fled their masters and sought refuge among a group of Afro-Indians from the Mvskoke Nation and Seminole Nation led by Chief Wildcat. Chief Wildcat, the Negro Abraham, Luis Pacheco, and their band of renegades attempted to flee through Texas in order to form a free community just across the Rio Grande in Mexico.¹⁶ A posse of slave owners from the Indian Territory surrounded the Cherokee slaves and captured most of them before they reached Wildcat and his band. Many of the fugitive slaves from the Cherokee Nation escaped capture and settled among the Seminole and Upper Creek who were historically receptive to runaway slaves.

In 1846, due to the outstanding leadership of Cherokee Chief John Ross, the factional disputes were tempered to the point where a sense of placidity emerged within the nation. To the amazement of all, former enemies John Ross and Stand Watie shook hands at the signing of the Treaty of 1846. They pledged themselves to peace, harmony, and the general welfare of the reunited Cherokee Nation. In the period of prosperity following the Treaty of 1846, the Cherokee Nation began to reclaim its lost status and struggled to remove itself from the cruel legacy of forced displacement.¹⁷ As many were meeting with success and making great strides in education, political, and social autonomy, the gap between the rich and the poor began to widen and the economic chasm reflected the cultural one. As this split widened, it laid the foundations for the coming struggle over the issue of slavery.

A PECULIAR INSTITUTION

As the Five Nations were facing removal from the East to the Indian Territory, another peculiar institution arose within the populace and began to spread even more rapidly upon arrival in the Indian Territory. J.Fred Latham describes this particular phenomenon in *The Story of Oklahoma Masonry*:

A number of the Indian Chiefs and other leaders had received their Masonic degrees in Washington, D.C., while there on official business. They, with the officers and enlisted men in the Army taking them to Indian Territory were members of the Craft. Seemingly this was the first time that any considerable number of Masons were domiciled in this area.... The history of the Indian Territory, and indeed that of Freemasonry in the present state of Oklahoma, is so closely interwoven with that of the Five Civilized Tribes it would be difficult—almost impossible—and entirely undesirable to attempt to separate them.¹⁸

The rapid spread of Freemasonry within the Indian Territory was a relatively novel phenomenon, but the outreach of the Masonic brotherhood to the

leadership of the Indian nations was as old as the country itself. When English settlers first arrived upon the shores of the New World, the philosophy and practices of Freemasonry were already a part of their cultural baggage.¹⁹ The appeal of Freemasonry in England, and its swift spread across the European continent following the establishment of the first Masonic Grand Lodge in 1717, appeared to stem from the harmony between the Masonic ideals of wisdom, strength, and beauty and the newer currents of religious and political thought of the Enlightenment.²⁰

The first authorized lodge in America, St John's Lodge #126, was organized at the Bunch of Grapes Tavern in Boston in 1733. By 1776, there were nearly one hundred lodges in the United States;²¹ by 1800, there were Grand Lodges in all of the thirteen states.²² Many of the founding fathers of the United States were Freemasons including John Hancock, Benjamin Franklin, and George Washington. Many of the historic documents of the United States were influenced by Masonic principles; thirteen of the signatories of the Constitution of the United States were also Freemasons.²³ Freemasonry not only spread among the American colonies, but also in Jamaica (1739), Barbados (1740), Haiti (1749), and throughout the Caribbean and Latin America.²⁴ By the beginning of the nineteenth century, Freemasonry was the most numerous non-denominational organization in the United States.²⁵

As reflected in the above speech of John Marrant before African Lodge #459, nationalism was a critical part of Freemasonry. A Freemason is bound to honor and respect the highest ideals of political sovereignty. One of the "Old Charges" states, "A Mason is a peaceable subject to the Civil Powers, wherever he resides or works, and is never to be concerned in Plots and Conspiracies against the peace and welfare of the Nation."²⁶ The relationship between Freemasonry and nationalism is universal. Augusto Sandino of Nicaragua, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Simon Bolivar of Venezuela, Jose Marti of Cuba, Emilio Zapata and Pancho Villa of Mexico, Winston Churchill of Great Britain, and Giuseppe Mazzini of Italy were all prominent nationalists who happened to be Freemasons.

Freemasonry is often understood as a "secret society," but it is better seen as a fraternal order. It is organized around selective membership, private rituals and ceremonies, and secret oaths and obligations.²⁷ The seemingly "exclusive" and "secretive" nature of Masonry irritates some non-Masons who particularly dislike the exclusivity of the organization and are suspect of the goals of this "secret society."²⁸ With respect to the public perception of these issues, Freemasons respond, "The essential qualification for admission into and continuing membership is a belief in a Supreme Being. Membership is open to men of any race or religion who can fulfill this essential qualification and are of good repute...The secrets of Freemasonry are concerned with its traditional modes of recognition. It is not a secret society, since all members are free to acknowledge their membership and will do so in response to inquiries for respectable reasons."²⁹

When John Marrant stated that Masons should “present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God...let love be without dissimulation, abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good,” he was articulating one of the central tenets of Freemasonry. The close associations of Masonic and Judeo-Christian traditions of morality lead some to see Freemasonry as a religion and although Masonry is religious, it is not a religion. It admits to membership men of all religious faiths; without attempting to make men perfect, it does seek to attain the greatest practical good.³⁰ It is not confined to persons of one religion, for “good men are found in many religions; only by circumstance of birth are persons under the auspices of a particular religion.”³¹

A fundamental part of Freemasonry is its system of ethics; key to this system are the “three great principles,” “Brotherly Love, Relief (charity), and Truth (ethical conduct).”³² Within the “Old Charges” of Freemasonry, the dedication to these principles is unyielding; they form the core of Masonic beliefs and are among the main reasons that persons choose to be associated with the craft. In 1734, an early predecessor of Marrant spoke in similar terms of his charges, “It is true that on this side of the grave absolute perfection is hardly to be Expected, yes. Encouraged by such a multitude of good Examples, Charg’d with so many solemn Charges, and Engag’d by such Strong and Enduring obligation, Strive, I beseech you, to persevere in the Constant practice of every virtue.”³³

Masonry spread so rapidly in the early nineteenth century that it was perceived to be a threat to the political and religious order of the United States. By the middle of the nineteenth century, there were nearly 60,000 Freemasons, many of whom held places in the highest positions of political authority. The fact that what many consider an American apostasy—Joseph Smith’s Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints—was closely affiliated with Freemasonry further contributed to the growing suspicion of Freemasonry.³⁴ The 1826 furor over the disappearance of one William Morgan, accused of revealing Masonic “secrets,” and subsequent stalling by New York political officials solidified anti-Masonic hysteria and led to the birth of the Anti-Masonic party.³⁵ In spite of this controversy, the organization grew exponentially and membership tripled to nearly 200,000 brothers in the years immediately preceding the Civil War.³⁶

Notwithstanding statements of fraternal love, there was one group of people to whom the bonds of brotherhood seldom applied. From the very beginnings of Black Freemasonry with African Lodge #459 in Boston in 1775, white Freemasons have largely refused to accept African-Americans into their lodges. In addition, they refused to grant recognition to Prince Hall Freemasonry as being legitimate and equal in standing with white Freemasonry despite the fact that African Lodge #459 was chartered by the Grand Lodge of England.

Freemasonic historian Albert Mackey ruled that African Lodge #459 was chartered legitimately, but that later jurisdictional problems and a period of

dormancy during the Revolutionary War rendered the lodge “clandestine.”³⁷ When asked about the issue of Negro Freemasons, Albert Pike declared in 1875, “Prince Hall Lodge was as regular as any lodge created by competent authority and had a perfect right to establish other lodges, and make itself a mother lodge. I am not inclined to meddle in this matter. I took my obligation to white men, not Negroes. When I have to accept Negroes as brothers or leave Masonry, I shall leave it.”³⁸ The fascinating struggle for the recognition of Prince Hall by American Freemasons parallels the larger struggle for civil rights that has occurred within the political and social systems within the United States. It is a struggle that continues to this very day.³⁹

Curiously enough, the discrimination that was shown by Freemasons towards African-Americans was not made for Native Americans. Even before their removal to Indian Territory, Indians were initiated into the craft throughout the country. Wherever there were colonists, there were lodges. Among the earliest lodges in the South were in Charleston at Saint Paul’s Parish between Goose Creek and the Stono River. Governor George Oglethorpe formed a lodge in Savannah, Georgia as early as 1736.⁴⁰ North Carolina had its first lodge in 1754 under the auspices of the Grand Lodge of England and in 1706, the North Carolina Grand Lodge chartered a lodge in Nashville, Tennessee.⁴¹ By the time of the removal of the Five Nations to the Indian Territory, there were Grand Lodges in every state in which the Southeastern Indians resided.⁴² The progress of “civilization” among Indians and their initiation into Freemasonry were intimately connected from the latter eighteenth century forward.

Many Native American leaders in the eighteenth and nineteenth century were Freemasons. The Shawnee prophet Tecumseh, who led a religiously charged pan-Indian militant movement in the early nineteenth century, “was made a Mason while on a visit to Philadelphia.” In his *A Spirited Resistance*, Gregory Dowd makes the following assertion, “Two names dominate Native American history in the 1780s and 1790s: Alexander McGillivray of the Creeks and Joseph Brant of the Mohawks.”⁴³ Both of these men were Freemasons. Brant was reportedly America’s first Indian Freemason when he was raised by the English Grand Lodge. Red Jacket, famous orator of the Seneca and leader of the traditionalist resistance among the Iroquois, was a Freemason. His nephew, General Ely S. Parker, was General U.S. Grant’s Adjutant and drew up the conditions of surrender at Appomattox. Pushmataha, a Choctaw leader who encouraged friendship with the whites and resisted Tecumseh, was also a Freemason.⁴⁴

Then, there is William Augustus Bowles. Bowles was born in Maryland in 1763 and joined the British forces at the age of thirteen. When he was fifteen, he fled the British Army and went to live among the African/Mvskoke/Seminole people of Southern Florida. He became the war leader of a Five Nation Confederacy entitled “the nation of Muscogee” and engaged in military struggles against the Floridians. Fleeing pursuit once again, he fled to the Bahamas in 1786 where he sought initiation into the Freemasonic

order for a second time (the first time was in Philadelphia in 1783); this time he was admitted. Bowles returned to the United States and in 1790, he and several Beloved Men (including the Cherokee Going Snake and the Mvskoke Tuskeniah, an associate of Tecumseh) went to England where they were accepted into the *Prince of Wales Lodge #259*. Bowles was introduced as “a Chief of the Creek Nation, whose love of Masonry has induced him to wish it may be introduced into the interior part of America, whereby the cause of humanity and brotherly love will go hand in hand with the native courage of the Indians, and by the union lead them on to the highest title that can be conferred on man.”

In 1795, the records of the Grand Lodge of England showed Bowles as the duly accredited provincial Grandmaster of the Five Nations.⁴⁵ In 1799, Bowles returned to the United States and tried to finance a revolution in order to set up a free and independent Muscogee State along the frontier of the colonial United States; in so doing Bowles freely associated with Indians and their African cohorts of the Seminole Nation. J. Leitch Wright credits Bowles with having spread the abolitionist message among the Upper Creek and Chickamaugan Cherokee in the eighteenth century through the use of black interpreters. Both Chief Bowlegs of the Seminole Nation and Chief Bowl of the Cherokee Nation are supposed descendants of William Augustus Bowles.⁴⁶

Fred Latham reports that during Indian removal, the fact that both the Indian leaders and the military officers presiding over removal were Freemasons, it made the process of removal “more orderly.”⁴⁷ Freemason Winfield Scott, the General who presided over the removal of the Cherokee, gave explicit orders to pursue this distasteful activity with civility, “Every possible kindness...must therefore be shown by the troops, and if, in the ranks, a despicable individual should be found capable of inflicting a wanton injury or insult on any Cherokee man, woman, or child, it is hereby made the special duty of the nearest good officer or man, instantly to interpose, and to seize and consign the guilty wretch to the severest penalty of the laws.”⁴⁸ When asked by John Ross to postpone removal because of drought and sickness among the Cherokee, General Scott respected the wishes of his brother. Chief John Ross was a Master Mason in good standing with the Olive Branch Lodge of the Free and Accepted Masons in Jasper, Tennessee.⁴⁹

When he recognized that the militia supporting removal exceeded the bounds of proper military conduct, Scott agreed to a plea from Chief John Ross to allow the Cherokee to manage removal themselves. When Andrew Jackson, Former Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Tennessee, heard of Scott’s brotherly relief, he wrote, “I am so feeble I can scarcely wield my pen, but friendship dictates it and the subject excites me. Why is it that the scamp Ross is not banished from the notice of this administration?”⁵⁰

Upon arrival in the Indian Territory, former lodge members from the East began to reorganize the craft in their new home. A number of the ministers,

merchants and military personnel assigned to the Indians were members of the craft. Along with the resident Indians, they began to have meetings throughout the Indian Territory. These meetings moved from very informal social groupings into fellowship meetings where Masons met and enjoyed fraternal discussions. Applications for the authority to organize lodges in several places were made, but the urgent domestic problems of resettlement prevented the satisfactory organization of lodges. Members of the craft made it a priority to work for the stabilization of the community through participation in political affairs and through the organization of law enforcement and judicial authority.⁵¹

In 1848, a group of Cherokee Freemasons made application to Grand Master R.H. Pulliam of the Grand Lodge of Arkansas and he granted them a dispensation to formulate a “blue lodge” in the Cherokee capital.⁵² Brother George Moser, Secretary of the Cherokee lodge, presents information regarding its charter as follows, “Facts as taken from the proceedings of the Grand Lodge Free and Accepted Masons of Arkansas show that the Committee on Charters and Dispensations did, on November 7, 1848 at the hour of 9:00 a.m., recommend that a charter be granted to ‘Cherokee Lodge’ at Tahlequah, Cherokee Nation, and that it be given the number ‘21’.”⁵³ The officers were sworn in at Supreme Court Headquarters on Keetoowah Street on July 12, 1849; it was the first lodge of Indian Freemasons established in the United States.⁵⁴

In 1852, the Cherokee National Council donated several lots in Tahlequah to be used jointly for the construction of a building to house two prominent organizations, Cherokee Lodge #21 and the Sons of Temperance. The building was erected a year later and owned and operated mutually by the two organizations; the Sons of Temperance⁵⁵ occupied the first floor and Cherokee Lodge #21 occupied the second floor. The lodge building was used for a number of community services, including lodge meetings, temperance meetings, educational instruction, and church meetings. Eventually, both organizations used the upper floor and left the lower floor free for church services and public meetings.⁵⁶

Freemasonry flourished in the Indian Territory leading the Grand Master of Arkansas to comment upon his “red brethren” in 1855:

All over the length and breadth of our state the (Masonic) Order is flourishing, and amongst our red Brethren, in the Indian Territory, it is taking deep hold, and now embraces a goodly number of Lodges and Brethren. The members of these Lodges compare very favorably with their pale-face neighbors. In fact, it is reported of them that they exemplify *practically* the Masonic teachings and ritual by living in the constant discharge of those charities and moral virtues so forcibly inculcated in our lectures, thereby demonstrating to all that Masonry is not only *speculative*, but that it is a living *practical* reality; of great utility to the human race, and of eminent service to a social community.⁵⁷

Freemasonry was indeed “taking deep hold.” Fort Gibson Lodge #35 was chartered by the Arkansas Grand Lodge on November 6, 1850; Choctaw Lodge #52, near Fort Wichita, was granted its charter on November 5, 1852; Flint Lodge #74 was chartered at Flint Station (near Peavine in the Cherokee Nation) on November 9, 1853; Muskogee Lodge #93 in the Mvskoke Nation was the last to be chartered, on November 9, 1855.

That is not to say that the only “lodges” in the area could have been chartered by the Arkansas Grand Lodge. A conservative estimate of the black population in the Indian Territory in the mid 1850s amounted to fifteen to twenty percent of the overall population.⁵⁸ It is not unreasonable to consider that, among the African-American population of the Cherokee Nation, there were fraternal orders including Freemasonry. By 1847, when the Prince Hall Grand Lodge was founded, there were subordinate lodges in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, California, Maryland, Delaware, Ohio, New York, New Jersey, and Virginia.⁵⁹ There is also evidence that there were lodges west of the Mississippi. A.G. Clark in *Clark’s History of Prince Hall Freemasonry* mentions that there were three Prince Hall lodges in St. Louis as early as 1851. That Prince Hall lodges did not receive their official charters from the Prince Hall Grand Lodge until immediately after the Civil War does not rule out the possibility of antebellum black lodges west of the Mississippi.⁶⁰

With respect to the spread of Prince Hall, it is also important to realize the deep relationships between black Freemasonry and black denominationalism; Richard Allen and Absalom Jones were both members of the Philadelphia lodge of Prince Hall. Throughout the South, the African Methodist Episcopal Church and, to a lesser extent, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church were closely related to the Prince Hall lodges. As many of the founders of the A.M.E. Church, as well as many of the senior officials, were Freemasons, the spread of the church throughout the South was closely related to the spread of Prince Hall Freemasonry.⁶¹ By 1860, there were at least four A.M.E. churches in New Orleans—three of which were led by “slave preachers;” as early as 1823 free blacks had built a church for “African Methodists” in St. Louis, Missouri.⁶² If there was a close affinity between the A.M.E. Church and Prince Hall Freemasonry, it is safe to assume that the two coexisted in the west as well as in the east.

In 1851, the Grand Lodge of Ohio granted a warrant to sixteen Master Masons from the Caribbean to form a Lodge in New Orleans; shortly thereafter, there were three more Prince Hall lodges formed in the Crescent City.⁶³ Many of the slaves that came into the Indian Territory in the years preceding the Civil War came from New Orleans. Slave traders within the Cherokee Nation, as well as wealthy Cherokee citizens, would go to the slave markets in New Orleans to acquire slaves.⁶⁴ Many of the slaves coming into the Cherokee Nation came through the Caribbean, where Freemasonry had been organized in the early to middle eighteenth century. There is even some implication that Cherokee chiefs, as followers of the enigmatic Tory William

Augustus Bowles, had attempted to play a part in the slave insurrection in Haiti led by Jean-Jacques Dessalines and Toussaint L'Ouverture (both Freemasons).⁶⁵

Among the French speaking nations, Freemasonry and abolition were also closely affiliated. The relationship stretches back to France's Victor Schoelcher, a junior minister for the navy under the Second Republic, that was instrumental in obtaining the final abolition of slavery in 1848 after its restoration by Napoleon I.⁶⁶ French Freemasons from New Orleans as well as those from Haiti, not only admitted Blacks into the brotherhood but actively worked to oppose the interests of slavery and slaveholders, "As a consequence, when, before the Civil War, the Scottish Rite Masons in New Orleans, many of whom were Frenchmen, avowed abolitionists, and enemies of the Roman Church, adopted a resolution to admit free Negroes as members on terms of absolute equality and brotherhood, a number of free men of color forsook Catholicism for Freemasonry. Their descendants in some cases followed their footsteps."⁶⁷

In fact, there was a strong protest tradition formed among Afro-Creoles and a small group of white French-speaking radicals in New Orleans that had its roots in the traditions of Nineteenth-century literary Romanticism, French Freemasonry, and mid-nineteenth century spiritualism. This movement championed material and moral progress, human perfectibility, and universal freedom. This protest tradition reached its zenith during the Civil War, to which many of the Afro-Creoles ascribed apocalyptic significance.⁶⁸

In addition to formal society, there is also a mysterious relationship between Freemasonry and the practice of Voudon in Haiti and its more malleable cousin, New Orleans' Voodoo. The imagery of Voudon, its art and ritual, is pervaded with Freemasonic symbolism, clothing, and secret doctrine.⁶⁹ The Voodoo religion encompasses many aspects of Freemasonry.⁷⁰ In its rituals, Voudon applies principles of esoteric religion and often deals with mysteries and aspects associated with the Knights Templar order.⁷¹ The first Freemasonic lodges in Haiti were founded in the early eighteenth century at a time when Voudon had its period of greatest growth. Voudon itself has been described as a mixture of Yoruba, Catholicism, and Freemasonry. If traditional African religion found expression in "Voodoo" and if such spread from Haiti to New Orleans and among the slaves of the Southeastern United States, it is quite possible that Freemasonry spread along similar routes.

Secret societies were also a critical part of the African traditions that persisted within the slave community in spite of efforts at Christianization. Mutual benefit societies, voluntary associations, and assorted "lodges" often rivaled the "invisible institution" of the nascent African-American churches as the grounds for leadership development and social action.⁷² Organizations such as the True Reformers, the Galilean Fisherman, the Mosaic Templars of America, the Brown Fellowship Society, and the Oddfellows flourished among

African-Americans, especially free Blacks, in areas such as Charleston, New Orleans, and Richmond. Yet, they did not just exist in the populated areas; many rural African Americans belonged to “secret societies.”⁷³

In 1846, twelve black men led by Moses Dickson, future Grandmaster of Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Missouri,⁷⁴ gathered in St. Louis and formed a secret society entitled the Twelve Knights of Tabor. They dedicated themselves to establishing an army, the “Knights of Liberty,” for the sole purpose of “aiding in breaking the bonds of our slavery.”⁷⁵ Its members then spread throughout the South and spent the next ten years organizing a “guerrilla force”⁷⁶ of resistance. Reverend Dickson, of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, traveled up and down the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers from New Orleans to Wisconsin, spreading his militant gospel of abolition.⁷⁷ By 1856, the Knights of Liberty had enrolled nearly fifty thousand soldiers in their secret organization, “It was absolutely a secret organized body. We know of the failure of Nat Turner and the others, the Abolitionist in the North and East. The underground railroad was in good running order, and the Knights of Liberty sent many passengers over the road to freedom. We feel that we have said enough on this subject. If the War of the Rebellion had not occurred just at the time that it did, the Knights of Liberty would have made public history.”⁷⁸

These “Sons of Liberty” were part of a much larger struggle. By the middle of the eighteen fifties, the United States was being ripped apart by the issue of slavery. The forming of the Republican Party in 1854 incited new hopes for freedom. The Kansas-Nebraska Act opened the west to “popular sovereignty” but led to fisticuffs in the Senate. John Brown’s first assault led to the massacre of five pro-slavery men in Kansas. Finally, the Dred Scott decision of 1857 ruled that Blacks had no rights which whites were bound to respect. In the midst of these overt political struggles, there was a clandestine campaign waged by “secret societies” for the hearts and minds of the Southern people. As the Cherokee Nation was bound culturally and geographically to the Old South, it could not help being caught up in the impending drama.

THE BAPTIST CHURCHES AND SLAVERY IN INDIAN TERRITORY

The years 1846–1855 were prosperous ones for the Cherokee Nation, but they were also years that the issue of slavery moved from being a backdrop for the factional struggle and came to eclipse all other issues that beset this new nation. The number of slaves within the Cherokee Nation had grown immensely following removal; in 1839, slaves represented ten percent of the Nation—by 1860, they represented nearly twenty-five percent. The 4,000 slaves in the Cherokee Nation were owned by less than ten percent of the population.⁷⁹ The recent slave revolts solidified the Cherokee elite in the belief of the efficacy and importance of vigorous enforcement of the institution of slavery.

Among the conservatives who were largely Baptists, the abolitionist message continued to spread and gain strength. Only five of the 1100 Cherokee Baptists owned slaves, and many slaves were members of the Baptist missions even though their owners often were not. Though Baptist missionaries seldom publicly preached against slavery, the Cherokee Baptists came to “look forward to the extinction of slavery.”⁸⁰ Missionary Evan Jones noted that among the strongest opponents of slavery were the native preachers who “are decidedly and steadfastly opposed to slavery.... We have no apology to make for slavery nor a single argument to urge in its defence, and our sincere desire and earnest prayer is that it may be speedily brought to an end.”⁸¹

At the heart of the Baptist gospel message within the Indian Territory was the universal language of freedom that arose within the prophetic religion of the Aframerindian Baptist churches. This folk community practiced an “art of resistance” that constituted the core of their religious beliefs and practices, and it was a community whose very existence constituted resistance to the ideology of racial supremacy. Former slaves and the descendants of former slaves, both black and Indian, formed the core of the Baptist churches in the Indian Territory just as they had done in the old homelands. This “old ship of Zion” traveled through dark and muddy waters.⁸²

In addition, the affinities between the Baptist liturgical practices and the rituals of traditional religion promoted the rapid acceptance and spread of the Baptist gospel message among the indigenous people of the Indian Territory. “Protracted meetings,” such as camp meetings and revivals, being social as well as religious functions that promoted direct participation in singing, shouting, and prayer, were well suited to those accustomed to traditional methods of worship. The preference of oratorical capabilities and oral tradition over literacy and competence in doctrinal sophistries also promoted the spread of the Baptist message.⁸³ That the Baptist ministry were fluent in Cherokee and worked to translate the Gospels, hymnals, and other materials into the indigenous languages was very important.

When accepted into the congregation, the symbolic rite of baptismal immersion was synonymous with the ancient Cherokee purification ritual of *amo’hi atsv’sdi* (“water: to go and return to, one”).⁸⁴ That the Baptists were receptive to even “the most ignorant and uncultivated” of the Cherokee created some ire among the other denominations. One American Board missionary noted, “Persons can scarcely be convinced of sin or begin to think seriously on eternal things before they are dragged into the bosom of some church.”⁸⁵ However, it is also worth noting that many of the members of the Methodist, Presbyterian, and Congregationalist churches belonged to a different social class and ascribed to different cultural values.

From the very first Baptist Church in Oklahoma, the congregations were of mixed cultural heritage. Missionary Isaac McCoy organized the Ebenezer Baptist Church, the first Baptist church in Oklahoma, in the Mvskoke Nation on September 9, 1832. It was composed of “three blacks, two white

people, and one Indian in its six charter members.”⁸⁶ The founding members of the church were Reverend David Lewis, his wife, John Davis—a Mvskoke, and three black members of the Mvskoke Nation by the names of Quash, Bob, and Ned.⁸⁷ Ebenezer Baptist Church conducted its first baptisms the following Sabbath, “The following Saturday, two Creeks and two Blacks were received for baptism, and on the following Sunday took place the first baptism in the Indian’s Home. On the same day, under the shade of the wide-spreading, hospitable, forest trees, in the presence of a great gathering of wondering, dusky Indians, and their darker slaves, the Memorial Supper was spread, and observed in apostolic simplicity.”⁸⁸ Later, the church continued to grow under the tutelage of the licensed preacher, Mr. John Davis, “On the 14th of October, thirty seven people were baptised at a meeting at the Muscogee church, eight or ten of whom were Creeks, and the rest, except one, colored persons and slaves. On the 10th of November, nine were baptized, three of whom were Indians.”⁸⁹

On October 20, 1833, Mvskoke minister John Davis was ordained to the Baptist ministry. Assuming the position of pastor of Ebenezer Church, he remained in this position until his death in 1839.⁹⁰ In January 1836, the church membership numbered 82–6 whites, 22 Native Americans, and 54 African-Americans. Canadian Station, an outstation of the Ebenezer Baptist Church, was started some 30 miles distant. In 1839, Canadian Station opened a missionary school of fifty students with John Davis as its principal; the chief instructor at the school was a Native American Baptist minister.⁹¹ The outpost at the Canadian River would later become center of the Cherokee Baptist missions among the Mvskoke Nation.

When Evan Jones arrived in the new territory in the West, he and his native ministers began an outreach to try to rebuild their former congregations and invite new members into the fold, “friendly deputations have visited the National Convention, from the Muscogeese, Seminoles, Shawnees, Delawares, and Senecas.”⁹² There were also community meetings at Flint Church where they “held meetings for devotional exercises.” At one such meeting, “four blacks—two males and two females, were baptized on a profession of their faith in the Lord Jesus.”⁹³

There is no doubt that African-American Baptist ministers led many of these early delegations. Most of the earliest ministers in the Indian Territory were African-american slaves or freed slaves.⁹⁴ Though seldom credited by name, their effects were well noted, “Four black women came forward to tell what God had done for their souls. They were approved and baptized on profession of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. There has been for several months considerable attention to religion among the Blacks on both sides of the line, principally through the instrumentality of a Black man who resides in the vicinity.”⁹⁵

Some of the black ministers were well known such as Joseph Island, “Old Billy,” and “Brother Jesse.” Brother Jesse worked among the Mvskoke where his efforts were often less than appreciated, “One of them came and

tied another rope around my wrists; the other end was thrown over the fork of a tree, and they drew me up until my feet did not quite touch the ground, and they tied my feet together. Then they went a little way off and sat down. Afterwards one of them came and asked me where I got this new religion. I said in the Old Nation. 'Yes,' replied the Indian, 'you have set half of this nation to praying and this is what we are going to whip you for.' Five men gave me five strokes each."⁹⁶

Native Christians were often punished for following black ministers, "One woman who received fifty lashes for affirming her faith in Christ went down to a spring...washed her wounds, and walked ten miles to hear Joseph Islands preach that night."⁹⁷ The most famous of these black Baptist preachers was Monday Durant, "a large, strong, man, of fine physical proportions. He readily spoke the Creek language, and commenced preaching when a young man."⁹⁸ Durant had been with the Mvskoke on the "trail where we cried" where the Indians "secretly held their meetings, baptizing after midnight in the streams, with guards posted to keep from being surprised and arrested."⁹⁹ Durant worked both the Creek and Seminole Nations and founded his own church in 1854.

Evan Jones and Jesse Bushyhead not only accepted these African-American ministers, but were also quite encouraging of their black brethren:

Agreeably to the suggestion in our last Report, Mr. Jones, of the Cherokee Mission, visited the late Creek Station (Ebenezer's Canadian Mission) in September last and attended a Creek protracted meeting. He was received with great affection and joy, and preached several times by an interpreter. He had also the happiness of seeing four candidates baptised, one of whom was a Creek chief of respectability and influence. Mr. Jones reports the state of the people to be highly encouraging. The members of the church appear well, and the religious meetings are thronged, many of the congregation attending from a distance of twenty or more miles...Religious meetings are conducted by two black men, both slaves. The oldest, Jacob, is ordained; the other called Jack, a blacksmith, acts as interpreter. They are allowed one day in the week to support themselves and their families in food and clothing; and these days they devote to the service of the church, hiring the working of their little corn and potato patches.¹⁰⁰

Later that year, a return visit found a revival in progress with about one hundred people having been baptized by Pastor Jacob, "some of whom were white people and some were black, but most of them were Indians."¹⁰¹

Within Bushyhead's Flint Church itself, there is evidence not only of black membership dating back to its foundation in Tennessee, but there is also considerable evidence of a black ministry. In the early 1840s, Minister Bushyhead became the center of a controversy because he was an ordained minister and yet still a slaveholder.¹⁰² However, the situation was hardly as simple as the hard-line abolitionists made it out to be:

About the years 1840, or 41, Bro. B. purchased a Black man with his wife and child (*by his own desires for the purpose of affording him an opportunity to become free*). The man is a Baptist Preacher. As soon as he came home, Bro. B. told him he must not consider himself any more as a slave but act faithfully as a free man. He furnished him with a horse to ride to his preaching places on sabbath days. This is the black man I have once or twice had occasion to allude to, having been called on several times to baptize hopeful converts, the evident fruit of the blessing of God on this man's labors. With respect to this transaction, I am fully satisfied that our dear departed brother was activated by the same generous and benevolent motives which pervaded and governed his conduct in all relations in life and the dispositions of all his time and talent¹⁰³

"Uncle Reuben," Jesse Bushyhead's slave, was a minister and preached to the slave communities in the Cherokee Nation for many years. Reuben's converts also became members of the Baptist church, "The colored persons baptized at this place are the fruits of the preaching of a Black man, a slave, who devotes his sabbath and frequently week[day] evenings to tell the love of Jesus to those of his own color, and God has blessed his labors."¹⁰⁴

"Uncle Reuben" became the center of a controversy within the Baptist denomination and precipitated the crisis that led to the "Great Schism" of 1844–1845. Antislavery activists from the North formed the American Baptist Free Mission Society in 1843 and published in their *Free Missionary* magazine the following note, "Mr. Bushyhead, A Missionary among the Cherokee. He lives in a fine dwelling, has a plantation and several wretched human beings under his irresponsible power."¹⁰⁵ Bushyhead's status as one of the denomination's finest native ministers was rocked by the scandal. It drew even further attention to the struggle over slavery within the Cherokee Nation.

The missionary position, that of being "between two fires," ended because of this controversy surrounding this disclosure. The Home Mission Board in 1844 rejected the application of a slaveholding minister from Georgia to be a missionary because, "When an application is made for the appointment of a slaveholder or an Abolitionist *as such*, the official obligation of the Board to act ceases."¹⁰⁶ In May 1845, at a convention in Augusta, Georgia, the Southern Baptist Convention was formed creating its own missionary boards. The schism in the churches reflected a larger schism that was taking place in the United States over the issue of slavery.¹⁰⁷

The issue of slavery became a critical issue for the denominations in the late 1840s and into mid 1850s. The American Baptist Missionary Union, motivated by the crisis in the churches in general and the Bushyhead incident in particular, sent frequent inquiries to Evan Jones as to the "institution of slavery" in the Cherokee missions. Beginning with a six-part questionnaire in November of 1848 and climaxing with a decisive split with fellow missionary Samuel Worcester over dismissing slaveholders from the church, the pressure on Evan Jones was relentless.

Yet, the schism was not only within the denominations, it filtered its way down even unto the Flint Baptist Church itself. In the spring of 1858, the Southern Baptist Convention sent its first minister, the Reverend James Slover, to the Cherokee Nation. Slover took advantage of the fact that Jones had expelled Cherokee slave owners from the church and well knew that the slave owners represented the wealthier class among the Cherokee. The churches associated with the Southern Baptist Convention had large purses and Slover offered the native ministers the opportunity to “set their own price.” He was able to attract away Young Duck (a deacon at Flint Church), David Foreman (ordained at Flint Church—a former interpreter in Valley Towns), and John Foster (dismissed for being a slave owner). Reverend Slover prided himself on being different from the “Jones’ Baptists” and reportedly boasted “he owns one ‘nigger’ and would own more if he were able.”¹⁰⁸

In the Mvskoke Nation, Jones found that the “Southern Baptists have their field.”¹⁰⁹ However, some ministers would not be won over to the Southern cause regardless of the bounty offered by the wealthy class. On a visit to the Mvskoke Nation in 1857, Evan Jones and Pastor Lewis Downing of the Peavine Baptist Church [formerly Flint] ordained a free black man by the name of “Old Billy.” Billy continued to preach the “Jones’ Baptists” gospel of liberation in spite of attempts to by the slaveholders to silence him. Southern Baptist missionary Henry Buckner stated, “Billy ought to have a hundred lashes” if he continued to preach among the Mvskoke.

“Brodder Billy” was given a note warning him that if he preached the “abolitionist” message in his next Sunday sermon message, he would be in violation of the law and would suffer the consequences. He took this note to his pulpit the following Sunday, read the note to his congregation, and asked them what he should do. According to John Jones: “They told him to preach and they would protect him.”¹¹⁰ Jones further stated, “Billy has some of the principle men of the Creek Nation on his side. I doubt not God is also with him. One of the District Chiefs said to me and Bro. Downing, ‘If they whip that little nigger, they will have to whip me first.’”¹¹¹ Later that summer, Jones and Downing ordained another member of the church, Henry Davise, to help “Old Billy” in his ministry to the Mvskoke Nation.¹¹²

Though the Southern Baptists (and Southern Methodists as well) had the money and offered many opportunities to those who would preach the proslavery gospel, many of the conservatives were well aware of the costs of such a discipleship, “It was so plain a case to see that these men were bought, that many turned away in disgust. Seeing that there were two denominations calling themselves Baptists, everybody was led to inquire into the difference between them, and set to examining the question to see who was right. Young men sprang up from obscurity and urged upon the people the sin of slavery, more clearly and efficiently than ever before. Many who were always opposed to it had their own sentiments more sharply defined in their own minds.... The contributions of the Pea Vine church were larger than usual.”¹¹³

Though the struggle was about slavery, it was also about something deeper. In the minds of those Cherokee sitting in the pews at Peavine Baptist Church witnessing what was going on around them, larger questions arose. Though they were Baptist, many still clung to the “old ways.” The similarities between the gospel message of the Jones’ Baptists and the religious values of equality, community, and religious identity that helped define Cherokee culture loomed large. In choosing not to reject the “old ways,” the Jones’ Baptists forged a dynamic and syncretic religious consciousness that laid the foundations for tremendous social movement. In solidarity with the quintessential Cherokee values of the “beloved community,” these religious ideals proved to be the most important factors in an emerging relationship between the traditionalist community and the Baptist churches.

THE BIRTH OF THE KEETOOWAH SOCIETY

In 1855, the issue of slavery within the Cherokee Nation could no longer be ignored and the topic of “Southern Rights” became a popular subject among the slaveowners in the nation. Chief John Ross tried to maintain a position of neutrality but with the Cherokee Nation lodged squarely between Deep South and “bleeding Kansas,” this became exceedingly difficult—especially considering the power and affinities of the Cherokee aristocracy.¹¹⁴ Ross, a slaveholder himself, tried to quiet the controversy by publicly distancing himself from “abolitionist” forces associated with the Northern missionaries by leaving the Congregational Church and joining a Southern Methodist congregation.

In the 1855 Cherokee Council elections, the Ross Party lost votes to the increasingly hard-line “Southern Rights” party that believed an alliance with white Southerners in the defense of slavery would be the best course for the Cherokee Nation. The “Southern Rights” party looked with disdain upon the poorer, “backward,” Cherokees and believed that the Northern missionaries, especially the Baptists, were taking advantage of the full bloods’ ignorance to push the cause of abolition. Immediately after the elections, the new council passed a bill declaring the Cherokee to be “a slaveholding people” in spite of the fact that less than ten-percent of the nation owned slaves.¹¹⁵ The bill further declared that each church issue a position statement regarding “the institution of slavery as a church principle.” It also contained several other provisions to limit the spread of abolitionism within the churches.¹¹⁶

However, it seems that the real crisis stemmed from a different kind of organization. On May 5, 1855, Chief John Ross sent a letter to Rev. Evan Jones in which he detailed the rise of a “a secret society” in the Cherokee Nation:

It seems that there has been a secret society organized in Delaware and Saline Districts, auxiliary to a “*Mother Lodge*” in some of the States or Territories of the United States, and the enclosed copy is a form of the

oath it is said to be administered to the members of the Society. But I do not apprehend that the authors of this sinister plot can possibly dupe the Cherokee people into their own ruin and downfall, as the schemes when found out will only render themselves more odious to all who feel an interest in the prosperity and welfare of the Nation.¹¹⁷

The oath of this “secret society” bound them to support “slavery in Kansas, the Cherokee Nation, and in other countries” and to “support any person that you may be instructed to, by the Mother Lodge, for any office in the Cherokee Nation, or anywhere else and to assist any member that may get into difficulty on account of being a brother of the Secret Society and to keep secret the names of the Brothers of the Society and other secrets of the Society.”¹¹⁸

According to Ross, a “Mother Lodge” established in the Indian Territory by officials from Arkansas was at the root of this “sinister plot.” Many of the pro-slavery factions in the Cherokee Nation had ties to Arkansas and Ross believed that the Grand Lodge of Arkansas established this “Mother Lodge” in the Indian Territory to “create excitement and strife among the Cherokee people.”¹¹⁹ Later historians often describe these lodges as “blue lodges” and tie them closely to the issue of slavery. For Freemasons, the “blue lodge” serves as a synonym for Freemasonry.¹²⁰ Ross, being a Freemason, referred simply to the “Mother Lodge” and would not have used the term “Mother Lodge” unadvisedly; that he did not use the word “blue lodge” at all is important.

The membership roll of Cherokee Lodge #21 (a blue lodge) records that there were many members of both “Ross Party” and the “Treaty Party” who belonged to the lodge. It seems that the issue of the promotion of “Southern Rights” by the Grand Lodge of Arkansas led to dissension within the Masonic brotherhood in the Indian Territory and this rupture occurred along the lines of party affiliation.¹²¹ Historian T.L. Ballenger notes that many members of Cherokee Lodge #21 were opposed to the efforts of the Grand Lodge, “There seems to have developed some misunderstanding between the Mother Lodge and Cherokee Lodge at that time, the exact nature of which the records fail to reveal: possibly it was a coolness that had grown out of different attitudes toward the war. The Cherokees were divided, some of them fighting for the North and some for the South. It happened that the leading members of the Lodge sympathized with the North.”¹²²

Because of the split within the lodges of Indian Territory or perhaps precipitating it, some of the members of the “blue lodge” became associated with a secessionist secret society by the name of the “Knights of the Golden Circle.” Later historians have assumed the “Knights of the Golden Circle” to be identical with the “blue lodges;” but this may be a misreading. If the leadership of the Cherokee lodge were opposed to slavery, then its alienated members would seek brotherhood elsewhere in an organization such as the Knights of the Golden Circle.

In 1854, George W.L. Bickley founded the Knights of the Golden Circle

for the purposes of “expanding the superior Anglo-American civilization” and extending the slave empire throughout the West Indies, the Southern United States, Central America, and Northern South America—hence the name Golden Circle.¹²³ Closely affiliated with the nativist “Know-Nothing” and “Copperheads” parties, Bickley traveled throughout the South establishing “castles” (lodges) and promoting Southern militancy and expansionism.¹²⁴ The “Knights of the Golden Circle” within the Cherokee Nation were associated with Bickley’s organization.

The leader of the Knights of the Golden Circle within the Cherokee Nation was, however, also a Freemason. Stand Watie was affiliated with Federal Lodge #1 in Washington, D.C. Members of the Knights of the Golden Circle included many of the elite of the Cherokee Nation: John Rollin Ridge, Elias Boudinot, William Penn Adair, James Bell, Joseph Scales, and Josiah Washbourne—all were leaders of the “Southern Rights” party and former “Treaty Party” members.¹²⁵ Many of these were also prominent Freemasons. The Constitution of the Knights of the Golden Circle, as recorded on August 28, 1860, states among its provisions:

We, a part of the people of the Cherokee Nation, in order to form a more perfect union and protect ourselves and property against the works of Abolitionists do establish this Constitution for the government of the Knights of the Golden Circle in this Nation... No person shall become a member of the Knights of the Golden Circle in the Cherokee Nation who is not a pro-slavery man... The Captain, or in case of his refusal, then the Lieutenant has the power to compell each and every member of their Encampment to turn out and assist in capturing and punishing any and all abolitionists in their minds who are interfering with slavery.... You do solemnly swear that you will keep all the secrets of this order and that you will, to the best of your abilities protect and defend the interests of the Knights of the Golden Circle in this Nation, so help you God.¹²⁶

The leadership of the Northern Baptist churches of the Cherokee Nation felt a strong need to respond to the growing militancy of the Knights of the Golden Circle and its powerful allies.¹²⁷ At the encouragement of Chief Ross, Evan and John Jones approached the native ministers and asked them to meet with their congregations to address this important issue. The laity decided that action must be taken and scheduled meetings to determine what would be their best course of action. Out of these religious gatherings would come the Keetoowah Society.¹²⁸

THE KEETOOWAH SOCIETY

The few men who gathered in the chapel of the Peavine Baptist Church in the Goingsnake District of the Cherokee Nation on April 15, 1858 faced grave

decisions of both a political and personal nature. A deep chasm was reopening within the Cherokee Nation and bringing to the surface old tensions best left buried. It was also ripping asunder the very religious institutions that had become the foundation of a new form of collective identity within the Indian Territory.¹²⁹ Furthermore, the very culture that formed the basis of Cherokee identity was being challenged by an alien ideology that asserted the rights of the individual over the rights of “the people.”

Among the Cherokee gathered in the chapel that evening were Lewis Downing, Budd Gritts, Smith Christie, Thomas Pegg, and James McDaniels—all religious leaders among the conservative Northern Baptists. Ministers Evan Jones and John Jones were also present. Little did these men know that what they were about to do would profoundly affect Cherokee history for the next one hundred years. From these few men gathered in the Peavine Baptist Church on that evening would come the leadership of the Cherokee Nation through the most troublesome period in Cherokee history. The vehicle through which this religiopolitical force found expression was the Keetoowah Society.

Derived from the Cherokee term “Ani-kituhwagi” meaning “people of the Kituwah,” the name Keetoowah has become synonymous with the conservative “fullblood” element of the Cherokee Nation.¹³⁰ It is believed that the Kituwah settlement was the original nucleus of the Cherokee people in the mountains of North Carolina along the highland regions of Cherokee homelands.¹³¹ Benny Smith, Cherokee Elder, agrees with this definition, “It is highly probable that Keetoowah was derived from ‘go-doo,’ a Cherokee word meaning on top, on the surface, or uppermost. The mother settlement of the ancient Cherokees was called Kituhwa, which is now Keetoowah, and was located in the uplands... ‘Go-doo’s’ is often used to refer to the highlands in relations to the low bottomlands or prairie lands.”¹³²

Although Kituwah was synonymous with the oldest of the mother towns, the story of the origins of Kituwah goes much farther back in Cherokee history. According to legend, the Cherokee people originated from an island in the Atlantic Ocean somewhere east of South America where they were continually plagued by attacks from neighboring peoples. In spite of the fact that they were heavily outnumbered, the Cherokee were consistently victorious in their struggles. One enemy saw in the plume of smoke from the Cherokee encampment an eagle bearing arrows in its claws, became convinced that the Cherokee were the divine’s chosen people and withdrew the assault.¹³³ According to the same legend, the Breathgiver did indeed grant the Cherokee unlimited and mysterious special powers. Their wise men were accorded the special gift of being able to interpret and act upon the Breathgiver’s wishes.¹³⁴

As time passed, this ancient and mysterious clan of wise men became known as the “Ani-Kutani.” Because of their mysterious powers and control over the forces of nature, the Ani-Kutani totally controlled the religious functions of the Cherokee Nation. The Ani-Kutani grew to be a clan among

the Cherokee, as opposed to a society, because their power and position had become hereditary.¹³⁵ As the powers granted to the Ani-Kutani were granted by special dispensation from the divine Breathgiver, they were to be used only for the best interests of the people.

However, the Ani-Kutani became selfish and used their powers in ways other than that which God had intended. One legend tells that one of the Ani-Kutani used his magical powers to seduce the wife of a young warrior while the warrior was away on a raid. When the warrior returned and discovered what had taken place, he led the people in an uprising in which all of the Ani-Kutani were slain.¹³⁶ In a different story, the people entered into cycles of prayer to beseech the Breathgiver for deliverance from the corruption of the Ani-Kutani, but as the people had fallen from grace, the divine Breathgiver refused to acknowledge their invocation.¹³⁷

The Cherokee people seemed to lose the special connection with the divine. Eventually, it was revealed to one of the *didahnvwisgi*¹³⁸ that the sacred leaders should go the top of a high mountain where they should fast and pray for the deliverance of the people. Each day for seven days, a different *didahnvwisgi* from each of the seven clans joined the others on the mountain.¹³⁹ On the seventh day, with representatives from each of the clans present, the medicine men observed a loud noise followed by a bright light and a voice that spoke to them, saying:

I am a messenger from the Great Spirit. God has heard your prayers and He has great compassion for your people, and from now on you shall be called Keetoowah. Go back to your fire and worship. There is a white ball coming from way east who is your enemy coming, and your grandchildren's feet are directed west. They shall have great trials on the edge of the prairie, they shall be divided into different factions, and their blood shall be only about one-half. Families shall be divided against each other and they shall disregard their chiefs, leaders, medicine men, and captains. But if these younger generations should endeavor to follow your God's instructions there is a chance to turn back east; and if not, the next move shall be west, on to the coast and from there on top the boat, and this shall be the last.¹⁴⁰

Members of the Keetoowah Society believe that this messenger from God gave them the name "Keetoowah" to them, and that this name bespeaks their special relationship with the divine.¹⁴¹

The *didahnvwisgi* returned to their respective clans and reported the message that God had given them, but only the true believers followed their instructions and made preparations to leave their fellows and follow the voice of the Great Spirit. This small band set forth from their island and proceeded west. As they turned to take one last look at their homeland, the island sank into the ocean taking with it the remainder of their people and the last vestiges of their ancient civilization. The survivors traveled west through Mesoamerica and up the Atlantic Coast, finally settling among the

Iroquois. In the winters, the Keetoowah migrated south into the Carolinas and Georgia returning each spring to live among their Northern neighbors. Eventually, the Keetoowah settled in the Carolinas and Georgia, making this area their permanent home until the coming of the Europeans in the eighteenth century.¹⁴²

As mentioned above, Kituwah was an ancient Cherokee settlement formerly on the Tuckasegee River just above the present Bryson City, in Swain County, North Carolina. It was one of the “seven mother towns” of the Cherokee. The inhabitants of Kituwah, the “Ani-kitu hwagi,” exercised a controlling influence over all of the towns along the Tuckasegee and Little Tennessee River. The people of this region became known as the Kituwah and the name became synonymous with the Cherokee among the Iroquois and the Algonquian.¹⁴³ As early as the 1750s, the “mother town” of Kituwah had a status and independence not granted less ancient settlements; town debates and political actions were kept a “profound secret.”¹⁴⁴

From the very beginning, the mother towns were known as a place of refuge where those fleeing enslavement could run. Christian Pryber, a German Jesuit among the first Europeans to live with the Cherokee, described one of these mother towns as “a town at the Foot of the Mountains among the Cherokee, which was to be a City of Refuge for all Criminals, Debtors, and Slaves, who would fly thither from Justice or their Masters.”¹⁴⁵ It was open to all who sought refuge and was thus a place of diversity. Tom Hatley describes the Kituwah dialect as being the product of multicultural synthesis, “from the beginning the Kituwah dialect was mixed with the English of white Tories, traders, and black refugees.”¹⁴⁶

A critical element in the Keetoowah beliefs is the existence of what is referred to as “the Kituwah Spirit.” The chosenness of the Keetoowah and the presence of divine power is a gift if this power is used only to the benefit of the collective body and not for purely personal or selfish ends. “The Kituwah Spirit” is this sense of identity tied to a bond of collective responsibility; “its members are obligated under a highly secret ritual to assist each other always and to work constantly for the aims of the organization.”¹⁴⁷ This “strong band of comradeship” is a key element in the Keetoowah Society and its focuses upon the perpetuation of a national/spiritual identity and the preservation of cultural integrity.¹⁴⁸ This Keetoowah “believe this is the moral way. These Indians believe in a Great Spirit who cared for his people and who desired that they care for each other.”¹⁴⁹

Placing the good of all above self-interest is called “the white path of righteousness.”¹⁵⁰ This “white path of righteousness” is laid out for the Keetoowah in seven sacred wampums made of shells from the Atlantic coast. These wampum vary in length from two to seven feet and in width from six inches to a single strand of beads. Interwoven in the sacred language of the beadwork of these ancient wampum are the sacred teachings that the Great Spirit gave to the seven wise men regarding “the white path of

righteousness.”¹⁵¹ Benny Smith describes the importance of these wampum, “These wampums have served the Keetoowahs in the same way that the Ten Commandments have served the Christians. For generations, these wampums have been read to the Keetoowah once each year... The Cherokee name for the wampums is *De’-ka-nuh-nus*’ which means ‘a way to look to’ or ‘keep looking in this direction.’”¹⁵²

J.R.Carselovey states that the purpose of the Keetoowah Society was the “perpetuation of the full-blood race” and to stand for unity and brotherly love among the Cherokee and, in every way possible, to work for the best interests of the tribe as a whole.¹⁵³ The Keetoowah Society stands for community solidarity in the face of change, “they entered into a solemn pact that whatever measure or man a majority, the band should agree on should be advocated and stood up for by all members of the society...such is their loyalty to one another and their steadfastness to keep inviolate any pledges of honor they make.”¹⁵⁴ The Keetoowah Society also sought to “conserve the purity of Cherokee Indian customs and traditions.”¹⁵⁵

From time immemorial, the Great Spirit and national patriotism seemed to be synonymous terms for the Keetoowah. The “Kituwah Spirit” stands for the autonomy of the Cherokee people and the sovereignty of the Cherokee Nation—a religious nationalism that sought to keep the Nation pure from within and free from outside influences and their ultimate control of the Cherokee destiny.¹⁵⁶ In addition, the Keetoowah believe that as the Cherokee Nation is a sacred and sovereign nation, its relations with other nations are of ultimate value, “Along with the wampums the Keetoowahs have in their possession relics held sacred because they were received through agreements with the United States. Some of these are a peace pipe used in signing treaties, flag of the United States, which the Keetoowahs agreed to uphold, and the seal of the Keetoowah Society. The significance of these relics is related as often as the wampums.”¹⁵⁷

So when these men gathered together at Peavine Baptist Church to formerly articulate the aims and the purposes of the Keetoowah Society, the rupture of the Cherokee Nation and its loyalty to the United States were pressing concerns, “On April 15, 1858, a small number of the leading members of the Keetoowahs got together and discussed the affairs of the Cherokees, the purpose and objectives for which they had always stood.... The Cherokees were situated too far in the South and the men were becoming reckless and seemed to be taking sides with the South, but the leading cause was those who owned Negro slaves. It was plain to be seen that Cherokee people without a full understanding were taking sides with the South. It seemed certain that the states of the South were entering into a conspiracy to abandon the union of states to set up a separate government. Keetoowahs had already studied their means of defense and knew the business followed by them.”¹⁵⁸

The Cherokee Nation was divided, and the institutions that guided the course of the nation were equally divided. The denominational fracture of

the issue of slavery now split the very Baptist churches that had been a point of consolidation and cohesion in the new homeland. The schools became ever more segregated as those who read and spoke in the native Cherokee were isolated within an educational process that increasingly served the interests of socialization into the dominant culture. The strength of the progressives had grown in the Cherokee legislature and it supported the aims and interests of the “Southern Rights” party often in opposition to the interests of the greater Cherokee Nation. Even the Freemasonic lodges, which had always encouraged a spirit of brotherhood, citizenship, and collective responsibility, found the organization split along party lines in a manner that would take decades for it to recover.¹⁵⁹

Reverends Budd Gritts, Lewis Downing, and the senior leadership of the Peavine Church considered the options and concluded that only a reemergence of the “Kituwah Spirit” and following the “white path of righteousness” could resolve this national crisis. In Chapter One of the Constitution of the Keetoowah Society approved on April 29, 1859, they articulated the problem and the solution, “As lovers of the government of the Cherokees, loyal members of Keetoowah Society, in the name of the mass of the people, we began to study and investigate the way our nation was going on, so much different from the long past history of our Keetoowah forefathers who loved and lived as free people and had never surrendered to anybody. They loved one another for they were just like one family, just as if they had been raised from one family. They all came as a unit to their fire to smoke, to aid one another and to protect their government with what little powder and lead they had to use in protecting it.”¹⁶⁰

The following year, what it meant to be a Keetoowah was even further defined:

Only fullblood Cherokees uneducated, and no mixed blood friends shall be allowed to become a member... Under the Cherokee Constitution, after confidential conference, a number of honored men began to discuss and deliberate and decide secretly among friends whom they love, to help each other in everything. Our secret society shall be named Keetoowah. All of the members of the Keetoowah Society shall be like one family. It should be our intention that we must abide with each other in love. Anything which derive from English or white, such as secret organizations, that the Keetoowahs shall not accept or recognize. Now all above described must be adopted same as under oath to be abided by. We must not surrender under any circumstance until we shall “fall to the ground united.” We must lead one another by the hand with all our strength. Our government is being destroyed. We must resort to bravery to stop it.”¹⁶¹

Although the focus of the Keetoowah Society was upon the “fullbloods,” this term must be understood within a cultural context instead of a biological or racial one.¹⁶² One can see “fullblood” as a connotation for traditional/

conservative and “mixed-blood” as implying acculturated/progressive. Some of those commonly referred to as fullbloods, including many of the leaders of the Keetoowah Society itself, were the products of Cherokee/white intermarriage. John Ross, leader of the full bloods, was only one-sixteenth Cherokee; Stand Watie, leader of the progressives, was a full blood Cherokee. The term “mixed-blood” often meant intermarriage with whites, however, those intermarried with free blacks and slaves were nearly always classified as black. It seems entirely possible that those Africans who inter-married with Cherokee and clung to traditional beliefs could have also been classified as “fullblood.”

When the Keetoowah Constitution describes its members as being “only fullblood Cherokees uneducated,” it is referring to those fluent in Cherokee who are “uneducated” in the sense of European language and culture, but educated in the sense of being literate in Cherokee language and culture.¹⁶³ It was not a race-based form of identity for, as discussed above, there was no race-based understanding of identity within the “old ways” of Cherokee culture. In Keetoowah cosmology, all races descended from a common one, “Finally God took compassion on them and heard their prayers and directed them to take the white fire and move away from place to place. Some went to Asia, some to India, and others to North America, leavng all the wise people behind.”¹⁶⁴

If one were literate in the Cherokee language and knowledgeable of Cherokee culture as many African-Americans were, then there were the universal bonds of the “Kituwah Spirit” that made one a member of the beloved community. Thus, the Cherokee Nation, as understood by the Keetoowah in the “old ways,” would be one open to all people regardless of race. It is antithetical to those on the “white path of righteousness” and who believed that the “Great Spirit who cared for his people and who desired that they care for each other” would exclude ones whose history and destiny was so linked to their own. Keetoowah meetings were opened with the expression, “We are all Keetoowah people.”¹⁶⁵

At the heart of the Keetoowah Society was a fundamental appeal to the “old ways” and the ancient Kituwah ideal of a “beloved community” in which each “loved one another, for they were just like one family, just as if they had been raised from one family.” This ideal of the “beloved community” has been the basis of the Cherokee social order from long before the first European contact. That the Cherokee descended from a single set of parents, Selu—the corn mother, and Kanat’i—the hunter father, provides the guiding principle in a humanitarian universalism that embraces difference while promoting harmony. The goal of the Keetoowah Society was to define a true Cherokee “patriot” as one who clung to traditional lifestyle that included the “white path of righteousness,” the ancient spirituality of the “old way,” and the sacred power of “beloved community.”

The “reorganized” Keetoowah Society of 1858 was more political in its orientation and perhaps more influenced by outside forces than it had been

previously, but still “it was directly associated with the original Keetoowah Society.”¹⁶⁶ Its aim was to preserve Cherokee sovereignty and solidarity as expressed in the Keetoowah constitution. The centrality of national identity, the sacred fire, and sacred ceremonies of traditional religion are critical elements in the Keetoowah Society.¹⁶⁷ It sought to counter the influences of the Knights of the Golden Circle and the attempted alignment of the Cherokee people with the ideologies of the “Southern Rights” party.

The meetings of the Keetoowah were held at the *gatiyo*, or stomp grounds, and centered on the sacred fire that was reportedly brought with them from the East and kept constantly burning.¹⁶⁸ The sacred fire was an essential element in the Keetoowah Society, “The sacred ritualism of the original Keetoowah is performed only with the sacred ceremonial fire. When the council of the Keetoowah is about to go in session, the fire keepers start the fire at the council grounds before the sun appears in the east. The fire must not be started with a match but through the old custom.”¹⁶⁹

The fire-keepers built earthen mounds two to three feet high and six feet across topped with four logs; surrounding the sacred fire were seven arbors in a circle for seating the seven clans.¹⁷⁰ The four logs pointed in each of the four cardinal directions and some say that it represented the four original Indians selected by the Great Spirit to start the sacred fire.¹⁷¹ Others assert that it signified that the power of the Keetoowah path extends to all four corners of the earth.¹⁷² Benny Smith shares this view, “the sacred fire extends its guiding light to people in all directions.”¹⁷³ The fire is purely a sacred fire and may be used for no other purpose than its sacred one; even Keetoowah children respect the fire and do not play in or near it.¹⁷⁴

Meetings were highly ceremonial occasions with opening pipe rituals, sacrificial offerings to the sacred fire, songs and dances, and explanations of the sacred mysteries of the wampum belts.¹⁷⁵ They usually began with speeches by the Keetoowah leaders addressing common concerns and urging followers to walk the “white path of righteousness” and “admonishing them to be loyal to God, and instructing them what to do to be a real Keetoowah.”¹⁷⁶ The Keetoowah Head Captain next filled the sacred pipe with tobacco and taking seven puffs, he then passed the pipe to each leader of the seven clans who, in turn, also take seven puffs.

Then, following a solemn prayer, a burnt offering was made of “a small game animal or a white chicken: each signifies purity.”¹⁷⁷ Some claim this white chicken represents Europeans, but the Cherokee believe the act represents “the visible living actual personification of the Great Spirit, Creator, and Father who alone has the power to give life and take life.” Following the sacrifice, the members form a square surrounding the sacred fire with two men on the eastern side creating a space “known as the door to the temple.” Once admitted to the sacred space, each person takes seven puffs from the sacred pipe. This ritual signifies a “commitment to be true to the seven clans and seven wampums of righteousness.”¹⁷⁸

Following this ceremony, the “stomp dance” begins. This dance is both a

highly religious ritual and one of the Cherokee's highest art forms.¹⁷⁹ The dances are coordinated to deep-rooted rhythms established by the drums of the men and the rattle of tortoise shell leggings the women wear.¹⁸⁰ The dances centered on songs and chants of a time so ancient that they have lost their meaning.¹⁸¹ They signify "the singing and raising of the name of God to the highest."¹⁸² An observer of these dances noted that "the leaders, however, call constant attention to the lost portent of the songs in their awkward gesturings toward the fire."¹⁸³

After dancing all night, the Keetoowah drank a "black drink" made from seven types of wood taken from the eastern side of the trees. They also washed their hands and faces in the drink as an act of external and internal cleansing that helped to maintain clarity of mind and purity of purpose.¹⁸⁴ In addition, large areas were kept adjoining the central meeting place for "ball play."¹⁸⁵ "Ball play" was, and is, a modified version of ancient Indian ball that is both a community building exercise and a religious practice that has tremendous significance to the Southeastern Indians.¹⁸⁶ All of these practices combined to make up the traditional religious ceremonies associated with the Keetoowah Society.

In spite of its relationship to traditional culture and religion, the Keetoowah Society was "reorganized" under the auspices of the Baptist churches and its leadership were the native ministers ordained by Evan and John Jones. The Head Captains of the Keetoowah Society—Levi Gritts, Smith Christie, and Lewis Downing—were all prominent Baptist ministers. In framing the Constitution of the Keetoowah Society, it "allowed broad religious interpretation, for there had been white missionary teachers among them and it was found that they all worshipped the same God and that prominent men of Bible history told of the same people that they knew of."¹⁸⁷ "The same God who gave them their religion has always taken care of them, takes care of them now and they are expecting him to do so. All of their work is carried on by the guidance of their God; it is strictly forbidden by the Society for any officer or member to use their own wisdom without the guidance of God."¹⁸⁸

The Keetoowah Society spread the organization and its message through the emergent Baptist churches and missionary outposts in the Cherokee Nation and even into the Mvskoke Nation as well. Cherokee sympathetic to the Keetoowah cause were encouraged to attend church meetings whether they were Baptists or not; from these organizational meetings local "captains" were established and the coordination of local "lodge" meetings was facilitated. Trusting their native preachers, the Northern Baptist ministers encouraged them to spread the Keetoowah message by capitalizing upon the affinities between traditional religion and the Baptist faith to build a potent force for religious revitalization.¹⁸⁹

It is also important to recognize the affinities between the structure and function of the Keetoowah Society and that of the fraternal orders that had proliferated within the Indian Territory in the middle of the nineteenth

century.¹⁹⁰ A provision in the Constitution of the Keetoowah Society stated, "Be it resolved by the Keetoowah Convention, if any Keetoowah should get sick, or unable to take care of himself, all members of Keetoowah Society who live nearby, shall look after him and visit him. And in case of the death of any Keetoowah they immediately must notify those that live afar and those that receive the message, it shall be their duty to come. All brother Keetoowahs shall march in line to the grave following the dead. And each shall take a shovel full of dirt and put it in the grave."¹⁹¹ There is a striking similarity between these practices and that of Freemasonry; Master Masons are called from throughout the district, parade in formation to the gravesite, and each cast a spate of dirt upon the grave.

There were also other similarities between the Keetoowah Society and Freemasonry. The positioning of three officers—a religious figure, a secretary and a treasurer within each lodge is also identical to that of the organizational structure of a Freemasonic lodge. Within the Keetoowah ceremony, the participants form a square around the central altar and the "door to the temple" is located and guarded on the East side. When a person appeals "of his own accord" for membership to the Society, his initiation involves standing before the "sacred fire" and having been accepted, he is led around the square. Accepted as he is, the secretary records his name, and he is offered the right hand of fellowship. This practice is reflected in Freemasonic ritual.

The ecclesiastical organization of the Keetoowah Society in with respect to "lodge" and "districts" bears a close relationship to that of Freemasonry. In addition, the practice of transferring lodge membership upon moving from one district to another and the explicit procedures with respect to references and recommendations from the previous "lodge" is also quite similar to that of Freemasonry. In many aspects of organizational structure and function, the Keetoowah Society is strikingly similar to that of American Freemasonry.¹⁹²

At the same time that it was a religious organization, the Keetoowah Society was also one that promoted Cherokee nationalism. Believing that their national identity had come from the divine and that there was a special bond between the "Giver-of-Breath" and the Keetoowah, there was an intense religious nationalism: "With them the Great Spirit and national patriotism seemed to be synonymous terms."¹⁹³ Historian William McLoughlin described the movement: "one key to the power of the movement was that it brought together both full-blooded traditionalists and full-blood Christians in the higher interest of unity and patriotism...[and] demonstrates that religion and politics cannot be separated but they can be transcended in the greater interest of national survival."¹⁹⁴

The rituals and activities associated with the Keetoowah Society were designed to unite the conservatives for political action and to create a force that would build the strength of conservatives in the National Council, promote the interests of traditionalists, and preserve Cherokee sovereignty.¹⁹⁵ In the holistic worldview of the Cherokee people, religion and politics could not be easily separated,

A few members of men of the society met secretly and discussed the condition of the country where they lived. The name Cherokee was in danger. The Cherokee as a Nation were about to disintegrate. It seemed intended to drown our Cherokee Nation and destroy it. For that reason, we resolve to stop it from scattering or forever lose the name Cherokee. We must love each other and abide by treaties made with the federal government. We must cherish them in our hearts. Second, we must abide by the treaties made with other races of people. Third, we must abide by our constitution and laws and uphold the name of the Cherokee Nation. Right here we must endeavor to strengthen our society. Our society must be called Keetoowah.”¹⁹⁶

T.L.Ballenger reaffirmed this position, “It was then that they conceived the idea of forming the full-blood Cherokees, the anti-slavery Keetoowahs, into a large political entity that might be able to salvage the Cherokee lands and other possessions and perpetuate the nation, in case of a Northern victory. Thus came about the writing of the constitution of the Keetoowahs.”¹⁹⁷

The Keetoowah Constitution was read and approved, revised and amended, and updated nearly a dozen times between 1858–1861 at Keetoowah conventions spread throughout the Cherokee Nation. Each lodge was responsible for keeping a copy of the Constitution and thoroughly indoctrinating their membership in it. They also provided for the implementation of the political organizing strategy expressed in the Constitution. At the conventions, political candidates were recruited to run for national office and the grass roots membership was organized into a populist movement to redefine the political soul of the Cherokee Nation. Those who had lost their voice suddenly found it in a reaffirmation of the “Kituwah Spirit.”¹⁹⁸ A new nation was being born.

In discussing the political idealism of the Keetoowah Society, some authors mitigate against the abolitionist nature of the Keetoowah Society, “it was not an abolitionist or antislavery organization, although its members strongly believed that the mixed-blood, educated slaveholders were usurping power and trying to lead the Nation into a fatal alliance with the South,”¹⁹⁹ or “It would probably be more correct to describe the society as not being pro-slavery, rather than being anti-slavery.”²⁰⁰ However, contemporaries viewed the society quite differently:

[The Keetoowahs are a] Secret Society established by Evan Jones, a missionary, and at the service of Mr. John Ross, for the purposes of abolitionizing the Cherokee and putting out of the way all who sympathized with the Southern State...²⁰¹

It was distinctly an anti-slavery organization. The slave-holding Cherokees, who constituted the wealthy and more intelligent class, naturally aligned themselves with the South, while loyal Cherokees became more and more opposed to slavery.”²⁰²

While some of the members of the Society were pro-slavery in their sentiments, yet they loved their country more than slavery—while the majority of its members were positive and strong anti-slavery men. Many were Christians and were opposed to slavery, not only from patriotic motives, but from religious conviction also.²⁰³

The Keetoowah Society, itself, never stated explicitly in its constitution that it was opposed to slavery, for to do so would have violated the “neutrality” contained within its articles. However, it made quite clear its position on the issue. The Constitution of the Keetoowah Society also articulated that a nation based upon the institution of slavery was inimical to the interests of the “Kituwah Spirit.” In expressing that the Keetoowah ancestors “loved and lived as free people who never surrendered to anybody. They loved one another for they were just like one family...” the Keetoowah Constitution was dedicating itself to the notion of liberty and egalitarianism as understood within the “old ways” in the Cherokee Nation. Any notion of slavery or inequality was contrary to the “Kituwah Spirit.”²⁰⁴

In June of 1858, Federal officials wrote to Evan Jones charging him with “abolitionist teaching and preaching in opposition to the institution of slavery.”²⁰⁵ Though Baptist missionaries often get credit for the spread of abolition among the Cherokee, notions of liberty and egalitarianism extended far back into Cherokee history. As mentioned earlier, there was no evidence to support any racially based prejudice or mistreatment of African Americans within the Cherokee Nation prior to contact with “civilization.”²⁰⁶ Many of the conservatives having been slaves themselves in the colonial period and having seen the destructive influences of the slave trade among their own people, it is likely that their opposition to slavery was rooted in their historical experiences. Finally, the lasting relationships between Indians and Africans that existed within both traditional religions as well as the Baptist church provided greater support for a society based upon freedom and liberty. The Keetoowah Society believed that the more the Cherokee Nation disestablished its ties with the institution of slavery, the better it could sustain its own national identity and control its own sovereignty.²⁰⁷

From the potent mix of religious, social, and political forces that shaped the Cherokee Nation in the late 1850s, the Keetoowah Society quickly became a powerful presence in the Cherokee Nation. In the face of the tremendous changes that swept through the country in the nineteenth century, the Keetoowah believed that in tradition lay the power of the “old ways” to overcome acculturation and accommodation to the forces of modernity. Arising from just a few members within the Peavine Church, its membership spread rapidly, and by the end of the decade, as many as 1500 men belonged to the Keetoowah Society.²⁰⁸ With the formal establishment of the Keetoowah Society in the spring of 1858, that which had been a critical factor in Cherokee mythology and religion moved from a secret society

shrouded in mystery to the forefront of Cherokee civilization. In the coming years, that which had been a secret was to be even further revealed. The message would spread beyond the Cherokee Nation and set into motion forces that would dramatically alter the face of Indian Territory.

THE KEETOOWAH MISSION TO OTHER NATIONS

There were deep bonds between the conservative members of the Cherokee Nation and those of the neighboring peoples that lived just across the border in the Mvskoke Nation and the Seminole Nation. The cultural bonds that linked the Mvskoke and Cherokee nations were strengthened at the hands of removal and the “common people” of both nations were found themselves being themselves displaced by the interests of the “progressives.” In addition, the Natchez people that settled among the Mvskoke and Cherokee people following their displacement at the hands of the French provided yet another link between the two peoples. The Natchez were known for their knowledge of the “old ways,” and served to promote traditionalism among the various peoples in which they settled.²⁰⁹

Not only were there traditional ties between the peoples relocated to Indian Territory, there were denominational ones as well. From their very inception, the Baptist missions in the Cherokee Nation established an outreach to the Mvskoke people to their immediate west. In the early days of the Mvskoke Nation in the West, law forbade an Indian or Negro to lead Christian worship services. Yet, it was done anyway, “Small earnest groups met secretly, sang negro spirituals and portions of the Creek Hymns they could remember, and listened to the instructions of ignorant slaves.”²¹⁰ When the hostility towards missionaries lessened in the early eighteen forties, native ministers from the Cherokee station visited the Mvskoke Baptist mission, “The church among the Creeks has been visited by the Cherokee missionaries and found to be in a prosperous condition, under the care of colored preachers. Several have been added to the church. No white missionary labors with the Creeks at present, but Mr. Jones of the Cherokee Mission has been requested to ascertain the practicability of stationing a mission family among them.”²¹¹

The Baptist Mission in the Mvskoke Nation was situated in the same Baptist church that was founded in 1832 by “three blacks, two white people, and one Indian.”²¹² Native preacher John Davis, the first Baptist preacher licensed and ordained in Indian Territory, led what had by this time become Ebenezer Baptist Church.²¹³ When Davis died in 1839, he left the church in very able hands, “Mr. Jones reports the state of the people to be highly encouraging. The members of the church appear well, and the religious meetings are thronged, many of the congregation attending from a distance of twenty or more miles...Religious meetings are conducted by two black men, both slaves. The oldest, Jacob, is ordained; the other called Jack, a

blacksmith, acts as interpreter. They are allowed one day in the week to support themselves and their families in food and clothing; and these days they devote to the service of the church, hiring the working of their little corn and potato patches.”²¹⁴ By 1845, Baptist and Methodist ministers were openly working in the Mvskoke territory and by the end of the following year, the ban against preaching had been lifted. In the area where the Arkansas River and Verdigris River, a number of churches had sprung up led by Native preachers.²¹⁵

On April 12, 1845, Minister Evan Jones founded the Cherokee Baptist Mission Society. Because of the poverty of the conservatives and slaves that supported the Baptist mission, the society was dissolved after only a few years.²¹⁶ However, in late 1848, a great camp meeting was held in the Mvskoke Nation led by Baptist missionaries sent by Evan Jones. Fourteen Mvskoke, including Chilly McIntosh²¹⁷ and several other prominent chiefs, united with the Baptist Church, “The Congregation was made up chiefly of Creeks and blacks, with a few whites and Cherokees. I became acquainted with two very interesting and intelligent young men, one the son of the late principal chief of the Creek nation, and the other of the present chief... They both appear well, and promise great usefulness to their people, as they speak the English and Creek languages fluently.”²¹⁸ At the time, the Mvskoke Baptists had eight preachers—one white, four Native Americans, and three African-Americans—and seven churches with more than 550 members.²¹⁹

In 1850, Evan Jones reconstituted the Cherokee Baptist Mission Society and “the preachers and others entered very cordially into the spirit of the missionary enterprise, and are determined to urge the subject on the attention of the people.”²²⁰ One of the leaders of Cherokee Baptist Mission Society was Reverend Lewis Downing. In the years between 1850 and 1860, Lewis Downing led numerous missions to the Mvskoke Nation, “where they had very large congregations and solemn attention.”²²¹ He brought to Christ all those who sought membership in the Church, “After the services of the morning, the congregation repaired to the water, a stream about a mile distant, and in the presence of a large company, br. Downing with deep solemnity baptized, on the profession of their faith in a dying savior, two Cherokees and three black men.”²²² Jones reported that missionaries such as Downing “are decidedly and steadfastly opposed to slavery; and the direct tendency of their influence is to extend their own sentiments and views. [Their] sincere desire and earnest prayer is, that it may be speedily brought to an end.”²²³

In 1853, Smith Christie, “a Cherokee of decided piety and promise,” was licensed for the ministry and was ordained the following year. In the years following 1858, missionaries Downing, Christie, and [John B.] Jones traveled exclusively throughout the Indian Territory conducting camp meetings, organizing, and structuring the Baptist missions. By 1860, the Cherokee Baptist Missionary Society had grown into a self-supporting

institution that held annual meetings and gave yearly contributions to the American Baptist Missionary Union.²²⁴

In addition to conducting a missionary effort among the Mvskoke with Cherokee missionaries, the “Jones Baptists” took it one step further. On one visit to the Mvskoke Nation in 1857, Evan Jones and Lewis Downing of the Peavine Baptist Church ordained a free black by the name of “Old Billy.” In 1860, Cherokee Henry Davise was ordained at Peavine Baptist Church and sent to the Mvskoke Nation to help “Old Billy” spread the gospel.²²⁵ Henry Davise was also a member of the Keetoowah Society and he was sent forth into the Mvskoke Nation to pursue the interests of the Keetoowah Society. The Keetoowah Society spread among the traditionalists in the Mvskoke Nation in the years preceding the Civil War.²²⁶

Little is known about the Keetoowah Society among the Mvskoke Nation. Angie Debo, in her *The Road to Disappearance* describes, “a secret society of full bloods known as the ‘Pins’... The origins of this society is unknown, but it exerted a strong hidden influence throughout the Nation.”²²⁷ The ‘Pins’ of the Mvskoke Nation were associated with Samuel Checote, a full blood Methodist minister from Alabama and one-time chief of the Mvskoke Nation. Checote was a graduate of the Asbury Mission and pastor of Eufaula Methodist Church in the Mvskoke Nation.²²⁸ He was also a member of Muscogee Lodge #93.²²⁹

There is no evidence of “Pin” activity among the Seminole Nation. However, it is likely that the Baptist message spread among the Seminole along the same routes as it did among the traditional Mvskoke and Cherokee. James S. Murrow, Baptist missionary and future “father of Oklahoma Freemasonry,” settled among the Seminole at the North Fork Town near Eufala in the Mvskoke Nation. Murrow immediately began his missionary work, “He secured a Negro interpreter, and promptly began his life’s work. December 25, [1857] Brother Murrow baptized an Indian girl. Since that time he has baptized more than a thousand Indians and almost as many whites and Blacks.”²³⁰

Just across town from Murrow’s missionary outpost was the North Fork Baptist Church; over the years, this church had become “a sort of ‘Jerusalem’” in the Indian Territory.²³¹ It was founded in 1854 by Black Baptist Monday Durant and was later ministered by the Black Baptist evangelist “Old Billy.”²³² The North Fork Baptist Church was also the center of the Keetoowah Society within the Mvskoke Nation. It was to the North Fork Baptist Church that Henry Davise was sent by the Cherokee Baptist Missionary Association. In later years, the church was later to become the center of a strong evangelical revival under the leadership of Black Baptist Harry Islands.²³³

James Factor, a “beloved man” among the Seminole, had made the North Fork Church a center of a controversy when he became the first Seminole to convert to Christianity. Factor, was a descendent of Black Factor and member of one of the oldest families of “black muscolges.”²³⁴ He was also

friends with Chief John Jumper of the Seminole Nation. Chief Jumper belonged to the “Moon Order,” a secret society among the Seminole that dated to the pre-removal period,²³⁵ but in 1860, he converted to the Baptist faith. Rev. Murrow, upon hearing of Chief Jumper’s conversion, established a Baptist mission at Ash Creek Baptist Church with Jumper as its first member. He was, within a few years, to become pastor of the church.²³⁶

Chief Jumper was also a Freemason.²³⁷ Freemasonry had also spread from the Cherokee Nation into the Mvskoke Nation. It also spread into the Seminole Nation through Seminole residents of the Mvskoke Nation. From the very first lodge formed in the Indian Territory among the Cherokee in Tahlequah, the brotherhood was spread by missionaries, merchants, government agents, and military officials. Reverend John Bertholf, member of Cherokee Lodge #21, relocated to the Mvskoke Nation and was appointed Superintendent of the Asbury Mission in Eufaula in 1859. George Butler, government agent and junior warden of Cherokee Lodge #21, became one of the charter members of the military base lodge at Fort Gibson Lodge #35. Doaksville Lodge #52 was organized in the Choctaw Nation and led by Chief Peter Pitchlyn, Sam Garvin, Basil Laflore, plantation owner Robert Jones, and American Board missionary Cyrus Kingsbury. Walter Scott Adair, Worshipful Master of Cherokee Lodge #21, left Lodge #21 to organize Flint Lodge #74 deep in Keetoowah country near the southeastern corner of the Cherokee Nation.

Joseph Coodey, nephew of John Ross and Junior Warden of Cherokee Lodge #21, resettled in the Mvskoke Nation at North Fork Town near Eufala.²³⁸ Benjamin Marshall, George Stidham, and Samuel Checote, all affiliates of the Asbury Mission, formed Muscogee Lodge #93 at the Creek Agency near the border of the Cherokee Nation. One of the early members of Muscogee Lodge #93 was a prominent traditional leader (and relative of Asi Yahola, i.e., Osceola)²³⁹ by the name of Opothle Yahola.²⁴⁰

The Keetoowah ideals of community, patriotism, and sovereignty spread throughout the Indian Territory through the several organizations that most clearly reflected these ideals. The Baptist Church, with its sense of the “beloved community,” its affiliation with political idealism, its tolerance for religious traditionalism, and the very nature of its ecclesiastical structure, resonated with the highest tenets of the “Kituwah Spirit.” The fact that the Baptist ministers were fluent in Cherokee and supported a missionary program led by native ministers was also a tremendously powerful influence in the spread of the Keetoowah message among the conservative population. Lastly, that the Baptist churches and missions were composed of persons of Cherokee heritage, both black and Indian, would prove to be of critical importance.

The split that had occurred within the Freemasonry in the Indian Territory was indicative of a larger rift that was spreading through the Masonic brotherhood throughout the United States. Yet, many of the brothers of the nascent lodges in this new land clung to the ties of

fraternalism, of service to the community, of honor, and of nationalism that had led them to bond together in the first place. Torn between the Cherokee Nation and their Mother Lodge, they placed their faith and confidence in each other and in their collective ability to work together “like so many links of a chain.”²⁴¹ In so doing, their affinity with the ideals of the Keetoowah Society was made manifest.

The nations would split, the churches would split, and the lodges would split, but the “Kituwah Spirit” would persevere in the hearts of the people. In the coming years, the trials and tribulations of the Cherokee Nation would be great and the spirit of the Cherokee people would be tested perhaps in a manner unparalleled in their history. Many Cherokee would “present their bodies a living sacrifice...abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good.”²⁴² The Keetoowah Laws would allow for nothing less, “Our secret society shall be named ‘Keetoowah.’ All of the members of our Keetoowah Society shall be like one family. It should be the intention that we must abide with each other in love. We must not surrender under any circumstances until we shall ‘fall to the ground united’ We must lead one another by the hand with all our strength. Our government is being destroyed. We must resort to our bravery to stop it.”²⁴³

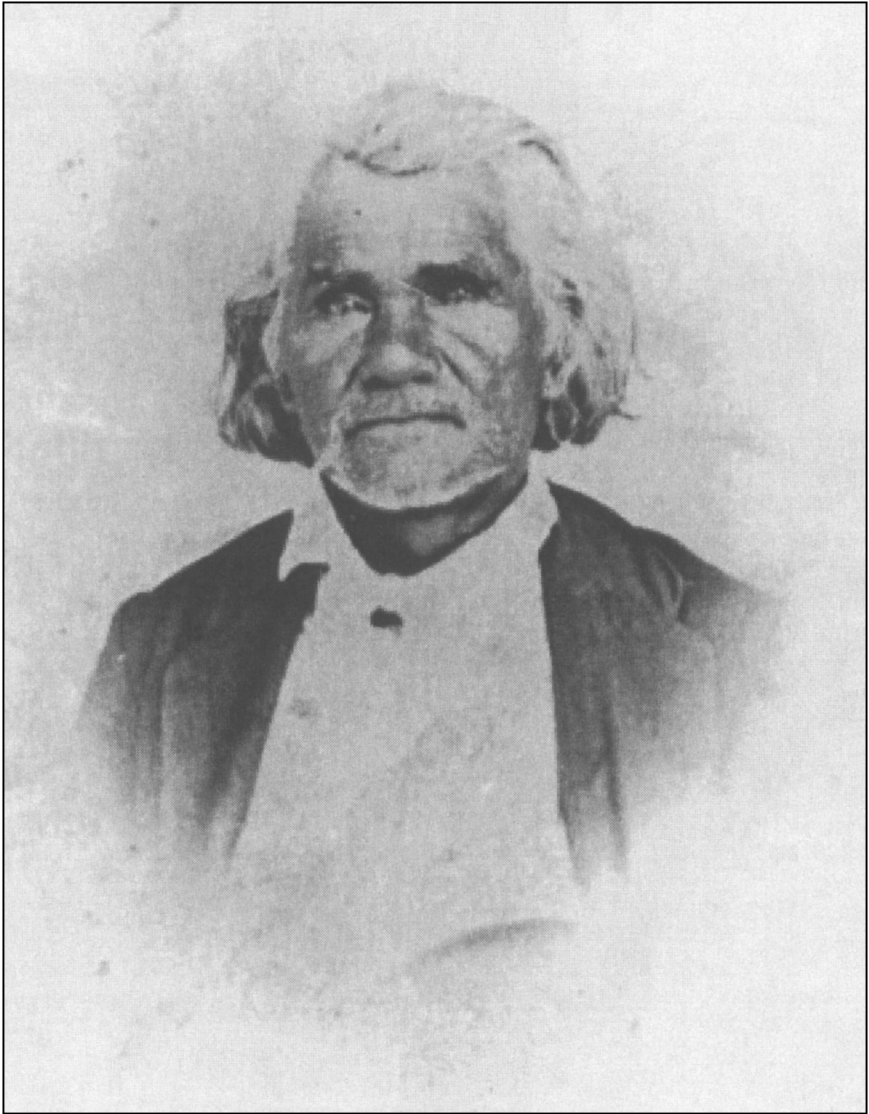


Figure 1: Stand Watie—leader of the Knights of the Golden Circle. Used with permission from the Archives and Manuscripts Division of the Oklahoma Historical Society.

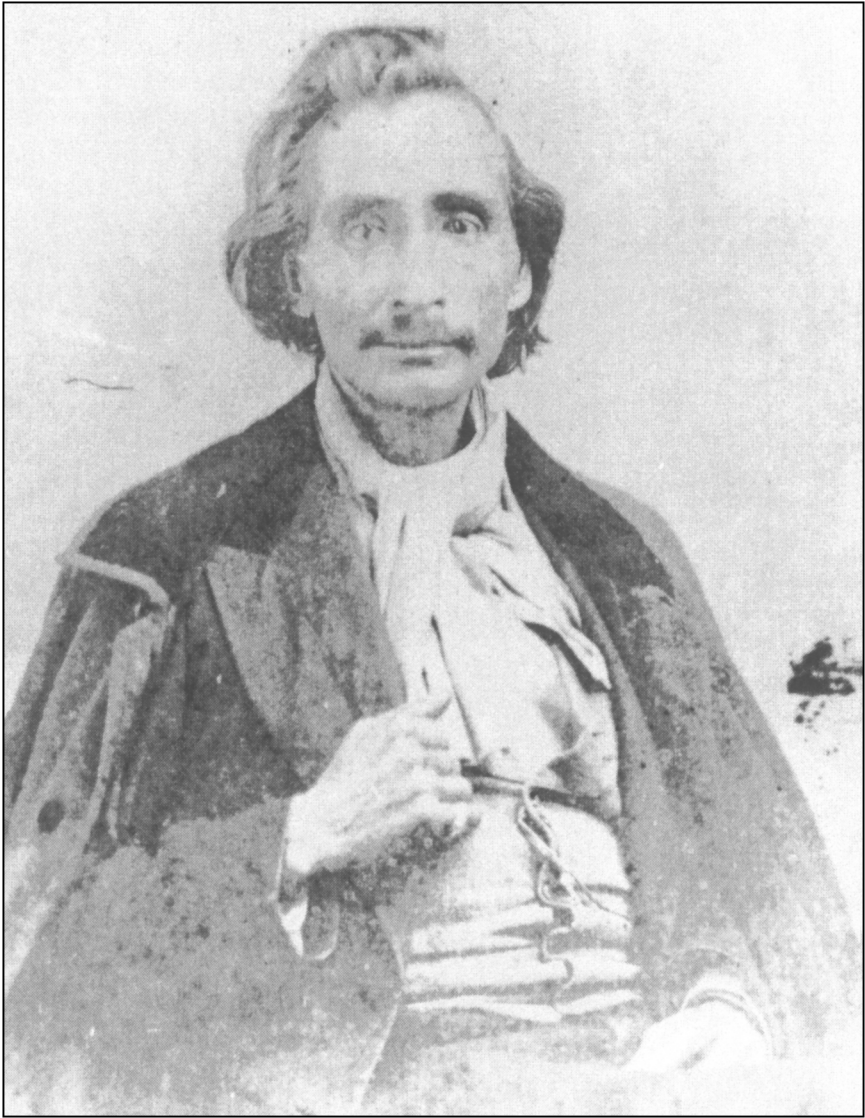


Figure 2: Louis Downing—leader of the Keetoowah Society. Used with permission from the Archives and Manuscripts Division of the Oklahoma Historical Society.



Figure 3: Opothle Yahola—leader of the Mvskoke. Used with permission from the Archives and Manuscripts Division of the Oklahoma Historical Society.

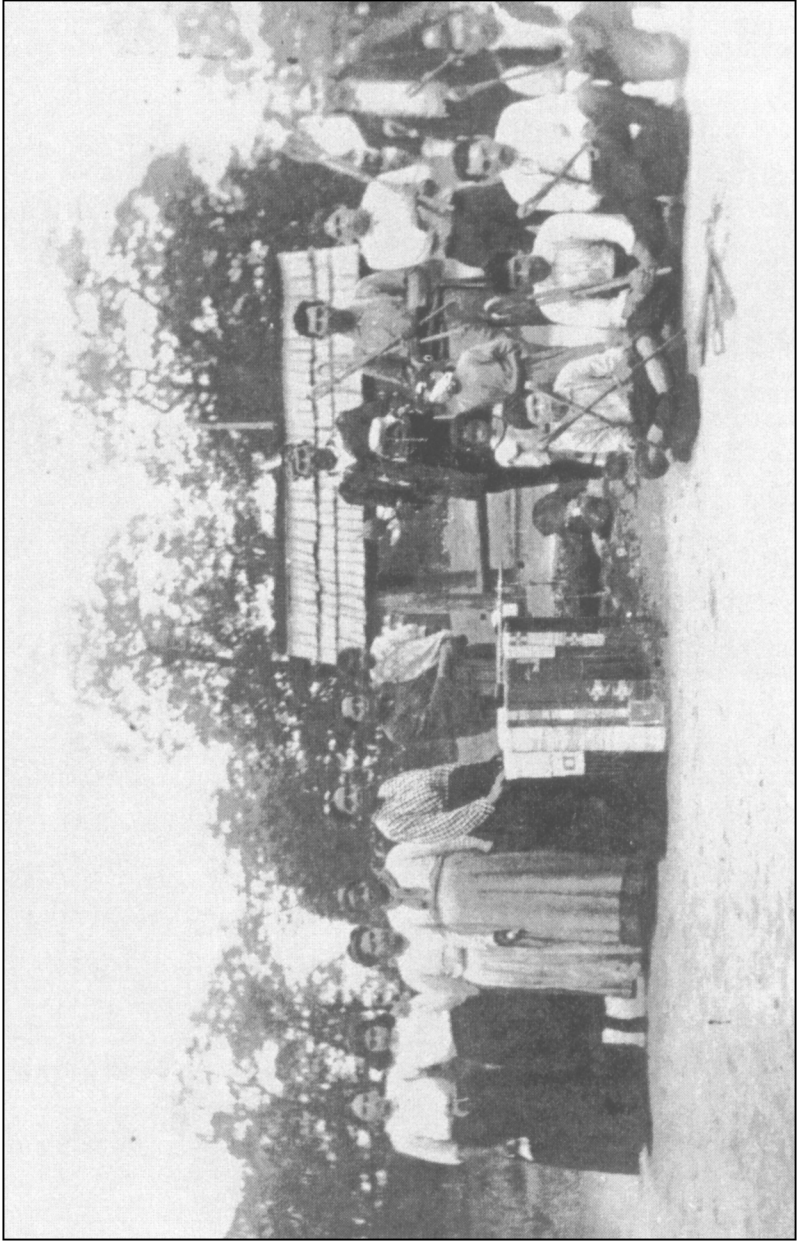


Figure 4: Keetoowah Society with wampum and stickball implements near Gore, OK, 1917. Mrs. Redbird Smith Collection. Used with permission from the Archives and Manuscripts Division of the Oklahoma Historical Society.

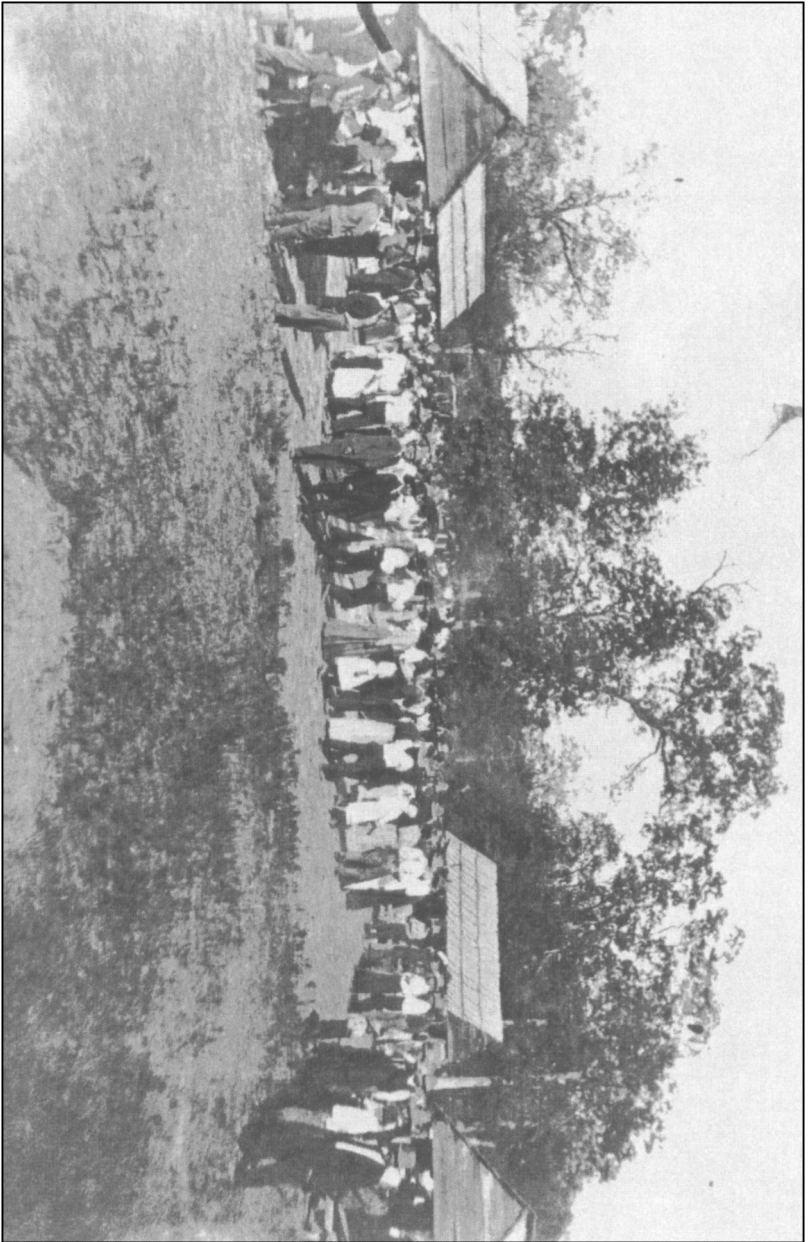


Figure 5: Keetoowah Society stomp dance at ceremonial round near Gore, OK, 1917. Mrs. Redbird Smith Collection. Used with permission from the Archives and Manuscripts Division of the Oklahoma Historical Society.

CHAPTER FOUR

“Between Two Fires”

Heading blindly north across a hundred miles of bleak plains, their only thought was to reach the mythical “Kansas.” By day, little parties of them cowered along the brushy creeks sheltered from the biting wind. After dark, they ventured across the open plains, guided by the stars and hoping to reach the next timber before dawn when Stand Watie’s keen-eyed horsemen were sure to spy them. The fugitives killed and ate their horses, used the hides for shelter and cut them into rude moccasins for frosted feet. Women crept from hiding places in gullies, after the pursuant horsemen had passed, and picked kernels of corn from the horses’ droppings to chew for food. Mothers, terrified and discouraged, threw babies into freezing mudholes and trampled the life out of them...

The rout was complete, with seven hundred Indians perishing in the fight. Confederate newspapers crowed exultantly, reported Stand Watie sweeping victoriously north across the “Boston abolition strongholds, leaving Fort Scott, Topeka, and Lawrence in ashes...”

In Fort Leavenworth, Agent George A. Cutler wired Washington: “Heopothleyohola...needs help badly... Hurry up Lane.”¹

—Jay Monaghan, *Civil War on the Western Border 1854–1865*

THE END OF SECRECY AND THE BIRTH OF THE “PINS”

The militancy of the Jones’ Baptists over the issue of slavery and the fact that their followers had moved from preaching to political organization over the issue became an increasing threat to the officials responsible for the Indian Territory. Federal Agent George Butler (a member of Fort Gibson Lodge #35) officially accused Evan Jones of being an “abolitionist” leading Jones to demand that Butler cite the specifics of his charges.² In 1858, Butler also noted the influence of certain “other” individuals, “there are a few Black Republicans, who are the particular fondlings of the abolition missionaries that have been, and still are making themselves officious upon the subject of slavery.”³ Although Agent Butler did not identify these “Black Republicans,” we must consider the message of liberation being spread in the Indian Territory by black ministers such as Joseph Island, Old Billy, Brother Jesse, Monday Durant, and Uncle Reuben.

On February 3, 1859, the *Fort Smith Times* noted not only the influence of the “Black Republicans,” but also that of the Baptist missionaries who

allowed them to operate with such freedom within their churches. Evan Jones was particularly cited as being “an abolitionist, and a very dangerous man, meddling with the affairs of the Cherokees, and teaching them abolition principles.”⁴ In late 1859, William Penn Adair (Flint Lodge #74), a member of the Cherokee National Council, declared that the Knights of the Golden Circle would remove the Joneses from the Cherokee Nation even if they had to resort to mob violence to accomplish their purpose.⁵ Adair, after an earlier struggle with Evan Jones over a “runaway slave,” noted that Jones’s “abolition principles and doctrines...may ‘gull’ a few of the ignorant class...but I think the more enlightened parties would rejoice at his removal.”⁶

In October 1859, George Butler had seen enough. He ordered John B. Jones “to take my person and effects and remove them out of the Nation.”⁷ Butler also ordered the sheriff of Goingsnake District to arrest Jones, by force if necessary, and remove him from the Cherokee Nation. When the sheriff went to arrest Jones, word was sent out among the faithful and the Keetoowah in the vicinity surrounded the mission. The sheriff was “deterred from executing the order by fear of the common people.”⁸ If the federal government would act against the will of the “common people,” then the people would, themselves, become the will of the Cherokee Nation. The Keetoowah Society had taken a profound step towards the building of a new nation; it had acted in its own self-defense.

Emerging within the Keetoowah Society was a distinctive form of patriot, one whose struggle was not only for the preservation of the “old ways,” but also one who was passionate in their concerns for the preservation of a sovereign nation. The “Pins,” or “Pin Indians” as they came to be called, were an offshoot organization made up of the more militant branch of the Keetoowah Society. Whereas the Keetoowah Society was dedicated to the “white path of righteousness,” the “Pins” would follow the “Red Path, the path of war and blood revenge.”⁹ The “Pins” chose the United States flag as their symbol and wore crossed straight pins on the left lapel of their hunting jackets and were thus called the “Pins.” The term “pins” came to be used as a derogatory term by for the Keetoowah Society by members of the Treaty Party.¹⁰

As the “Pins” were dedicated to the “red path” in an increasingly dangerous Cherokee Nation, they developed their own security measures. The pins on their lapel were worn “in the event that hand-to-hand combat against one another, they were not to harm anyone wearing the cross pins.”¹¹ They developed secret signs such as touching the hat as a salutation or taking their left lapel and drawing it forward and rightward across the heart.¹² When meeting each other in the dark, the first asked the other, “Who are you?” The reply or pass was “Tahlequah—who are you?” The proper response was, “I am Keetoowah’s son!”¹³

By the middle of 1860, the crisis over slavery and secession that was sweeping the country made its way to Indian Territory and the Keetoowah

Society became a source of great concern. The “Pins,” with their militant activism, aroused great attention among the government and the press. The *Fort Smith Times* (Arkansas) issued the following alarm:

We noticed a week or two ago that there was a secret organization going on in the Cherokee Nation, and that it was among full-blood Indians alone. We are informed by good authority that the organization is growing and expanding daily, and that no half or mixed blood Indian is taken into this organization. The strictest secrecy is observed, and it is death, by the order, to divulge the object of the Society. They hold meetings in the thickets, and in every secret place, to initiate members. We are told that the mixed-bloods are becoming alarmed, and every attempt to find out the object of this secret cabal has thus far proved abortive. The Joneses are said to be the leaders in the work, and what these things are tending to, no one can predict. We fear that something horrible is to be enacted on the frontier, and that this secret work will not stop among the Cherokees, but extend to other tribes on this frontier. The Government should examine into this matter, before it becomes too formidable.¹⁴

Interestingly enough, the actions of the Knights of the Golden Circle and the threats and intimidation of the Northern Baptists and their followers were not an issue of concern.

A.B.Greenwood, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, responded to the public alarm by dispatching Colonel Robert Cowart, formerly of Georgia, to investigate the Keetoowah Society and to proceed “at once to break it up,” as it was now deemed a threat to national security, “It is believed that the ultimate object of this organization is to interfere with the institutions of that people, and that its influences will extend to the other tribes upon the Western border of Arkansas. This scheme must be broken up: for if it is permitted to ripen, that country will, sooner or later, be drenched in blood. You are aware that there is a large slave property in the Cherokee country, and if any steps are taken by which such property will be rendered unsafe, internal war will be the inevitable result, in which the people of the bordering states will be involved.”¹⁵ Cowart was also informed that if “any white persons residing in the Nation are in any way connected with this organization, he will notify such person or persons forthwith to leave the Nation.” Entering the Cherokee Nation, Cowart knew “that the Secretary of War will be requested to place such force at his disposal as may be necessary to enforce any order he may deem it his duty to make.”¹⁶

Upon arriving in Indian Territory, Colonel Cowart found that his reliance upon the Secretary of War would not be necessary; the forces of the Knights of the Golden Circle were already mobilized to accomplish his goals. Stand Watie and William Penn Adair had started a petition among the Knights of the Golden Circle, calling for the eviction of John B. Jones from the Nation, “The said Intruder is an abolitionist and as such is scattering his principles of Abolitionism like fire brands throughout the country. It is needless to say

...that our whole system of Government recognizes the institution of African slavery... Our present unhappy state of affairs has to a very great degree been brought about by the doctrines that this intruder is daily promulgating under the guise of preaching to the Cherokees the Gospel of Jesus Christ.”¹⁷ The petition further excoriated the Northern Baptist churches for supporting abolitionism by excluding slaveholders from the church. Though it also accused Evan Jones of preaching the doctrine of abolitionism, it did not call for sanctions against the missionary who had more than once been the source of controversy.

In his efforts to gain information about the Keetoowah Society sufficient to call in Federal troops, Cowart was less successful, “As regards those Secret Societies, I firmly believe, that they are gotten up with a view to aid in conveying those abolition plans of operation, to a successful termination. Allow me to say—that I shall continue to travel in and through the Nation until I establish those charges if it can possibly be done.”¹⁸ There were also different kinds of problems associated with interfering with the affairs of the Keetoowah Society. William Penn Adair addressed these difficulties in a letter to Stand Watie, “Fifty men with guns appeared to watch after Geo. Smith and Chas. Rooster to protect them, though unauthorized by law. These fifty men were ‘Secret’ men, and seemed to present rather a defiant front We need not expect any quarters from our enemies.”¹⁹

On September 7, 1860, Colonel Cowart wrote a letter to John B. Jones that stated, “I have petitions by some 500 citizens asking for your removal from the Cherokee Nation by the 25th of this present month...otherwise Military Force will be employed to remove you.”²⁰ Fearing that this “Military Force” would take him to Arkansas where a waiting mob would tar and feather him, Jones and a small contingency of Keetoowah set forth for Kansas: “I feel my forceable expulsion from the Cherokee Nation to be a great outrage. I feel that I have been deeply and grossly wronged. I have the sympathies of a large majority of the Cherokees. Many of them expressed their great indignation at the treatment I had received. They felt that Colonel Cowart, the U.S. Agent, had usurped authority over their country and was attempting to establish a precedent, which if followed up, would override their government and rob them of their sacred rights.”²¹

“A POSITION OF NEUTRALITY”

On the eve of the Civil War, a chasm located specifically along economic, political and even “blood” lines split the Cherokee Nation. On the one side lay the “progressives” of the “Southern Rights” party that sought to align themselves with the South and the enveloping culture of slavery. On the other side lay the “conservatives” that believed that the best interests of the Cherokee Nation rested with the fortunes of “the people” and the preservation of the “old ways.” Going into the national [U.S] elections of 1860, the Cherokee

Nation was as split by controversy and dissension as the larger United States. When the elections were over, the results would be even more disastrous for the Cherokee than it would be for the larger United States.

The election of Abraham Lincoln in November set in motion a series of cataclysmic events. The following month, the state of South Carolina adopted an Ordinance of Secession and withdrew from the United States of America. At the beginning of 1861, Kansas entered the United States but by the end of May, ten more states had seceded from the Union. On February 4, 1861, six secessionist states met in Montgomery, Alabama and formed a provisional government, the Confederate States of America, and appointed Jefferson Davis as interim President of the C.S.A. Federal funds and property were seized throughout the South and the secessionist states were seen as engaging in servile insurrection. In early spring of 1861, Abraham Lincoln, the newly inaugurated President of the United States, issued the call for 40,000 volunteers to serve for three years in defense of the United States of America and in preservation of the union.

On January 5, 1861, following activism by the Knights of the Golden Circle, the Chickasaw Nation authorized its governor to appoint commissioners to meet with representatives from other Indian Nations for the purpose of “entering into some compact, not inconsistent with the Laws and Treaties of the United States, for the future security and protection of the rights and Citizens of said nation, in the event of a change in the United States.”²² On March 11, 1861, the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations met at Boggy Depot and decided to send designates to meet with the Confederate States of America to discuss a political allegiance.²³

John Ross, upon hearing of the decision, wrote to Cyrus Harris of the Chickasaw Nation in early February, “Although I regret most deeply, the excitement which has arisen among our White brethren: yet by us it can only be regarded as a family misunderstanding among themselves. And it behooves us to be careful, in any movement of ours, to refrain from adopting any measures liable to be misconstrued or misrepresented:—and in which (at present at least) we have no direct and proper concern.”²⁴ Chief Ross, seeking to maintain neutrality in the coming conflict, asked Harris to send a body of representatives to a council of the Five Nations to discuss the current crisis. The council of the Five Nations was called for by Harris and scheduled for February 17, 1861.²⁵

On January 25, 1861, the *Arkansas Gazette* published an editorial that warned, “In the event that Arkansas secedes from the Union, a war on her Western frontier is inevitable. That Abolition enemies of the South will hiss the Indians upon her...for the indulgence of their hellish passions [is obvious].”²⁶ Less than a week later, Chief Ross received a letter from the governor of Arkansas that stressed the ties between the Cherokee and their Southern neighbors, “Our people and yours are natural allies in war and friends in peace. Your country is salubrious and fertile, and possesses the highest capacity for future progress and development by the application of

slave labor. Besides this, the contiguity of our territory with yours induces relations of so intimate a character as to preclude the idea of discordant or separate action.” and that he hoped the Cherokee were “willing to cooperate with the South in defense of her institutions.”²⁷

Ross wrote a letter to the *Arkansas Gazette* stating that the Cherokee’s “first wish is for peace and the protection by the Central Government... But if ambition, passion, and prejudice blindly and wickedly destroy it—with a fair guarantee of their rights, they will go where their institutions and geographical position place them—with Arkansas and Missouri.”²⁸ However, with respect to the issue of an attack by the Indians and the indulgence of their “hellish passions,” he replied, “We are not dogs to be hissed on by abolitionists.”²⁹

Responding to the governor, Ross stated, “The Cherokees have placed themselves under the protection of the United States and no other Sovereign whatsoever...” but that “Their institutions, locality and natural sympathies are unequivocally with the slave-holding States.”³⁰ When John Ross sent his nephew William P. Ross to the council of Five Nations in mid-February, he reminded them of their sacred oaths, “Our duty is very plain. We have only to adhere firmly to our respective treaties. By them we have placed ourselves under the protection of the United States, and of no other sovereign whatsoever. We are bound to hold no treaty with any other foreign Power, or with any individual State or combination of States nor with Citizens of any State. Nor even with one another without the interposition and participation of the United States.”³¹

THE SHADOW OF WAR

The halfbreeds belong to the Knights of the Golden Circle, a society whose sole object is to increase and defend slavery, and the fullbloods have—not to be outdone—got up a secret organization called ‘the Pins’ which meets among the mountains, connecting business with Ball-playing, and this is to be understood to be in favor of the [Lincoln] Gov’t.³²

The pressure upon Chief John Ross of the Cherokee Nation was intense; his nation was splitting apart just as was the larger United States. Moreover, not just the Cherokee, but all of the Five Nations were facing internal conflicts that reflected the impending crises of the coming war. Ross, with the support of his conservative allies within the Keetoowah Society, was working within the political system to maintain the sovereignty of the Cherokee Nation, abide by their sacred treaties, and to establish a position of neutrality between North and South. At the same time, the Keetoowah Society was working within the religious congregations to build the “beloved community,” preserve the religious traditions, promote the common welfare, and provide for independence and sovereignty of the Cherokee Nation.

At the heart of the resistance movement lay a core of beliefs that was best defined as the "white path of righteousness;" these beliefs became embodied in the "Kituwah Spirit." Very much in the tradition of Cherokee culture, this fusion of the "old ways," the gospel of liberation, and Masonic idealism helped shape a unique vision of the Cherokee Nation. The message of the Keetoowah Society provided a sense of identity and purpose that would be a unifying element among conservatives in the political, economic, and military struggle that would come to the Cherokee Nation over the next five years.

The Knights of the Golden Circle also continued to mobilize, and sought to destabilize that religious community that they perceived to be dominated by "abolition enemies of the South." Willard Upham, minister of the Bushyheadville Church at the Cherokee mission,³³ reported that the slaveholding members of the community had withdrawn their support for his mission, "There is a great reduction from former attendance and this is to be accounted for by the intense hostility to our mission on the part of the large pro-slavery party in the Cherokee Nation who have for more than a year past, by means of the press in the contiguous states, and every possible means, stigmatized our Mission as a 'Nest of Abolitionists whose only business was to overthrow slavery in this country and make a Second Kansas thereof.'"³⁴

Upham, a Baptist minister and public school teacher, had remained in the Cherokee Nation even after the flight of John Jones. Upham was firmly opposed by the Knights of the Golden Circle and they sought to have him removed from his teaching position. Smith Christie, a leader of the Keetoowah, reported to John Jones a "desperate effort made to pass a bill in the Cherokee Council" for the removal of Evan Jones and Willard Upham from the Cherokee Nation.³⁵ However, a systematic effort had been made by the Keetoowah to organize politically and to elect representatives to the Cherokee Council. They were successful in gaining a large number of representatives to the Lower House of the council, but they were soon met with strong opposition, "In every political election, whenever a Baptist happens to be a candidate for office, he is opposed as an abolitionist and sometimes successfully opposed on the ground only."³⁶

The Upper House, dominated by the Knights of the Golden Circle, continually presented bills to remove the Baptist missionaries from the Cherokee Nation and to close down Willard Upham's school. Each time, the efforts of the Keetoowah Society in the Lower House prevented these bills from being passed.³⁷ Some bills even made it through both houses only to be vetoed at the hands of Chief Executive John Ross. The factional dispute over slavery, which had its roots in a much deeper struggle in the Cherokee Nation, had moved to the forefront of the political process. The struggles in the National Council were representative of a much more violent struggle to be carried out in other places in the Cherokee Nation.

In November 1860, a four-day "meeting" led by Smith Christie at the

Peavine Church was attacked by what the younger Jones called “emissaries of the Prince of Darkness.” These forces attempted to break up the meeting, “They came to the meeting in the evening and made a formidable demonstration. The Cherokees immediately gathered a strong force and arrested the whole gang and kept them under guard the whole night. This put an end to their enterprise of abolition hunting; but a man belonging to their party, named Alberty, threw a paper of gunpowder into the fire, at one of the camps. Fortunately, no one was hurt... May the Lord [set] down all opposition to his cause by converting the offenders and changing them from enemies into friends of God and truth.”³⁸

In early February, a plot to assassinate Evan Jones was launched within the Cherokee Nation as part of a larger “plot to kill off several of the principle men of the Nation. All this was, of course, in behalf of the ‘peculiar institution.’”³⁹ Once this was to be accomplished, “the buildings on the mission premises were to have been burned.”⁴⁰ The elder Jones, taking the plot seriously, joined his son in Kansas where he spent much of the duration of the next five years. In late February, Willard Upham left the Cherokee Nation to escape “apprehension and arrest by Southern Troops” from his position as missionary to the Cherokee.⁴¹

In February, a group of representatives from the State of Texas engaged in a diplomatic mission to the Indian Territory to explore the sentiments of the various Indian governments regarding a relationship with the Confederate States of America. After meeting with Chief John Ross, they concluded that he did not recognize the Confederacy and would not be easily swayed. They likened his position to that of fellow Cherokee and Freemason Sam Houston who refused to support secession from the Union and was eventually deposed from the governorship of Texas.⁴² The Texas delegation also considered Ross to be the leader of the “common Indians of the Cherokee” and unduly under the influence of abolitionist Evan Jones, a “Northern missionary of education and ability who has been among them for many years, and who is said to exert no small influence with John Ross himself.”⁴³ The Texas Delegation placed their confidence in the progressive Cherokee—“the intelligence of the nation.”⁴⁴ In spite of their doubts about him and the “common Indians,” Chief Ross assured the delegates that “if Virginia and the other Border States seceded from the Government of the United States, his people would declare for the Southern Government that might be formed.”⁴⁵

In March 1861, Freemason Robert Toombs, the Secretary of State of the Confederate States of America, sent forth a resolution requesting a “special agent to the Indian Tribes west of the State of Arkansas.”⁴⁶ The next day, the government appointed Albert Pike, a Freemason and member of the Democratic American Party (Know-Nothings), as Confederate Commissioner to the Indian Nations.⁴⁷ Later that month, the Confederate Congress created the Bureau of Indian Affairs, under the auspices of the War Department, and appropriated \$100,000 for the activities of the Department.⁴⁸

Albert Pike was well known among the Five Nations. He had been legal counsel to the Choctaw in a successful effort to recover misappropriated federal funds. In addition to this, he was also the founder of the Southern Jurisdiction of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite.⁴⁹ In spring of 1860, Albert Pike had raised Peter Pitchlyn (Chief of the Choctaw), Cherokee Elias C. Boudinot, and Holmes Colbert (National Secretary of the Chickasaw Nation) to the 33rd degree of the Scottish Rite.⁵⁰ Truly, Pike's Masonic connections were a critical factor in consolidating support among the Five Nations for the Confederate States of America.

In March 1861, a secession convention was held in Arkansas. In a diplomatic maneuver to win favor among the Cherokee elite, Elias C. Boudinot, a Cherokee resident of Little Rock, was appointed secretary of the convention. On May 6, the convention passed the Arkansas Ordinance of Secession.⁵¹ Shortly afterwards, a party of Cherokee led by Stand Watie, leader of the Knights of the Golden Circle, met with Albert Pike and General Benjamin McCulloch, "in order to ascertain whether the Confederate States would protect them against Mr. Ross and the Pin Indians, if they should organize and take up arms for the South."⁵²

Pike and McCulloch were both well aware of the conflict that existed within the Cherokee Nation, "It appears that there are two parties in the Cherokee Nation—one very much in favor of joining the Southern Confederacy; the other hesitates, and favors the idea of remaining neutral. These two parties are kept apart by bitter feuds of long standing, and it is possible that feelings of animosity may tempt one party to join the North: should their forces march into the Indian Territory."⁵³ Pike urged Stand Watie to assume responsibility for the destiny of the Cherokee Nation. However, he was not alone in his efforts. A group of secessionists from Arkansas had previously met with Watie and informed him that twenty-five hundred guns were being shipped to western Arkansas. They assured him that a goodly number of these could be made available to protect the interests of the Confederate States of America in the Indian Territory.⁵⁴

Pike and McCulloch set out in late May for the cottage of John Ross hoping to win the Cherokee Chief and his nation over to the side of the Confederacy. If he did not see their point of view, they would inform Ross that there would be serious consequences for the Cherokee. Fully aware of the hostilities that existed within the Cherokee Nation, Pike proclaimed, "If he refuses, he will learn that his country will be occupied; and I shall then negotiate with the leaders of the half-breeds who are now raising troops."⁵⁵ With the Federal government having abandoned all outposts in the Indian Territory and refusing to make payments owed to the Cherokee, Ross was in dire straits. In spite of this, he courageously maintained the neutrality of the Cherokee Nation and stressed the precedence of Cherokee treaties with United States that forbade allegiances with foreign governments.

Chief Ross told a federal officer, "We do not wish our soil to become the battle ground between the States and our homes to be rendered desolate and

miserable by the horrors of civil war.”⁵⁶ However, the Cherokee Nation was divided, and, according to Albert Pike, the Cherokee people “could not remain neutral.”⁵⁷ Elizabeth Watts, a former slave from the Cherokee Nation, described the state of the Nation in 1861:

Years passed, and the bad feeling between the two factions seemed to get worse over the question of slavery. Ross opposed it. Stand Watie, relative of Boudinot, was for it. Missionaries came along the “Trail of Tears” and opposed it. Some Indian Agents were for it. The Indians did not want to fight...Not many full bloods owned slaves and they had a secret society called “Kee-too-wah.” They wore two common pins crossed on their coats for an emblem. Most all full-bloods belonged and wanted to stay with Tribal laws and customs. Most of them were the Ross faction and opposed Slavery. Those who endorsed slavery had a society and it was made up of half-breeds and they owned most of the slaves. About this time the war broke out. A man named Albert Pike came from Arkansas and wanted the Cherokees to join the Southern Army. Lots of them joined, but Chief Ross never would do it, and tried to keep all of them from it. But the half-breeds and some of the full-bloods did it anyway, and finally, Pike got the Cherokees to sign as a whole, promising them many things, but all of them didn’t join the South though a hasty treaty was made.⁵⁸

In early June, John Ross again called for a council of the Five Nations to discuss the crises and to determine the best course for the Indians in the impending struggle. The counsel, held at Antelope Hills, was composed of leaders of the traditional community or as Albert Pike described it later, “Northern and other Indians.” Pike also stated that he believed the purpose of the meeting, “to remain neutral” and “to take advantage of the War Between the States, to form a great independent Indian Confederation.”⁵⁹ Though Albert Pike was to crow about the “Southern Indians” and their solid support for the Confederacy, a different vision was beginning to spread within the Indian Territory.

INTO THE FIRE

On May 17, 1861 Chief John Ross issued a statement regarding the neutrality Cherokee Nation in the pending Civil War and emphasized that the Cherokee wished to “take no part in the present deplorable state of affairs” and fervently hoped that “they should not be called upon to participate in the threatened fratricidal war...”⁶⁰ The following day, Stand Watie was approached by Southern agents and encouraged to “join in our efforts for mutual defense” by forming Cherokee militia units; he was assured that they would be armed within weeks. With this in mind, Watie immediately contacted the Knights of the Golden Circle and began to organize his troops for induction into the Army of the Confederate States of America.⁶¹

In early June, the Council of the Great Nations met and attempted to resolve the issue of allegiances and to determine the proper course for "the people" of the Indian Territory. Present at this conference were Chief John Ross of the Cherokee Nation, Chief John Jumper of the Seminole Nation, Chief Peter Pitchlynn of the Choctaw Nation, and Chief Opothle Yahola of the Creek Nation. Each of these men was a Freemason.⁶² A central issue for discussion at this council was a plan for the establishment of a "great independent Indian Confederation." Not a new idea, it was remarkably reminiscent of the concept of a confederation articulated by Freemason William Augustus Bowles nearly a century earlier.⁶³

As the leaders of the Five Nations met at Antelope Hills, Albert Pike (and possibly Brother J.S. Murrow) hastily organized an alternative council at the Asbury Mission near the North Fork Village in the Eufaula District of the Creek Nation. Present at this meeting were Freemasons Samuel Checote, George Stidham, and Robert Jones, as well a number of other wealthy and educated mixed-bloods and "Southern Rights" sympathizers.⁶⁴ In early July, Pike announced a treaty with the "United Nations of the Indian Territory" signed by numerous progressives that granting the "Grand Council" the right to arm troops in order to repel the "invading forces of Abolition hordes under Abraham Lincoln."⁶⁵ On July 12, 1861, Stand Watie was commissioned as a Colonel in the Confederate States of America and his battalion was stationed near the Arkansas border.⁶⁶ North Fork Village, the former "Jerusalem" of the Indian Territory, became the seat of this "Grand Council" and the center of Confederate operations for the first two years of the war.⁶⁷

During this critical period in Cherokee history, the embers that had been smoldering on both sides were quickened by the winds of history and the flames erupted throughout the Cherokee Nation. Reverend Henry F. Buckner indicated the climate of increasing violence in the Indian Territory when he described the murder of a former Keetoowah who had defected to the Southern Baptist Church. In vivid and symbolic detail, he described much more than the incident alone:

I think Jones and party have learned that it would be dear blood for them to shed mine. My brother, help me to praise God for the preservation of my life... The Native Minister [recently killed in the Cherokee Nation], an inoffensive and pious man, was murdered—called out of his house at night and shot; he ran—they followed him and cut his throat. If we are not mistaken, every man in Jones' churches is more or less tinctured with abolition sentiments, and some of them, yea a later majority, are deep black in the warp and sable African in the filling, for I heard one of his preachers say [that] if Abraham, David, and all the ancient worthies of the Old Testament, being slave holders, were here on earth, he could not fellowship with them. Now would you not think such a man as this was an abolitionist of the deepest die?⁶⁸

In early July, when a company of Stand Watie's Southern troops attempted to raise the Confederate flag over the Cherokee Nation, they were met with opposition by loyal members of the Keetoowah Society, "This [group] is understood to be in favor of [the] Gov't., at least when a half breed at Webber's Falls raised a secession flag, the "pins" turned out to haul it down & were only stopped by a superior force, they retired swearing "that it shall yet be done & its raiser killed."⁶⁹ Senator William Doublehead and 150 conservatives confronted the larger force of Confederate Cherokees, "These desperadoes and their friends made several attempts to raise the rebel standard in the Cherokee Nation. On each several occasion, the loyal populace, either prevented the raising of the flag, or tore it down when raised, and dispersed those making the treasonable demonstrations..."⁷⁰

Bloodshed was only narrowly averted by the intervention of John Drew, a member of the Ross family, and a person who was well respected by both parties.⁷¹ Ross wrote to Drew and Joseph Vann (Cherokee Lodge #21) of the incident, "We regret very much indeed to hear that difficulties of a serious nature exist in your neighbor hood between some of the half and full blood Cherokees, which we have been informed, may be in part the result of a mutual misunderstanding... There is no reason why we should split up and become involved in internal strife and violence on account of the political condition of the States. We should really have nothing to do with them, but remain quiet and observe those relations of peace and friendship towards all of the people of the States imposed by our treaties."⁷²

On August 15 1861, the Cherokee Executive Council met and resolved that a "meeting of the Cherokee people should be held for the purpose of harmonizing their views in support of the common good and to remove the false allegations as to the opinions of the 'fullblood' Cherokee on the subject of slavery and of their sentiments towards the white and 'Half-breed' citizens."⁷³ In another part of the Indian Territory, the Loyal Mvskoke met in council a few days later and declared the treaty arranged with Pike to be illegal and the office of Chief vacant; they appointed Sands Harjo as Principal Chief.⁷⁴ No sooner was Harjo appointed Chief by the Loyal Mvskoke than a bounty of a thousand dollars was placed on his head by the Confederate Cherokee.⁷⁵ In late August, sensing that the situation was becoming desperate, Sands Harjo and Opothle Yahola wrote to President Abraham Lincoln requesting assistance:

Now I write to the President our Great Father who removed us to our present homes, & made treaty, and you said that in our new homes we should be defended from all interference from any person and that no white people in the whole world should ever molest us...and should we be injured by any body you would come with your soldiers and punish them. But now the wolf has come. Men who are strangers tread our soil. Our children are frightened & mothers cannot sleep for fear. This is our situation now. When we made our treaty at Washington you assured us

that our chil dren should laugh around our houses without fear & we believed you Once we were at peace. Our great father was always near & stood between us and danger. We his children want to be so again, and we want you to send us word what to do. We do not hear from you & we send a letter, &c we pray you to answer it. Your children want to hear your word, & feel that you do not forget them. I was at Washington when you treated with us, and now white people are trying to take our people away to fight against us and you. I am alive. I well remember the treaty. My eyes are open & my memory is good.⁷⁶

On August 10, 1861, the first military engagement in Indian Territory occurred at Wilson’s Creek in Southwestern Missouri.⁷⁷ In this battle, Stand Watie’s Confederate Cherokee regiment fought with great vigor and the Union forces took a terrible beating. Watie’s troops became an esteemed force in the Confederate Army and the tide of feeling was being swept toward the Confederacy. The situation of those loyal to the Government seemed quite desperate, “I sometimes hear rejoicing on the part of the Northern people, that these tribes are seceding, because they say that such violation of their treaties will lose them their lands, whose beauty & fertility have long been admired by western farmers. I have been twelve years among these tribes & I know the full bloods to be loyal to the Gov’t. That Gov’t. is bound by treaties to protect these nations, to keep up Forts for that purpose.... The agents who hold Commissions from Mr. Lincoln & go to Montgomery to have Jeff. Davis endorse them, show a faith in the issue, that is not lost upon the Indians.”⁷⁸

THE CONFEDERATE CHEROKEE

On August 20, 1861, friends asked Chief John Ross whether an alliance with the Confederacy was immanent and whether it would be permanent. He replied, “We are in a situation of a man standing alone upon a low naked spot of ground, with the water rising all around him...the tide carries by him, in its mad corse, a drifting log...By refusing it he is a doomed man. By seizing hold of it he has a chance for life. He can but perish in the effort, and he may be able to keep his head above water until he is rescued or drift to where he can help himself.”⁷⁹ The letters of Evan Jones reveal little about Ross’s indecisiveness; in early September, Jones stated that “The Principal Chief stood firm in his adherence to the terms of their treaties, and in their determination to keep clear of all entanglements in the strife which rages around them.”⁸⁰ However, there is also little evidence that, at this point, Jones tried to dissuade Ross from an alliance with the South.⁸¹

The following morning, John Ross addressed a meeting of some four thousand Cherokee and discussed the nation’s stand in the coming Civil War.⁸² Present were a large and diverse group of Cherokee, but this number also included nearly a hundred of Watie’s troops sent to ensure that the

outcome of the meeting would be to their liking. Ross encouraged the Cherokee to remember that which had always been dear to the Cherokee people:

The people are here. Say whether you are arrayed in classes one against the other—the full-blood against the white and mixed blood citizens; say whether you are faithful to the constitution and laws of your country—whether you abide by all the rights they guarantee, particularly including that of slavery, and whether you have any wish or purpose to abolish or interfere with it in the Cherokee Nation. The great object with me has been to have the Cherokee peoples harmonious and united in the free exercise and enjoyment of all their rights of person and property. Union is strength; dissension is weakness, misery, ruin. In time of peace together! In time of war, if war must come, fight together. As Brothers live; as brothers die! While ready and willing to defend our firesides from the robber and the murderer, let us not make war wantonly against the authority of the United or Confederate States, but avoid a conflict with either, and remain strictly on our own soil. We have a home endeared to us by every consideration; laws adapted to our condition and of our own choice, and rights and privileges of the highest character. Here they must be enjoyed or nowhere else. When your nationality ceases here, it will live nowhere else. When these homes are lost, you will find no others like them. Then, my countrymen, as you regard your own rights—as you regard your own posterity, be prudent how you act.⁸³

In an appeal to the “Kituwah Spirit,” Ross hoped to spare his people from a terrible tragedy but the tide of history was too strong. With the Southern presence being so evident, Ross finally acquiesced, “the time has now arrived when you should signify your consent for the authorization of the Nation to adopt preliminary steps for an alliance with the Confederate States upon terms honorable and advantageous to the Cherokee Nation.”⁸⁴ In so doing, the Cherokee Nation abandoned its neutrality in order to maintain unity. In the final outcome, it would lose so very much more.

Upon hearing of the Ross decision to side with the Confederacy, brother William Penn Adair of the Knights of the Golden Circle wrote to his brethren,

You have doubtless heard all about Ross’s convention, which in reality tied up our hands and shut our mouths and put the destiny of everything connected with the Nation and our lives in the hands of the Executive... Pike is disposed to favor us and to disregard the course our executive has taken. The Pins already have more power in their hands than we can bear and if in addition to this they acquire more power by being the treaty making power, you know our destiny will be inalterably sealed. It seems we should guard against this. Now is the time for us to strike or we will be completely frustrated... Under these circumstances our Party [the Southern Rights party] want you and Dr. J.L.Thompson (Cherokee

Lodge #21) to go in person and have an interview with Mr. Pike to the end that we may have justice done us, have the Pin party broken up, and have our rights provided for and place us if possible at least on an honorable equity with this old Dominant party that for years has had its foot upon our necks.⁸⁵

Equally disturbed on learning of Ross's change of policy were the leaders of the loyal Mvskoke, Opothle Yahola and Sands Harjo. In a letter thanking God for granting him the power "to unite the hearts and sentiments of the Cherokee people as one man," Ross informed the Creek leaders that the Cherokee had reluctantly ended their neutrality. They had formed an "alliance with the Confederate States and shall thereby preserve and maintain the Brotherhood of the Indian Nations in a common destiny."⁸⁶ Believing the letter to be a hoax, the Mvskoke wrote to Ross, "We have received a liter from you the same letter that you have sent the head men of the Creek Nation in your letter we understand that you & all the Cherokee people have in favor with Capt. Pike. We don't know wether this is truth or no the reason we send the same letter back for you."⁸⁷ Even when reassured of the validity of the letter and when requested to support "our common rights and interests by forming an alliance of peace and friendship with the Confederate States of America," Opothle Yahola refused to discuss the Cherokee treaty scheduled to be signed in early October.⁸⁸

On August 24, the Cherokee Executive Committee informed Brigadier General Ben McCulloch of Arkansas of their decision to join the Confederacy, but also something more, "To be prepared for any such emergency, we have deemed it prudent to proceed to organize a regiment of mounted men and tender them for service. They will be raised forthwith by Col. John Drew, and if received by you will require to be armed. Having abandoned our neutrality and espoused the cause of the Confederate States, we are ready and willing to do all in our power to advance and sustain it."⁸⁹ Now, there were two Confederate regiments within the Cherokee Nation. This is how General McCulloch described the two regiments, "Col. Stand Watie belongs to the true Southern party, composed mostly of mixed bloods, and opposed to John Ross, and by whose course and influence Ross was induced to join the South. Colonel Drew's regiment will be mostly composed of full-bloods, whilst those with Col. Stand Watie will be half-breeds, who are educated men, and good soldiers anywhere, in or out of the Nation."⁹⁰

Membership in the two units fell quite closely along party lines and memberships in the two corresponding secret societies. Many members of the Keetoowah Society and supporters of John Ross formed the core of the First Cherokee Mounted Rifles. It was reported that "Colonel Drew's regiment [was] made up mostly of full blood Indians and Negroes."⁹¹ The Second Cherokee Mounted Rifles were members of the Knights of the Golden Circle, "mixed bloods and adopted whites,"⁹² and followers of Colonel Stand Watie. The leadership of both parties was composed of former

Freemasons from Cherokee Lodge #21, Fort Gibson Lodge #35, and Flint Lodge #74.⁹³ By the end of September, the situation in the Cherokee Nation had become exceedingly tense and the two armed factions of the Confederate Cherokees operated with impunity within the Indian Territory.

The followers of Stand Watie circulated an “inflammatory sheet denying a unity of feeling” and “endangering a bloody Civil Conflict among men devoted to the same Cause.”⁹⁴ Among the full blood Mvskoike and Cherokee, there was also some confusion, “It has been represented to them that you with a few followers design going with the South, while a large majority of your people is against you—and with him (Opothle Yahola) in Sentiment If some timely remedy is not used for its arrest it will and must end in civil war. We have thought the best remedy would be to send a few of your old men well known to the party to give them a true statement of the condition of your people and brotherly talk in the right direction, which is to be done without delay.”⁹⁵

On October 7, 1861, the Cherokee Nation became the last of the Five Nations to sign a treaty with the Confederate States of America.⁹⁶ The next day, Chief Ross of the Cherokee sent Joseph Vann (Cherokee Lodge #21) to meet with the Mvskoike leader Opothle Yahola and ask that he “shake the hands of Brotherly friendship with your Cherokee Brethren.”⁹⁷ Brother Opothle Yahola, hearing of Ross’s signing a treaty with the Confederate States of America, refused the right hand of fellowship. We are not sure whether Opothle Yahola refused fellowship because he did not believe in the sincerity of Ross’s actions or whether he did believe such and refused fellowship with an enemy of the United States.

At the ceremony welcoming the Cherokee into the Confederacy, Albert Pike, Stand Watie and Chief John Ross stood upon the platform in Tahlequah. On one side of the platform were Colonel Drew’s Confederate regiment and on the other side Colonel Watie’s confederate troops. Chief Ross presented a Cherokee flag to Commissioner Albert Pike; Commissioner Pike presented the Confederate colors to Colonel Drew and his troops. Then the two old enemies, yet fraternal brothers, crossed the stage to shake hands and to promote peace and unity. Watie commented to Ross that the two parties should have acted like this long ago; he also noted that even on this day of reconciliation that there would be no peace as long as the “Pins” remained a political organization. Chief Ross replied politely that he didn’t know what Colonel Watie was talking about.⁹⁸

THE CIVIL WAR COMES TO INDIAN TERRITORY

Reverend Lewis Downing, ordained Baptist minister, was 38 years old when he was appointed Chaplain of the 1st Cherokee Mounted Rifles. In addition to being minister at Peavine Baptist Church, he was also chair of the Cherokee Baptist Missionary Society and, as such, engaged in frequent missions to the

Creek Nation. Smith Christie and Too-Stoo Swimmer were also members of Colonel Drew's regiment. Christie was the Secretary of the Cherokee Baptist Missionary Society; Swimmer was the Treasurer of the Society, minister at Delaware Church, and a sponsor of Henry Davise's mission among the Mvskoke.⁹⁹

As missionaries, Downing and his assistants often preached to congregations and camp meetings of Mvskokean and African peoples. The Baptist Church in the Indian Territory was founded within the Creek Nation as an Aframerindian congregation, and, as such, it helped reinforce the "beloved community" that had been the center of resistance within the Southeastern Nations for well over a century. It was to these people that Downing and his native ministers spread the gospel of community, spirituality, and liberation. As well, they also spread the message of unity, righteousness, and activism that was at the heart of the Keetoowah Society. At this particular point in history, the message was sorely needed, "The latest reliable intelligence from the Nation was encouraging so far as our Native Preachers are concerned.... They were having large congregations and profitable meetings... And so far as human instrumentality is concerned, their services at this time are particularly needed and seem indispensable to the maintenance of the pure and undefiled pure religion in the Nation. They are now the only persons who preach the Gospel unmixed with [pro-slavery] errors that put darkness for light and light for darkness..."¹⁰⁰

The center of the Cherokee Baptist Missionary Society efforts was the North Fork Baptist Church in the Canadian District of the Creek Nation. Among these Baptist congregations were many who had participated in the "Red Stick" rebellion as well as those who, with African American support, had fought a dreadful war against removal. There were large numbers of "free Negroes" among the Creek and Seminole Nations within Indian Territory, as well as large numbers of Black Indians, "As already intimated, the Creeks had no aversion to race mixture and intermarriage between negroes and Indians was rather common. The half-breeds resulting from such unions were accepted as bona fide members of the tribe by the Indians."¹⁰¹ The largest portion of these "free Negroes" lived at the center of the Upper Creek stronghold just west of the North Fork Baptist Church at the intersection of the Little River and the Canadian River.¹⁰²

Some of the Upper Creek adopted the Keetoowah message and became "Pin Indians."¹⁰³ One of those who developed a strong affinity for the Keetoowah message was Chief Opothle Yahola, one of the largest "slave-owners" within the Creek Nation whose homestead was located near the Ebenezer Baptist Church.¹⁰⁴ Chief Opothle Yahola believed that the Mvskokean people should remain neutral in the Civil War. He and his followers, at least a third of the Creek Nation, criticized the nation's leadership for signing a treaty with the Confederacy and decided that resist this alliance.¹⁰⁵ When the leadership passed a law giving free Negroes within the Creek Nation ten days to "choose a master" or face the trading block,

many chose Chief Opothle Yahola.¹⁰⁶ Free Africans, runaway slaves, and large numbers of Mvskoke and Seminole began to flee to Chief Opothle Yahola's two thousand acres homestead.¹⁰⁷ The prospect of armed resistance by Africans and Native Americans, as had been experienced in the Seminole Wars, was a grave threat to the Confederacy.¹⁰⁸

When some of his followers faced forced conscription into the Confederate Army, Chief Opothle Yahola saw no recourse to assemble his followers and attempt to flee the Indian Territory to Kansas. In his pocket, he carried a letter from Federal Commissioner E.H. Carruth assuring him that if he and his followers remained loyal to the United States of America that the Federal Army would come to their rescue.¹⁰⁹ The large numbers of people assembled on his property quickly expended his resources and fearing the isolation of their position in North Fork, Opothle Yahola and the refugees and renegades fled to near the Little River in the heart of "black muscolge" territory near the Seminole Nation. In this stronghold of resistance, they hoped to wait out the war.¹¹⁰

Opothle Yahola scheduled a council at his Little River location and invited those Indians loyal to the United States to meet and discuss contingency plans. Half of the Seminole Nation, a number of Choctaw, some Kickapoo, Shawnee, Yuchi, Delaware, and Comanche, as well as a "considerable body of Negroes" fled to the site of the council. This greatly strengthened Opothle Yahola's forces and made them a force to be reckoned with. David McIntosh, a Creek leader, wrote to Cherokee John Drew of Chief Opothle Yahola and his 4,000 followers, "It is now certain that he has combined with his party all the surrounding wild tribes and has openly declared himself the enemy of the South. Negroes are fleeing to him from all quarters—not less than 150 have left within the last three days. [This rebellion] should be put down immediately... I hope you will come in all haste and join in an undertaking for the interest of all...this state of things cannot long exist here without seriously effecting your country."¹¹¹ In addition to charging Opothle Yahola with rebellion, the Pro-Southern Creek believed that they were stealing cattle and slaves and that troops from General James H. Lane's "Jayhawkers" from Kansas would soon join them.¹¹²

Following the council and its decision to seek refuge in Kansas, Opothle Yahola sent out delegates to secure safe passage and assistance from the federal authorities should they encounter armed Confederate resistance to their migration. When they arrived in Kansas, the first person that the delegates met with was former federal agent to the Creek Nation, Major George A. Cutler. They reassured Cutler of their commitment to their treaties with the United States and asked him to provide military support for the refugees as well as ammunition, clothing, and tents to outfit the "Union Red people."¹¹³ Lastly, they assured the federal officers that John Ross of the Cherokee was for the Union but dared not to express his position publicly for fear of violence to his person.¹¹⁴

When they heard that Opothle Yahola was attempting to seek support

from the North, the Southern Creek wrote to John Ross of their fears as well as their intentions, "For if they get aid from the North which they are making every effort to do, they will be our most formidable enemy. For while the knowledge of the country would give us a decided advantage over the whiteman with our own people to lead them we would have none. Again, they are causing our negros to run to them daily greatly to the injury of many of our best citizens. These and other considerations make it necessary for them to be put down at any cost. Therefore so soon as we are reinforced which we daily expect we shall proceed without further delay and put an end to the affair."¹¹⁵ Chief John Ross was aghast at the possibilities of Native Americans making war upon each other in such a manner. He wrote back to the Confederate Creeks:

Brothers, we are shocked with amazement at the fearful import of your words! Are we to understand that you have determined to make a Military demonstration, by force of Arms, upon Opothleyahola & his followers, at the cost of civil war among your own People, and thereby involve your red Brethren, who are in alliance with the Confederate States? Such a conflict would bring on a warfare inaugurated by you, that will not fail, to sever the bonds of peace and friendship between us and the other Tribes of Indians, who are not in alliance with the Southern Confederacy at a cost [whatever] blood & Treasure would be lamentable. We have no good reasons to consider the delegation of the Asst. Chief [Joseph Vann] & his associates to Opothleyahola as a hopeless failure.¹¹⁶

On October 24, 1861, the Cherokee Nation issued its "Declaration of Independence" in a letter written by Commissioner Albert Pike; the following day the letter was printed in the *Springfield Republican*.¹¹⁷ Evan Jones, reading the letter in the newspaper was struck with disbelief, "I was exceedingly troubled when I heard of the surrender of the Cherokees, though I had feared that the force which would be brought to bear on them would be overwhelming and that they might not be able to withstand it long without the promised protection of the U. States.... I trust God will yet bring about their deliverance from the heartless grasp of those selfish men who would exterminate the Indians as well as enslave the Blacks. The laws of Georgia for the protection of the Indians, I remember well."¹¹⁸

In the same Cherokee Council session that ratified the Confederate treaty, a bill was passed confiscating all of the mission stations in the nation and selling off mission property to the highest bidder. The bill specifically mentioned the missions of the American Board, the Baptist missions, and the Moravian missions, but the churches of the Southern Baptists and the Southern Methodists were left untouched. Chief John Ross vetoed the bill, "because I can see no propriety or justice [in]...precipitating the missionary families out of possession as intruders."¹¹⁹

In early November, Joseph Vann (Cherokee Lodge #21) informed Chief Ross that he was able to secure the consent of Opothle Yahola to a meeting

held in the home of Joseph Coody (Cherokee Lodge #21) near North Fork Township in the Creek Nation. Keetoowah James McDaniels and John Porum Davis of John Drew's regiment would provide Opothle Yahola escort to the meeting.¹²⁰ Opothle Yahola also sent a messenger to Evan Jones in Kansas that "strengthened the doubts in regard to the defection of John Ross and the Cherokee. He says the full Indians, Creeks, Cherokees, and Seminoles are loyal, but the secession army and traitor half-breeds kept them in awe. They want protection from the Government and are hoping for it."¹²¹

In the meantime, Opothle Yahola and his followers had organized a wagon train and were circling the settlements near the Little River inviting supporters to "join Union sympathizers among the Cherokees with whom they were in communication."¹²² In their discussions with their Mvskoke brethren at the home of Joseph Coody, the loyal Cherokee "complained because they were compelled to dig up the hatchet and fight their Great Father, after they had agreed to remain neutral."¹²³ Following the meeting, Opothle Yahola's first step was to attempt to move his refugee army to the Cherokee Nation, where he expected assistance from his fellow Keetoowah.¹²⁴

With brother Albert Pike in Richmond finalizing treaty arrangements, Chief Daniel McIntosh (Creek Nation) and Chief John Jumper (Seminole Nation) wrote to Colonel Douglas Cooper of the Confederacy requesting assistance. They had heard rumors of a pending attack by Opothle Yahola's assembled forces.¹²⁵ McIntosh, a Freemason (as was Jumper) was ordained at Murrow's Ebenezer Baptist Church and reportedly disdained Opothle Yahola's pagan beliefs and his close associations with Africans. He encouraged enlistment in his Confederate Creek Regiment by promising that captured cattle and Negroes—free or slave—belonging to Opothle Yahola's supporters would be sold to benefit the Creek Nation treasury.¹²⁶

Colonel Cooper assumed command of the Confederate forces in the Indian Territory: the First Regiment Choctaw and Chickasaw Mounted Rifles; the First Creek regiment under Colonel McIntosh; the First Regiment Cherokee Mounted Rifles under John Drew; the Second Regiment Cherokee Mounted Rifles under Colonel Stand Watie; the Choctaw Battalion led by Chief Chilly McIntosh; and the Seminole Battalion under Chief John Jumper. In addition to the Confederate Indians, Cooper had at his disposal Colonel Quail's Fourth Texas Cavalry; an effective fighting force of nearly fourteen hundred troops.¹²⁷ A soldier from Quail's regiment described Drew's troops, "Colonel Drew's Regiment is encamped here, and over one thousand strong of the finest set of warriors that can be found anywhere; they will make their mark wherever they come in contact with the enemy."¹²⁸

General Ben McCulloch, Confederate Commander in Arkansas, ordered Drew's regiment to "proceed without delay" and to join forces with Colonel Daniel McIntosh's and Colonel Douglas Cooper's command. They were then to move against Chief Opothle Yahola's band of nearly 10,000 refugees, which included 1500 Indian soldiers and 700 armed blacks. The Southern

troops caught up with Opothle Yahola's refugees near Red Fork on the Arkansas River in November. They sent out a slave to warn the runaways of the impending attack, but the renegades seemed to refuse to heed the warning.¹²⁹ On November 15, 1861, Colonel Quayle and his Texas troops attacked what they thought was Opothle Yahola's camp near North Fork. However, they found only a deserted outpost, so they set out again in pursuit of the refugees who in hasty flight towards Kansas.¹³⁰

The Confederate troops finally caught up with the refugees near Round Mountain, west of the junction of the Cimarron and Arkansas Rivers in the Creek Nation.¹³¹ On the eve of what was to be the first battle of the Civil War in Indian Territory, Echo Harjo of the Confederate forces met under a flag of truce with Chief Opothle Yahola, but the aged Chief refused to yield or surrender to his enemy. Harjo later wrote to John Ross of the meeting, "On the evening before the battle Echo Harjo went into their camps and conversed with them they proclaimed war, and affirmed that they were looking for Cherokees to aid them that they had promised to come to their assistance. They have a quantity of our property which they are taking Northward. Should they be passing through your country, please stop them!"¹³² However, this seemed quite unlikely as Opothle Yahola had a letter of his own from the Cherokee that stated that the refugees would receive support once they reached the Cherokee Nation, "...a Creek Messenger from Opothle Yahola had reported that O. said that he wanted Peace & will take the advice of his Cherokee Brethren and come into the Cherokee Country &c &c."¹³³

On November 19, 1861, the Confederate troops stumbled upon the Union Indians at Round Mountain in the Mvskoke Nation, but they ran headlong into a line of resistance that was nearly twelve hundred men long. The volley from the Mvskoke and Seminole soldiers cut down several of the unwary Confederates who then retreated. The loyal forces—led by "war chiefs" Billy Bowlegs, John Chupco, Halleck Tuskenugge and Little Captain—had formed a defensive line to protect the women and children of Opothle Yahola's band. All of these war chiefs were "black muscolges" and veterans of the Second Seminole War in Florida. Chupco was a leader of the Black Seminoles that nearly to the man fought for the Union and Billy Bowlegs now fought for the United States "as energetically as he had struggled against them in Florida."¹³⁴

Colonel Cooper then reinforced his troops and again attacked the renegades with the full force of the combined armies of the Confederacy. John Drew's First Cherokee Mounted Rifles had not yet decided to commit to this action. The battle of Round Mountain became quite heavy until darkness fell upon the combatants and forced both sides to break off the engagement.¹³⁵ Though Colonel Cooper was turned back and he lost nearly twenty men, he reported to military authorities the loyal Indians losses to be 110 killed and wounded.¹³⁶

Just before the battle at Round Mountain, a friendly messenger from the

Cherokee Nation had ridden into the Mvskoke encampment. He offered Opothle Yahola hospitality in his village along Bird Creek in the Cooweescoowee District of the Cherokee Nation. When the Battle of Round Mountain had come to a close, Opothle Yahola's band of "wild Indians and Negroes" slipped over the Arkansas River and into the Cherokee Nations. As they retreated, the renegades set fire to the plains; hundreds of acres were burned as they covered their path.¹³⁷ Less than fifty miles from Kansas, the refugees once again encamped and made their stand at Bird Creek in the Cherokee Nation not far from the home of Captain James McDaniel, one of the founders of the Keetoowah Society.¹³⁸

A TURNING POINT

Colonel Cooper was less than confident in the battle readiness of his troops, especially with respect to John Drew's First Cherokee Mounted Rifles with whom he knew considerable Union sentiment existed. When he learned that Opothle Yahola and his assorted supporters had taken refuge within the Cherokee Nation, he was even more concerned. Withdrawing his troops to Spring Hill, he allowed them to rest and recuperate before setting out once again against Opothle Yahola. Knowing that the next battle would be fought within the Cherokee Nation in a district where loyalty to John Ross was strong, Cooper set forth upon a decisive plan to ensnare and eliminate his opposition.

As Cooper's forces were preparing for yet another conflict, Captain James McDaniel and his Confederate troops were encamped within close proximity of Opothle Yahola and his renegade band of blacks and indians. McDaniel's troops were in constant communication with the Opothle Yahola's forces and, when asked by Drew to report on the location of the renegades, McDaniel informed Drew that he could not do so. He further informed Drew that his true sentiments lie with his fellow Keetoowah loyal to the Union and not with the Confederacy. In spite of poor communication with his fellow officers, McDaniels "always sent a secret message to the Loyal League [Keetoowah], in the rebel service [Drew's Regiment] informing them of his real movements."¹³⁹

In late November, rumors that McDaniels and his fellow Keetoowah were fraternizing with the enemy swept through Fort Gibson in the Cherokee Nation where Lewis Downing was currently stationed. When Chaplain Downing left for Camp Coody to deliver supplies to Drew's troops, a large number of his regiment sought to accompany him to the place where the impending battle was to occur. However, only a small group of men were chosen to accompany Downing to Drew's camp.¹⁴⁰ Though Colonel Drew again knew precious little of Downing's activities, "the Yankee abolitionist"¹⁴¹ Opothle Yahola and his followers were kept well abreast of his movements.¹⁴²

On November 27, Colonel Cooper and his refreshed troops set forth from

Spring Hill towards Bird Creek to overtake and destroy Opothle Yahola and his followers. Colonel William Sims' Ninth Texas Cavalry Regiment was given orders to ride up the Verdigris River towards Camp Coody where they were to rendezvous with Drew's First Cherokee Mounted Rifles. The combined troops were then to move on the Union Indians from different angles in order to trap the renegades. When learning of Cooper's plans, Colonel Drew announced that his troops would rendezvous with Cooper's column on the road to James McDaniel's house.¹⁴³

In early December, rumors once again spread that Captain James McDaniel and his company of Keetoowah military authorities had deserted to the enemy. Drew, attempting to verify the rumor, sent a messenger to Camp McDaniel and ordered Captain McDaniel and his troops to return to Camp Coody and join forces with the rest of the Confederate Cherokee. The courier returned to report that Opothle Yahola and his forces had created a breastwork of logs and taken their stand at Bird Creek near McDaniel's home. It was also quite apparent to the courier that an entire company of Drew's regiment had deserted the Confederacy and had joined with Opothle Yahola and his renegade exodus.¹⁴⁴

Upon receiving final confirmation of his orders to rendezvous with Confederate forces at Chief David Vann's homestead on December 7, Drew's Cherokee forces hurried to make this appointment. Mysteriously, however, Colonel Drew and his troops "misunderstood" their orders and somehow made their camp less than six miles northeast of the position held by Opothle Yahola and his troops. On several occasions, there were short engagements between forces of the Confederacy and the Union. At one point, Captain George Scrapper captured eight or ten Union Indians. Another small scouting party from Drew's regiment detected nearly a dozen Cherokee from the other side. When asked by the Union Indians on which side they belonged, Captain Pickens Benge replied that "he belonged to the Cherokee regiment who were soldiers of the South."¹⁴⁵ For whatever reasons, these troops did not engage each other and each made a hasty retreat back to their camp.

That evening, some of the Drew's Keetoowah who were on guard duty at Camp Melton were surprised to see Captain James McDaniel approaching, giving them the hailing signs of their secret society. Allowed to pass the pickets, McDaniel met with the members of Drew's First Cherokee Mounted Rifles of the Confederate States of America (probably Lewis Downing, Budd Gritts, Smith Christie, and Thomas Pegg). At this meeting of Union and Confederate Keetoowah, they planned what their course of action would be over the next several days. The Keetoowah under Drew's command confessed that they were serving in the Confederate Army both against their will and in opposition to the laws of the Keetoowah Society.¹⁴⁶ On that night, moved by the "Kituwah spirit," the men in Drew's regiment decided to take their guns, horses, and ammunition and join their brethren on the other side of the line that separated North from South.¹⁴⁷

The following morning, Colonel Drew announced that Chief Opothle Yahola had sent a message to Colonel Cooper of the Army of the Confederate States of America, “expressing a desire to make peace.” After a short meeting between Colonel Drew, Colonel David McIntosh, and Colonel Cooper, members of Drew’s regiment were sent to the opposing camp, expressing the concern that “they did not desire the shedding of blood among Indians.” The peace delegation sent by Drew was composed entirely of Keetoowah officers (Chaplain Lewis Downing, Major Thomas Pegg, Captain John Porum Davis, and Captain George Scrapper). They were led to Chief Opothle Yahola’s camp by the same Mvskoke scouts who earlier had been captured by Captain Scrapper.¹⁴⁸ Upon reaching the Mvskoke camp, the Cherokee met a fearsome presentation. There were hundreds of warriors painted for battle that made threatening gestures toward the Cherokee soldiers and assured them that this night they would take their lives.¹⁴⁹

Back in Drew’s camp, the remaining Keetoowah spread a rumor among the troops of an impending assault by an overwhelming force of African Americans and Native Americans under the leadership of the fierce warrior Opothle Yahola. The “Pins” among the Confederacy were hardly committed to the cause and they were quite reluctant to fight against their brethren across the field whose only offense was loyalty to “the old ways” and to the tenets of the “white path of righteousness.” Throughout the early night, messengers passed through the pickets of the opposing sides, using the hailing signs that of the Keetoowah Society.

Unwilling to fight against their brother Keetoowah in the opposing camp, three-quarters of Drew’s regiment tied cornhusks in their hair and crawled across the cornfield to join the other side. As they passed one another, the Keetoowah brothers would ask “Who are you?” The reply from the other side would come, “Tahlequah—who are you?” Defenses were lowered and unity restored with the words, “I am Keetoowah’s son.”¹⁵⁰ In the midst of political division, class conflict, racial animosity, and even brotherly disunion, the breach was sealed by the words “I am Keetoowah’s son.”

Captain James Vann, Captain Albert Pike (Cherokee), Captain George Scrapper, Lieutenants White Catcher, Eli Smith, Samuel Foster, John Bear Meat, and Nathaniel Fish and most of their companies joined forces with Opothle Yahola. It seems that the entire peace conference had been an elaborate ruse to allow the officers of Drew’s regiment to be away from camp when most of Drew’s regiment defected to the other side. The plan, hatched in the secret meeting the night before, had worked perfectly. The Keetoowah were united once again. In all, some six hundred Confederate soldiers deserted the Confederacy and joined Chief Opothle Yahola’s forces, and eventually the Army of the United States of America.¹⁵¹

Michael Roethler, in his dissertation “Negro Slavery among the Cherokee Indians: 1540–1866,” poses an interesting question seldom explored in other narratives of the defection of Drew’s regiment. He states, “By the time of the

defection Drew's regiment contained many Negro slaves who, for the most part, had freely joined the army with their masters. The Indian slaves served well in the border warfare, and there was no recognized difference of social status between the red and black soldier."¹⁵² Given that, even as late as 1863, Drew's command contained "many Negro slaves who, for the most part, had freely joined the army with their masters," it is likely that Drew's command at this early point also contained many Negro slaves. Among the Keetoowah, for whom bonds of culture and community transcended the lines of nation and possibly even of "race," there were probably African Americans. Among the Baptists who made up Drew's command, there were most certainly African Americans. When asked for the password as he crossed enemy lines, the black soldier would most likely answer, "I am Keetoowah's son!"

THE MOURNING AFTER

Chaplain Lewis Downing of the First Cherokee Mounted Rifles awoke at the dawn of a new day, December 9, 1861. He stood amidst officers of the Mvskoke and Cherokee Nations in what was to become the Kansas Indian Regiments of the Army of the United States of America. Among the warriors lay free Africans, maroons, and fugitive slaves from the Deep South hoping to move "on to Kansas" and freedom on the border. Though there were many battles yet to come, on this morning Chaplain Downing felt as if he were seeing the birth a new people.

Across the cornfield lay what was left of the First Cherokee Mounted Rifles of the Army of the Confederate States of America under the leadership of Colonel John Drew. Behind Colonel Drew's men lay the secessionist troops of Albert Pike's "Indian brigades," including the First Choctaw and Chickasaw Regiment, the Choctaw Battalion, the First Creek Regiment and the Second Cherokee Mounted Rifles under Colonel Stand Watie. On the other side of the Confederate Army lay Chaplain Downing's home, his family, and the rest of the Cherokee Nation.

It was the issue of slavery that ripped the Cherokee Nation asunder leading up to the Civil War, but it was also something older and much stronger. Deep within the "Kituwah Spirit" was an ideal of a free and independent Cherokee Nation founded upon the "old ways" of liberty, equality, and community. These old ideas were being challenged by a modernist movement among the elite that supported a nation based upon the institution of slavery, racial inequality, and radical individualism. As he looked about him, Chaplain Downing could see the effects of this crisis among the people that were his flock. However, at the same time, he also saw within the people the face of that new nation founded upon the ancient principles of the "old ways."

The people who surrounded him reminded Chaplain Downing of the

gospel message of equality brought to the Indians by the missionaries John Marrant, Uncle Reuben, Monday Durant, and John B. Jones. Chaplain Downing had found confirmation in the gospel for that which had been a critical element in the “old ways” of the Cherokee Nation: all humanity has a common origin and, ultimately, a collective responsibility. In the bonds of the “beloved community” of the Keetoowah Society lay the faith that would lead these fugitives to build a new Cherokee Nation.

When Colonel John Drew of the Confederate Cherokee stepped from his tent in the middle of that night, he discovered that only about sixty of his original force of nearly five hundred men remained in his camp. Presuming an impending attack from his “loyal” troops, Colonel Drew began to saddle his horse and ordered his remaining men to set themselves for a strategic withdrawal. As Drew was preparing a quick retreat, Captain Pickens Benge rode up exclaiming, “We had better be off, as the enemy are upon us.”¹⁵³ As the remainder of Drew’s Confederate Cherokee was riding hurriedly off to the Southeast to rejoin Colonel Cooper and his troops, Major Thomas Pegg and his peace delegation returned to Camp Melton to find it abandoned.

In his report to Colonel Cooper, Drew cited the circumstances of the Keetoowah “dispersion” as being, “The causes which led to the dispersion of the regiment arose from a misconception of the character of the conflict between the Creeks, from an indisposition on their part to engage in strife with their immediate neighbors, and from the panic gotten up by the threatened attack upon us. The regiment will be promptly filled and ready for service.”¹⁵⁴ When Colonel Cooper learned of the Keetoowah betrayal, he immediately called for his drummers to beat the “long roll” and his troops turned out on the double. He then sent Drew and his remaining twenty-eight Confederate Cherokee to salvage what was left of their former encampment. Cooper and his troops then withdrew down the east bank of Bird Creek to await reinforcements from Watie’s Cherokee, as well as soldiers from the rest of the Confederacy.

On December 9, 1861, the Civil War within the Indian Territory began in earnest. One of the participants tells the story:

The McIntosh men got nearly everybody to side with them about the Civil War, but we Negroes got word somehow that the Cherokees over back of Ft. Gibson was not going to be in the War, that there was some Union people over there who would help slaves to get away, but we children didn’t know nothing about what we heard our parents whispering about, and they would stop if they heard us listening. Most of the Creeks who lived in our part of the country...belonged to the Lower Creeks and sided with the South, but down below us along the Canadian River they were the Upper Creeks and there was a good deal of talk about them going with the North. Some of the Negroes tried to get away and go down with them, but I don’t know of any from our neighborhood that went to them. Some Upper Creeks came up into

Choska bottoms talking around among the folks there about siding with the North. They were talking, they said, for old man Gouge, who was a big man among the Upper Creeks. His name was Opoeth-le-yahola, and he got away into Kansas with a big bunch of Creeks and Seminoles during the War. I asked mammy where everybody had gone and she said, “Up to Mr. Mose’s house where we are going. He’s calling us all in.” “Will pappy be up there too?” I asked her. “No. Your pappy and your Uncle Hector and Your Uncle William and a lot of the menfolks won’t be here any more. They went away. That’s why Mr. Mose is so mad, so if any of you younguns say anything about any strange men coming to our place I’ll break your necks.”¹⁵⁵

and yet another:

They called the old Creek, who was leaving for the North, “Old Gouge.” All our family join up with him, and there was lots of Creek Indians and slaves in the outfit when they made a break for the North. The runaways was riding ponies stolen from their masters. When they get to the hilly country farther north in that country that belonged to the Cherokee Indians, they made a big camp on a big creek and there the Rebel Indian soldiers caught up, but they was fought back.

The Creek Indians and the slaves with them tried to fight off them soldiers like they did before, but they get scattered around and separated so they lose the battle. Lost their horses and wagons, and the soldiers killed lots of Creeks and Negroes, and some of the slaves were captured and carried back to their masters.... Dead all over the hills when we get away; some of the Negroes shot and wounded so bad the blood run down the saddle skirts, and some fell off their horses miles from the battle ground, and lay still on the ground.¹⁵⁶

The Battle of Bird Creek raged for four hours with repeated advances and retreats from both sides, but Opothle Yahola’s position at a horseshoe bend in the creek was quite difficult for the Confederate forces to overcome. One of those who was with Opothle Yahola at Bird Creek was Pig Smith, father of Redbird Smith, and one of the founders of the Nighthawk Keetoowah. It is believed that the entire Smith family fled with Opothle Yahola to Kansas, “Redbird Smith was exactly ten years and four months old at the time of the battle of Round Mountain and there is the possibility that he saw it all. This battle had a profound effect upon the Indians who perceived it as further proof of the perfidity and viciousness of the white man.”¹⁵⁷

In many instances, the battle was fought not just with powder and bullets, but at close range with fists and knives. The Keetoowah fought with tremendous determination. Alligator, a muscolge from Florida, would fight in the tradition that made the “black Seminole” legendary warriors, “An old warrior fired upon a party of eight or ten from behind a tree. The men did not wish to kill him, and even used entreaties to induce him to surrender; but, with death imminent, he continued to load his old rifle with a sublime

indifference never attained by the Cynic philosophers of Greece, and having loaded he coolly proceeded with the priming, when his admiring foes were compelled to dash out his old brave life.”¹⁵⁸

The results of the battle were inconclusive militarily, yet painful and bloody. The Confederates lost fifteen killed and thirty-seven wounded; Opothle Yahola lost twenty-seven killed and several hundred wounded. When darkness fell, Opothle Yahola and his forces retreated to the Osage Hills of the Cooweescoowee District of the Cherokee Nation. In their hasty retreat, the renegades left many of their supplies including the largest part of their ammunition. They also left much more, “One time we saw a little baby sitting on a little blanket in the woods. Everyone was running because an attack was expected and no one had the time to stop and pick up the child. As it saw people running by, the little child began to wave its little hands. The child had no knowledge that it had been deserted.”¹⁵⁹

In the ensuing turmoil and conflict of allegiances, there were few ways to detect enemy from friend. The only way that the “loyal Indians” could define themselves was by the means and mechanisms of the Keetoowah Society. In the absence of uniforms, the “shuck badge” became the emblem of freedom; it also became a badge of subversion. As Colonel Cooper reported, “a body of Cherokees from Fort Gibson, about 100, who passed up the previous evening, had put on the “shuck badge” (Hopoeithleyohola’s) and gone direct to his camp at Shoal Creek, I was impressed with the necessity of placing the force under my command as soon as possible in position to counteract any movement among the people to aid Hopoeithleyohola and his Northern allies.”¹⁶⁰

On Christmas Day, 1861, Colonel Stand Watie and his Second Cherokee Mounted Rifles finally joined with Cooper’s troops. The following day, the strengthened forces attacked the renegades led by Seminole War Chief Hallek Tustenuggee. More reinforcements from Texas and Arkansas arrived and the Confederacy defeated Opothle Yahola’s renegades by fight and flight and the renegades were forced to retreat. Colonel James McIntosh, West Point graduate, reported that 250 of Opothle Yahola’s followers were killed, and 160 women and children, 20 Negroes, 30 wagons, 70 yoke of oxen, 500 horses, and several hundred head of livestock were captured.¹⁶¹

Not content with defeating the Keetoowah, the Knights of the Golden Circle pursued Opothle Yahola’s followers as they fled raining death upon them at every occasion for more than twenty-five miles. Stand Watie’s troops killed nearly one hundred “Union Indians” without taking a single loss in a series of running fights. Elias Boudinot described his forces’ hunger for the engagement, “Every man seemed anxious to be foremost, and the charges made upon the enemy over rocks, mountains, and valleys—the roughest country I ever saw—were made with the utmost enthusiasm, and with irresistible impetuosity.”¹⁶² The “Yankee abolitionist” Opothle Yahola and his force of nearly 4,000 warriors were routed:

We cannot adequately depict the scenes that followed in consequence of the failure to obtain help from the Federal Army, as seven thousand loyal Indians, driven before a foe, infuriated by defeat, and strongly reinforced. With their eyes turned toward the North, ever hoping for succor, the warriors battled in the rear covering the retreat, while the old men, with women, and children, half starved, half clothed, bare footed waded through the frozen snows, and breasted the keen winds on the prairie. Never will their sufferings be known. Frozen Hands and feet—starved and emaciated frames—swift fevers and lingering diseases filling a thousand premature graves, all bear witness to their patriotic sufferings.¹⁶³

Confederate Indian Agent Albert Pike was pleased to hear of the quelling of this rebellion and the determined pursuit of his brother Mason, Opothle Yahola.¹⁶⁴ Joseph S. Murrow delighted in the pursuits of the Confederacy, "He later, from Scullyville, wrote interesting letters, wholly lacking in compassion for the refugees, describing the pursuit of Opothleyahola's people to within ten miles of the Kansas line. He said that the country they went through was laid waste. Indian settlements and towns where formerly a contented and prosperous people lived, were ruined and destroyed, houses and barns burned, stock killed or driven off. Murrow, he says, termed the whole enterprise an effort to cut down a 'rebellion of Opothleyahola's action'"¹⁶⁵

On January 1, 1862, the weather turned bitter cold and a sleet storm allowed the Confederate Soldiers to more easily track the renegades who by now were within miles of the mythical "Kansas." To protect themselves from the elements, a group of the renegades had pitched their tents at the foot of a tall bluff on the Arkansas River. The Confederate Cherokee swept down upon them, killing one man and taking twenty-one prisoners—all women and children. The weather was bitterly cold and there were no provisions to be had for either side, "The fatiguing scout of seven days...was endured with great fortitude by the officers and men under my command. Its results were 6 of the enemy killed and 150 prisoners taken, mostly women and children, the total dispersing in the direction of Walnut Creek, Kansas, of Hopoeithleyahola's forces and people, thus securing the repose of the frontier for the winter."¹⁶⁶

Finally crossing the state line into Kansas, the surviving refugees led by the "arch old traitor" Opothle Yahola gathered to lick their wounds. Nearly five thousand Indians and Africans made camp near Leroy in East Central Kansas. Kansas had made no provisions for the refugees and the six weeks of fighting in the bitter cold had taken its toll. An army surgeon who visited the refugees found them lying on the frozen ground with little or no shelter. Influenza and disease swept among the Indians with circumstances being beyond the control of the neighboring citizens, government, or military officials. More than one hundred frozen limbs had to be amputated. Mass graves covered the ground.¹⁶⁷ The army surgeon reporting on their condition

wrote, "Why the officers of the Indian Department are not doing something for them, I cannot understand; common humanity demands that something be done, and done at once to save them from total destruction."¹⁶⁸

Chief Opothle Yahola lay under a tent made by a blanket so spare that it failed to reach the ground by nearly two feet. Once he had been a rich man, the owner of a vast homestead, and a prominent member of the Creek Nation. Now, he lived little differently from those for whom he would have given up this life. No longer in his possession was the letter from Federal Agent E.H.Carruth that he had received in September of 1861. Somehow, in the confusion of flight, the letter had been lost. It had stated:

BROTHER: Your letter by Micco Hutka is received. You will send a delegation of your best men to meet the commissioner of the United States Government in Kansas. I am authorized to inform you that the President will not forget you. Our Army will soon go South, and those of your people who are true and loyal to the Government will be treated as friends. Your rights to property will be respected. The commissioners from the Confederate States have deceived you. They have two tongues. They wanted to get the Indians to fight, and they would rob and plunder you if they can get you into trouble. 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. When your delegates return to you they will be able to inform you when and where your moneys will be paid. Those who stole your orphan funds will be punished, and you will learn that the people who are true to the Government which so long protected you are your friends.

Your friend and brother,
E.H.CARRUTH,
Commissioner of U.S. Government¹⁶⁹

In late January, at the request of Commissioner William P.Dole, Federal Indian Agent George Collamore and Baptist missionary Evan Jones visited the now ten thousand refugees at their camp in southern Kansas. Reverend Jones was there to assist the renegade Keetoowah, but he also sought information from the assembled multitude as to what had led to this terrible state of affairs in the Cherokee Nation. In his report to Commissioner Dole, Collamore described the flight of the refugees and their current status, "The women and children suffered severely from frozen limbs, as did the men. Such coverings as I saw were made of the rudest manner, being composed of pieces of cloth, old quilts, handkerchiefs, aprons, etc. etc., stretched upon sticks, and so limited were many of them in size that they were scarcely able to cover the emaciated and dying forms beneath them. Under such shelter I found, in the last stages of consumption, the daughter of Opothleyahola, one of the oldest, most influential, and wealthy chiefs of the Creek Nation."¹⁷⁰

Reverend Jones also ministered to the several thousand renegades that now constituted the bulk of his mission. He solicited help for the

dispossessed from among the local churches and the supporters of his mission at the American Baptist Missionary Union, "I have lately received a good deal of information from the Cherokee Nation, all favorable to the faithfulness and loyalty of John Ross and the body of the Cherokee people... In daily visiting the camps of the Indians, I witness a vast amount of destitution and suffering, and it is painful to think how little I can do towards its alleviation. I am glad to hear such good news about Missionary contributions coming in. I hope it will continue."¹⁷¹

Among the Keetoowah, Jones inquired as to what could lead his old friend John Ross to capitulate to the Confederacy. Jones wrote to Commissioner Dole of his findings regarding John Ross, "And since I have had free conversations with the Cherokee messengers from Opothleyahola's camp, about the events which have transpired with the last few months, I am satisfied that I was not mistaken in Ross's character, and—that whatever unfavorable shade may rest on his movements, is the result of causes beyond his control."¹⁷² Years later, Evan Jones would describe those forces upon the Cherokee and the response of the Keetoowah in a letter to the American Baptist Missionary Union:

...for several years past, efforts have been made in various forms, to extend the power of slavery among them, and other Indian tribes. In this work there have been engaged commissioners and superintendents of Indian affairs, Indian agents, emissaries of secret societies,—such as the Knights of the Golden Circle, members of the Blue Lodges, missionaries under the patronage of religious bodies, pro-slavery politicians and their satellites, hireling presses in the pay of slave interest; together with the Commissioners of the States of Arkansas and Texas; voluntary committees of influential private men; and from the government of seceded states, their commissioner and superintendent of Indian affairs and Indian agent. All these have been earnest and indefatigable in their endeavors to bring the Cherokees over to the side of the rebellion. But they stood up firmly for their principles and their rights, and would have put down, and kept down, the rebellion among themselves, even in the absence of the pledged protection of the United States. And they were forced into an unwilling surrender by the power of a rebel army, which they were in no condition to resist. And the result was, the conclusion of a treaty under the dictation of Confederate officers [Pike]. But the hearts of the people were not in it. And though brought under the control of the rebellion, they continued to cherish their loyalty to the government of the United States.¹⁷³

“So Laudable an Enterprise”

The legislative work of the Cherokee Council, partisan body that it was, with Lewis Downing as its presiding officer and Thomas Pegg as acting Principal Chief, was reactionary, yet epochal. It comprised several measures and three of transcendent importance, passed between the eighteenth [February, 1863] and the twenty-first:

1. An act revoking an allegiance with the Confederate States and re-asserting allegiance to the United States.
2. An act deposing all officers of any rank or character whatsoever, inclusive of legislative, executive, judicial, who were serving in capacities disloyal to the United States and to the Cherokee Nation.
3. An act emancipating slaves throughout the Cherokee country.¹

—Annie Abel, *The American Indian in the Civil War, 1862–1865*

THE NAKEDEST OF THE NAKED

It was upon General David Hunter, Commander of the Western Department of the Army of the United States of America, that the main responsibility for the refugees from the Indian Territory fell. As they were fleeing north, the destitute renegades fell in with a group of buffalo hunters from the Sac and Fox Nations near Osage County, Kansas. After hearing of their tragic experience, these friendly relations sent word ahead of their party to federal officials. William G. Coffin, Federal Southern Superintendent, appealed to General Hunter to send federal officers and assistance to aid the distressed refugees.² In addition, Coffin ordered every federal agent in his charge to assemble at Fort Roe, Kansas to assist the refugees.³

General Hunter sent Captain J.W. Turner, Chief Commissary of Subsistence, and Brigade-Surgeon A.B. Campbell to the refugee Indian encampment to assist the destitute. However, the plight of the refugees overwhelmed the meager resources of Hunter's men. The few cheap blankets and condemned army tents that they had did little to meet the dire needs of those who had endured the exodus to the “Promised Land.” According to Campbell, the supplies provided by the army consisted of thirty-five blankets, forty pairs of socks, and a few underclothes. He woefully admitted

that he “selected the nakedest of the naked” and gave them what few items there were.⁴

Then, Campbell was forced to explain to the hundreds that stood about him that there was to be nothing left for them. From among those who stood before him, there were “seven, varying in age from three to fifteen years [without] one thread upon their body.”⁵ On February 15, with supplies exhausted, the army stopped giving assistance altogether; the horror was such that was “beyond the power of any pen to portray.”⁶ Annie Abel described the situation in her work *The American Indian in the Civil War, 1862–1865*, “The inadequacy of the Indian Service and the inefficiency of the Federal never showed up more plainly, to the utter discredit of the nation, than at this period and in this connection.”⁷ Yet, from the midst of this chasm of despair was to come the hope for a new day.

When Evan Jones arrived in the new nation in January 1862, it was no longer the Cherokee Nation. It was Keetoowah; it was a nation of the “beloved community.”⁸ According to reports from the camps, there were more than three thousand Creek, a thousand Seminole, a hundred Quapaws, and about fifty Cherokee and Chickasaw. Fewer than a hundred African Americans survived the flight to Kansas;⁹ by the end of January, there were as many as ten thousand people living in the squalid refugee camps near Leroy, Kansas. Historian Annie Abel described these camps as “concentration camps.”¹⁰

Reverend Jones continued to work with the local religious and charitable organizations to provide further assistance for the refugees. This was a difficult endeavor because the refugees, of necessity, had been situated on uninhabited lands along the Verdigris River. Though Jones could offer little material assistance to the emaciated refugees, his mere presence provided great hope and inspiration to those who had been his flock for so many years. He wrote home to his missionary board, requesting assistance for his congregation and expressing hope that they would soon be able to return to their homes.¹¹

When Jones traveled among the more able-bodied, he found a resilient and inspired people who were eager to return to the homelands and reestablish their former positions in the political and social affairs of their respective nations. If this meant joining the Federal Army and returning to Indian Territory as soldiers to engage the rebel brigades of Watie, McIntosh, and Jumper, the loyal Keetoowah were eager to do so. Remembering how Confederate forces had ruthlessly pursued them to the Kansas border, the loyal Keetoowah had even stronger resentment towards their former enemies.¹²

There was also strong support within Kansas for organization of a force of “colored” troops to protect the state from its enemies to the South.¹³ It was believed that “hordes of whites and half breeds in the Indian country are in arms driving out and killing Union men. They threaten to overrun Kansas and exterminate both whites and Indians.”¹⁴ As early as August 1861, Sena

tor James Lane of Kansas had asked permission to form Indian troops among his brigade to use as “Jayhawkers” in Missouri, Arkansas, and Indian Territory.¹⁵ He wrote to federal Indian agents of Kansas, “For the defence of Kansas I have determined to use the loyal Indians of the Tribes above named ... If you have means within your control I would like to have you supply them when they march with a sufficient quantity of powder, lead & subsistence for their march to this place, where they will be fed by the government.”¹⁶ Lane, the “Grim Chieftain” of the Republican Party, was an unscrupulous political opportunist who used the struggle over slavery in Kansas to pursue his own political ambitions.¹⁷ A loyal cadre of militant journalists, preachers, and politicians supported him in his “abolitionist” fervor.

Senator Lane was not the only one interested in using Indian troops. Federal Agent George Cutler, who had first met with Opothle Yahola’s emissaries, wrote to Commissioner Dole to “see if possible that some measures are taken to rescue the Southern Indians from the rebels;” he requested “the formation of a brigade of friendly Indians” to rescue their abandoned families.¹⁸ Commissioner Dole responded to his agent’s request quite simply, “I am disinclined to encourage the Indians to engage in the war except in extreme cases, as guides.”¹⁹

Senator Lane, however, was not to have his plan slowed by either Commissioner Dole or General David Hunter, Commander of the Western Department who had military responsibility for the Western frontier. By late 1861, Lane had used his influence in Washington and his supporters in Kansas to organize the “Kansas Brigade.” The brigade swept across the border into Missouri, burning, looting, and distributing pamphlets announcing the abolition of slavery on the frontier. Wherever Lane’s Kansas Jayhawkers swept, they “liberated” hundreds of black slaves and allowed them to accompany the expedition as teamsters, cooks, and sometimes even as soldiers.²⁰

Lane was not averse to using the black soldiers for whatever purpose he saw fit. At Fort Leavenworth, Kansas in early 1862, the wily Lane stated, “I do say that it would not pain me to see a Negro handling a gun and I believe the Negro may just as well become food for powder as my son.”²¹ By late November of 1861, Lane’s Jayhawkers had “liberated” six hundred ex-slaves and sent them back to the “Happy Land of Canaan” in a “Black Brigade” led by two Methodist chaplains. When they arrived in Kansas, the freed blacks cheered for “James Lane, the liberator.” However, Lane’s chaplains then rewarded the slave’s loyalty by distributing the “ex-slaves” as laborers among the farms and villages of his supporters in southern Kansas.²²

Because of Kansas’s reputation as an abolitionist enclave—especially in the areas around Lawrence, Leavenworth, Wyandotte, and Fort Scott—large numbers of African-American refugees began to flee Missouri, Arkansas, and Indian Territory for Kansas.²³ In addition, the fear of Lane’s Jayhawkers led many slaveholders in states surrounding Kansas to free their slaves as

opposed to facing the scorched earth policy of the Jayhawkers. Some Missouri slaveholders took their slaves to Texas, as did many Cherokee, to safeguard them until the war was over. Many of those African Americans in Kansas were refugees from the Indian Territory who were now living in camps in the Southern part of the state.²⁴ By 1863, there were nearly 8,000 former slaves in Kansas; by the end of the war, the state's African-american population had grown from 816 in 1860 to nearly 13,000.²⁵

Just as there was support in Kansas for the use of Indian troops to "protect" the state from the "hordes of whites and half breeds" lurking on their Southern border, there was also a movement to enlist these African-Americans in the army. The *Leavenworth Conservative* echoed Lane's call by stressing the need for "colored" troops to protect Kansas's long border from Southern Indians and guerrillas. The *Emporia News* argued that if the South used "colored" troops "to shoot down our brave boys, ought we not retaliate by using them to subdue the enemies of the government?"²⁶

As the Kansans considered the use of "colored" soldiers, the refugees themselves looked forward to returning home and the restoration of their once-powerful nation. A pervasive image in Cherokee society, the phoenix, remained present in the minds of those so beaten and so destitute. Their homelands and their people were held hostage by those captivated by an ideology very much at odds with the traditional way of life and one that had already had a destructive influence on the Cherokee Nation. If an army was needed, then this army was willing. Out of the "nakedest of the naked," this new army was to rise.

THE HOME FRONT

Back in the Cherokee Nation, Principal Chief Ross struggled to maintain control over a Cherokee Nation that was spinning hopelessly out of control. Confronted with the fact that the very troops he had commissioned into military service had deserted to the enemy, he found his leadership of the Cherokee Nation and its loyalty to the Confederate States of America called seriously into question. Stand Watie and the Knights of the Golden Circle had not only gained a strategic advantage by the Keetoowah's desertion, they were using the desertion to increase their own political and social standing within the nation. In addition to accusing the Keetoowah of spoiling the good name of the Cherokee people before their Confederate allies, the Knights of the Golden Circle even charged Ross with having protected some of the deserters in his home.²⁷

Some deserters were, indeed, returning to the Cherokee Nation and trying to rebuild their lives; others gathered up what they had in order to return to Kansas. When he learned of Cooper's intention to court-martial the deserters, Chief Ross asked him if he could handle this situation as Chief of the Cherokee Nation. He explained to Cooper that he felt responsible for the confusion because of his efforts at reconciliation with Opothle Yahola. He

also stressed the terms of the treaty with the Confederacy that the Cherokee soldiers would be required to fight only in defense of their homeland and that the assault on the fleeing renegades went against this policy. Through deft discourse and diplomacy, Ross was able to persuade Cooper to allow him to accept responsibility for these affairs.²⁸

Ross reassembled the remainder of Drew's regiment on December 19, 1861 and addressed the troops with Colonel Cooper and Major Thomas Pegg at his side. He began by chastising those among Drew's regiment who had deserted the Confederacy, but promised a pardon to those who agreed to return to the regiment. The desertion was all a misunderstanding, "According to the stipulations of our treaty [with the Confederacy] we must meet enemies of our allies whenever the South requires it, as they are our enemies as well as the enemies of the south; and I feel sure that no such occurrence as the one we deplore would have taken place if all things were understood as I have endeavored to explain them."²⁹ In spite of Ross's call to Drew's regiment to recognize the treaty with the Confederacy, the plea fell upon many a deaf ear; even Major Pegg could not rally the remaining Keetoowah to recognize the Confederate treaties. Many of the Keetoowah deserted the army and simply went home. Yet, the danger at home was as great as that on the battlefield.³⁰

In late December, the Civil War was brought home to those "Pins" who had returned to the nation seeking safety. In spite of Ross's amnesty, there was no safe haven. Chunestotie, one of the leaders of the Keetoowah, was murdered and scalped by Charles Webber, the nephew of Colonel Stand Watie. Chunestotie had deserted Drew's regiment, fought with Opothle Yahola against the Confederate troops, and returned to the Nation under Ross's amnesty. Chunestotie, a well-known "Pin," had also been part of a struggle over the Confederate flag being raised over the Cherokee Council House in August.³¹ Chunestotie was killed for his part in the preservation of the "old ways."

Colonel Drew called the murder of Chunestotie a "barbarous crime" and demanded the arrest and trial of Webber. The Keetoowah held Watie and the Knights of the Golden Circle responsible for the murder. Stand Watie called the murder "regretful," but said that his nephew was "beside himself with liquor" at the time. He also stated that the Ross party was just trying to make political hay of an unfortunate but entirely understandable incident.

Not long after this, Arch Snail, another of the Keetoowah deserters from Drew's regiment who had returned home, was killed by his own pistol. Watie's followers claimed that Snail had tried to ambush them and they were forced to kill him.³² Ross wrote to Colonel Cooper, urging him to investigate "certain complaints made against the reckless proceedings of Colonel Watie and some of his men towards Cherokee citizens," and demanded Cooper's immediate "attention to the Subjects therein embraced."³³ Cooper initiated an investigation into these murders and solicited information from his Confederate troops.

Stand Watie, in responding to Cooper's inquiry regarding the murders, was incredulous. The murder of Chunestotie, he replied, "is called a barbarous crime and shocks the sensitive nerves of Colonel Drew, Mr. Ross, and others, who of course never participated in the shedding of innocent blood."³⁴ He further went on to lay out his contempt for Chunestotie and the Keetoowah, "Chunestotie has been for years hostile to Southern people and their institutions; he was active last summer in repressing Southern movements with a strong hand, with the advice and assistance of Capt. John Ross 'who accompanied you in your recent expedition.' He went at the head of many others of like opinion to Tahlequah last summer for the avowed purpose of butchering any and all who should attempt to raise a southern flag—the flag was not raised as you remember..."³⁵

Watie concluded his statement by noting that he was "well aware that the personal relations of myself with the unfortunate faction is seized upon with avidity by those whose only ambition seem to be to misrepresent and injure me."³⁶ Cooper's half-hearted investigation of Webber probably resulted from his disinterest in prosecuting those who would kill an enemy of the Confederacy. However, his inaction resulted in an increasingly clandestine internal warfare between the Keetoowah and the Knights of the Golden Circle. The losses on both sides would be great.

Drew's regiment was the only thing that stood between John Ross and his enemies; Ross began to refer to them as "my regiment" and those Keetoowah who remained in the Cherokee Nation were tied closely to Ross. Not only did they protect Ross, but they also worked against the Knights of the Golden Circle in their efforts to promote the interests of the Confederate States of America within the Cherokee Nation. In January 1862, Colonel Drew's troops left Fort Gibson to go to Ross's home at Park Hill in order to "protect Chief Ross, that it was thought that he was not safe."³⁷ The troops were called to Park Hill because John Ross had been threatened by "a drunk boy [who] goes there, calls him a Pin and an abolitionist."³⁸

Ross's problems with this "drunk boy" were not only just the fear the he might, himself, become another victim of someone "beside himself with liquor." There were deeper issues here. The boy was Return Foreman, the nephew of Reverend Stephen Foreman, Pastor of Park Hill Presbyterian Church. Foreman was Ross's closest neighbor and a follower of Stand Watie. The Foreman family ran down both sides of the conflict. Stand Watie killed James Foreman, supposedly responsible for killing Treaty Party members, in 1842. David Foreman, ordained by Evan Jones at Flint Church in 1849, left Jones's church over the issue of slavery to pursue a ministry with the Southern Baptists in 1861. Members of the Foreman family also fought on both sides in the Civil War: Stephen Foreman's sons fought with Watie's troops; John Foreman fled north to Kansas with Opothle Yahola's forces.³⁹

Reverend Stephen Foreman shared his nephew's opinion about Ross. He never believed Chief Ross to be committed to the Southern cause and thought that the sole purpose of Drew's regiment was to serve the interests of

Ross and the Keetoowah Society. Foreman, a mixed blood slaveholder, distrusted John Drew and his regiment, “His regiment showed their hand and his hand too at the Bird Creek fight when they fought against our own men. Mr. Ross showed his hand also in pardoning all those men without even a trial. Mr. Ross also showed his hand harboring the leaders of those traitors of the country. It is said that two or three of those traitors were in his house.”⁴⁰ It is likely that when Return Foreman, with so many family members on both sides of the conflict, called John Ross a “Pin,” he knew what he was talking about.

Colonel Cooper’s investigation into the Chunestotie and Snail murders being only a cursory exercise, Chief Ross felt further isolated and endangered. The Knights of the Golden Circle kept up the intensity by consistently provoking incidents. Ross, with great consternation, wrote a letter to brother Albert Pike, seeking assistance, “I have at all times in the most unequivocal manner assured the People that you will not only promptly discountenance, but will take steps to put a stop to such proceedings for the protection of their persons & property and to redress their wrongs. This is not the time for crimination and recrimination; at a proper time I have certain complaints to report for your investigation.”⁴¹ Though Ross was attempting to find justice in an increasingly lawless land, it was clear that a blood feud between the Knights of the Golden Circle and the Keetoowah had been set in motion. In this conflict, there would be no innocent parties:

Them pins was after Master all de time for a while at de first of de War, and he was afraid to ride into Fort Smith. Dey come to de house one time when he was gone to Fort Smith and us children told dem he was at Honey Springs, but dey knowed better and when he got home he said somebody shot at him and bushwhacked him all the way from Wilson’s Rock to dem Wildhorse Mountains, but he run his horse like de devil was setting on his tail and dey never did hit him. He never seen them neither. We told him ‘bout de Pins coming for him and he just laughed... Pretty soon all de young Cherokee menfolks all gone off to de War, and Pins was riding ‘round all de time, and it ain’t safe to be in dat part around Webber’s falls, so old Master take us all to Fort Smith where they was a lot of Confederate soldiers.⁴²

A new chaos arose within Indian Territory that eclipsed even the terrible years following removal. Each day, the terror struck not just at the respective parties, but also at those defenseless ones who made the easiest targets. Hannah Hicks, the daughter of missionary Samuel Worcester, described the dread that stalked the Nation, “Today we hear that Watie’s men declared their intention to come back and rob every woman whose husband has gone to the Federals and every woman who has Northern principles.”⁴³ The internecine struggle, being no respecter of persons, decimated with equal ferocity the just and the unjust too.

Not just in the Cherokee Nation did the terror reign; it spread like a wild-fire among the nations of Indian Territory. In the Mvskoke Nation, crops that had been ready to gather were left in the field. The ceremonies to celebrate the harvest and the beginnings of a new season were not held; the lodges and churches also saw little activity. There was only desolation, "We would see some lone cow that had been left. The roosters would continually crow at some deserted home. The dogs would bark or howl. Those days were lonesome to me, as young as I was, for I knew that most of our old acquaintances were gone."⁴⁴

Terror reigned; men from both parties killed each other on sight. Great numbers of armed factions rode the land looking for the spoils of "war." Theft was endemic not only from the homes of the "enemy," but also from anyone thought to be "supporters" of the enemy. Homes were burned, supplies were stolen, and what could not be used to support the struggle was destroyed. The women and children hid in the woods by day, and at night returned to "what was left of our homes." No one was left untouched by the pain and horror that swept the Indian Territory.

In March of 1862, there was a decisive struggle against Union forces at the Battle of Pea Ridge in northwestern Arkansas in which members from both regiments of Cherokee Confederate fought.⁴⁵ For the first time, the Confederate Indians were not only allowed to fight amongst the white soldiers in a military manner, they were encouraged to fight in "their own fashion" with traditional weapons. A soldier from Missouri described the Confederate warriors, "They came trotting gaily into camp yelling forth a wild war whoop that startled the army out of all of its propriety. Their faces were painted for they were 'on the warpath,' their long black hair qued in clubs hung down their backs, buckskin shirts, leggings, and moccasins adorned with little bells and rattles, together with bright colored turkey feathers fastened on their heads completed unique uniforms, uniforms not strictly cut according to military regulations. Armed only with tomahawk, and war clubs, they presented an image somewhat savage, but they were mostly Cherokees, cool and cautious in danger, active and sinewy on persons, fine specimens of the 'noble red man.'⁴⁶

Watie's Confederate troops fought bravely and earned recognition for their valor. After first being frightened by the "thunder wagons" of Union artillery, they recovered and captured several of the cannons and supporting artillerymen. However, when the Battle of Pea Ridge was over, it was a sound victory for Union forces under General Samuel Curtis over the Confederates led by General Earl Van Dorn. The Western frontier was up for grabs. Furthermore, there were troubling rumors of "atrocities" being committed against Union soldiers by the Confederate Cherokee.⁴⁷

A Northern pamphlet charged that General Albert Pike had "maddened them [the Confederate Indians] with liquor to fire their savage natures, and, with gaudy dress and a large plume on his head, disregarding all the usages of civilized warfare, led them in a carnage of savagery, scalping wounded

and helpless soldiers, and committing other atrocities too horrible to mention.”⁴⁸ Nothing could be farther than the truth, but upon examining the reports of Confederate surgeons, it was found that, indeed, one of the federal dead was found scalped. Pike forthrightly denounced the scalping and bluntly alleged that surely soldiers from another command had committed these outrageous acts. Union officers later reported that it was white Texans who had actually committed the “atrocities.”⁴⁹

However, this controversy paired with the wholesale desertion from Drew’s regiment in December caught Brother Albert Pike in a whirlwind that he was not to emerge unscathed. He was described as being “partially deranged, and a dangerous person to be at liberty among the Indians” and if not insane, then he was to be arrested for violation of the “Rules and Articles of War.”⁵⁰ He was actually arrested and numerous charges were advanced regarding supposed violations of military protocol including “intercourse with the Indians.”⁵¹ For Albert Pike, the infamy was too great and he soon resigned his commission.⁵²

Farther north in Kansas, a new storm was rising. Those who had fled the Indian Territory and suffered greatly in through a winter of discontent were now gathering their forces in preparation to return home to recover the land that had once been theirs. An ill wind blew across the prairie and the struggle to come would be monumental. Back in the Cherokee Nation, the Confederate forces also gathered their strength for the coming days. In the forthcoming battles, there would be no winners.

“SO LAUDABLE AN ENTERPRISE”

...the Indians of all tribes held a grand council last Thursday at Fort Roe in regard to the war, at which they determined with great unanimity to gather up and arm as best they could, all their able bodied men and go down with the army on the own hook and aid in driving out the Rebels from their homes in time to plant a crop for this season and then gather all the Ponies they can and they think they can capture enough from the Rebels with what they have come up for their families. Cannot the Government aid so laudable an enterprise as that at least with a few guns and some ammunition...

—Agent Coffin to Commissioner Dole, March 3, 1862⁵³

In the middle of 1862, Evan Jones visited the Cherokee Nation on at least two occasions and having reviewed the situation in the Cherokee Nation, he came to an astonishing conclusion, “Slavery is at an end in the Cherokee Nation. Several of the largest slave owners have declared their slaves free.”⁵⁴ Upon his return to Kansas, he immediately visited the refugees to give them news of the homeland.

At the same time, he also initiated a plan to rescue John Ross and the loyal

Cherokee from their desperate position in the occupied Indian Territory. Evan Jones, in letters to Commissioner Dole that were forwarded to the War Department, pleaded with the federal officials to recognize that Chief Ross was, and always had been, loyal to the government and that his actions were simply delaying tactics until a federal force could restore order in Indian Territory. He put forward Ross's position to Dole, "In view of all [of] which the best friends of the Union and of the Nation were brought to their wits' end and...to avert the overrunning of their country by the secession troops, and having no military force of their own, nor any other means of defense, the only choice seemed to be to accept the best conditions they could obtain...[Drew's regiment] was raised for home protection...the great majority of the officers and men in this case being decidedly loyal Union men."⁵⁵

Among the refugees, the desire to return to their homes was great. Even if it meant having to fight their way back to their homelands, they would do so. When General [formerly Senator] James Lane visited the refugee camps in early 1862, Chief Opothle Yahola and Chief Halleck Tustenuggee (Seminole) met with him and pleaded with him for assistance. Lane's boasts of his efforts to raise an "Indian Expedition" to retake the Indian Territory aroused the loyalist forces and they believed their commission into the United States Army was imminent.⁵⁶

The people of Kansas supported the expedition believing the Confederate Indians on their border were a grave threat to their safety. The reports of "atrocities" committed against Federal troops at Pea Ridge even furthered their fears of being overrun by Confederate savages. What better plan than to set the "savages" against each other? In addition, the possibility of retaking Indian Territory following its act of "treachery" against the people of the United States would provide land dealers, railroad promoters, and home-steaders with ample grist for the mill of speculation.

As much as the people of Kansas sought to organize a brigade of "colored troops," senior federal officials, in both Kansas and Washington, resisted the idea. Abraham Lincoln, himself, was opposed to arming and using Indian troops. In light of the happenings at Bird Creek and Pea Ridge, it was felt that Native Americans were unreliable, undisciplined, and prone to become "savages with all the barbarity their merciless and cowardly natures are capable of."⁵⁷ General David Hunter was sympathetic to the plight of the Indians, but distrusted James Lane and was contemptuous of his marauding "Jayhawkers." Kansas governor Charles Robinson as well as General Henry Halleck, now responsible for the Western frontier, disapproved of the use of "colored troops" in general, but most specifically under the command of the self-serving adventurer Lane.⁵⁸

The continual lobbying of Evan Jones for the rescue of Chief John Ross, the persistence of Lane's requests for an Indian expeditionary force, and the increasing costs of supporting a large army of unenlisted refugees from the Indian Territory put pressure upon Congress to act. On March 19, 1862, the Adjutant General wrote to General Henry Halleck with the following

orders, "It is the desire of the President, on the application of the Secretary of the Interior and the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, that you should detail two regiments to act in the Indian country, with a view to open the way for the friendly Indians who are now refugees in Southern Kansas to return to their homes and to protect them there. Five thousand friendly Indians will also be armed to aid in their own protection, and you will please furnish them with necessary subsistence."⁵⁹

The orders for the recruitment of an "Indian Expeditionary Force" were sent down from Henry Halleck, but with the provision that they "Report immediately what means you have for arming friendly Indians, and how many it will be safe to arm. These Indians can be used only against Indians or in defense of their own territory and homes."⁶⁰ By the time of the organization of the "Indian Expeditionary Force," there were nearly ten thousand refugees in Kansas from all over Indian Territory.⁶¹ General Hunter drew two regiments of "infantry" from among the refugees. In reality, these regiments of what would be called the "Indian Home Guard" were actually mounted riflemen, just as were their counterparts in the Confederate Army.

In addition to the Indian Home Guard, there were three thousand white troops largely from Kansas, Ohio, Indiana, and Wisconsin associated with the Indian Expeditionary Force.⁶² All of the troops were placed under the command of Colonel William Weer, a good officer but a chronic alcoholic.⁶³ They were assigned to the Department of Kansas under the charge of General James Blunt. Blunt and Weer were close associates of Senator James Lane.⁶⁴ Reverend Evan Jones was assigned as an official emissary between Commissioner Dole and the Indian Home Guards.

The First Indian Home Guard was composed of loyal Mvskoke supporters of Opothle Yahola and Seminole warriors led by mixed blood Billy Bowlegs. Though history was to credit the entrance of African-American troops into the Civil War at a much later point, there is little doubt that many of the leaders of the First Indian Home Guard were of African-American/Native American descent. Besides Billy Bowlegs, the leaders of the companies were the aging "black muscolge" veterans of the Florida wars Halleck Tustenuggee, Tustenuggee Emarthla (Jim Boy), and Gopher John.⁶⁵ Chitto Harjo, a veteran of the Florida wars, spoke as a Keetoowah when he articulated the reasons for his enlistment in the First Indian Home Guard, "I left my laws and I left my government, I left my people and my country and my home...in order to stand by my treaties...and I arrived in Kansas. It was terrible hard times with me then... Then I got a weapon in my hands, ...for I raised my hand to God to witness that I was ready to die in the cause that was right and to help my father defend his treaties. All this time the fire was going on and the war and battles were going on."⁶⁶

The Second Indian Home Guard was composed of a variety of Indians, but at the core of the leadership were Keetoowah loyalists formerly enlisted under Colonel John Drew. Among the officers of the Second Indian Home Guard were Captain James McDaniel, Captain Moses Price, Captain

Archibald Scaper, Captain Bud Gritts, Captain Dirtthrower, and Captain Springfrog. That the Second Indian Home Guard was composed of fullblood troops is evidenced by the roster of enrollees: Oochalata (future leader of the Keetoowah), Littlebear Bigmush, Eli Tadpole, Goingsnake, Pelican, and Bullfrog.⁶⁷ Many of the members of the Second Indian Home Guard were Baptists.⁶⁸ Reverend Evan Jones and John B. Jones were respectively Chaplains of the First and Second Indian Home Guard.⁶⁹

Evan Jones continued to assert John Ross's loyalty to the United States in letters to Indian Commissioner Dole and Dole established a similar position before the political officials in the War Department.⁷⁰ Trusting that this information was derived from sources deep in the Cherokee Nation, the War Department set forth a plan to test Ross's loyalty to the United States. They would use the federal Indian Home Guard to sweep deep into the Indian Territory in a series of early summer engagements. Jones was authorized to compose a confidential message from the War Department and to deliver it to Ross under a flag of truce when the Indian Expedition reached the Cherokee Nation. They believed that Ross and the Keetoowah loyalists still within the nation would reunite with their brethren from the North. The government further believed that this would seal the fate of the Civil War within the Indian Territory.⁷¹

Leading up to the summer invasion, the Indians were trained daily by white officers in the proper procedures of military warfare. They marched and drilled and drilled and marched; finally, they were issued uniforms, caps, and discard rifles from the Federal stocks. They were also taught to operate the "shooting wagons" of the Federal artillery. The recent "atrocities" still fresh in mind, it was incumbent upon the white officers to instill discipline in these unruly and unsophisticated troops. The troops, many still gaunt from their horrible winter, hardly filled out what uniforms they had, and their kepi caps sat precariously upon full heads of hair. What the troops lacked in military demeanor, they made up for in earnestness and commitment to their cause.

In preparation for the return to their homelands, the Indian Home Guard engaged in their traditional preparation for wartime much to the concern of the federal officers under whom they were commissioned. They drank great quantities of "black drink" that they believed would render them impervious to Confederate bullets, and engaged in ritual cleansing, "they foolishly physic themselves nearly to death danc [dance] all night and then jump into the river just at daylight to render themselves bullet proof...they have followed this up now every night for over two weeks and it has no doubt caused many deaths."⁷² Wiley Britton, in his *The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War*, reported, "the white soldiers saw hundreds of families, women and children, bathing nude in the warm shallow water of the stream, apparently unconscious of what we call shame. They were mostly Creeks and Seminoles."⁷³ The Native troops chanted curious incantations to the spirits for protection and frequently punctuated drill practice with traditional war whoops.⁷⁴ In addition, the Mvskoke soldiers carried the

scales from Uktena and the uwod from the magical lizard, two objects as sacred to them as the "Ark of the Covenant" carried by the Israelites.⁷⁵

A week before the Indian Expedition set out for Indian Territory, a group of Osage scouts encountered some loyal Cherokee heading to Kansas for a pre-invasion conference. The Cherokee, members of the Keetoowah Society, were bringing messages of support and solidarity for the invasion. They reported to the federal Indians that there were two thousand warriors within the Cherokee Nation led by a Cherokee named Salmon.⁷⁶ There were also reports of a significant number of former slaves, being enrolled as "wooly-headed" Indians, joining up with the loyalist forces in the Indian Territory.⁷⁷

The messengers were sent by Salmon to ascertain the status of the invasion force and to detail the frightful situation of the Cherokee remaining within the Nation. Watie's men had picked up the intensity of the internecine warfare in recent weeks, and Salmon sought assurances that the remaining Keetoowah would not be left to face the struggle alone. Upon hearing of the support for invasion within the Cherokee Nation, Colonel Weer wrote that "John Ross is undoubtedly with us, and will out openly when we reach there."⁷⁸

HOME COMING

On June 21, 1862, the Indian Expedition with nearly six thousand soldiers set forth from Humboldt, Kansas for the Indian Territory. The spectacle of this new army in Federal uniforms marching military style was one to behold, "... first and second Indian Regiments left for Indian Territory in good stile and in fine spirits the Indians with their new uniforms and small Military caps on their Hugh Heads of Hair made rather a Comical Ludecrous apperance...they marched off in columns of 4 a breast singing a war song all joining in the chourse and a more animated seen is not often witnessed."⁷⁹ On June 26, 1862, Lieutenant James Phillips of the United States Army wrote to Chief John Ross, informing him of the impending invasion by the loyal forces, "I have learned from your friends with me that you and your people are truly loyal to the United States; but from stress of circumstances have not been able to carry out your loyal principles during the present unholy rebellion...My purpose is to afford you protection and to relieve you and your Country from your present embarrassment and to give to you and all your friends an opportunity to show their loyalty to the United States Government."⁸⁰

Accompanying the expedition were two Federal Indian Agents, E.H. Carruth and H.W.Martin, to provide liaison between the Indians and the military authorities. They were also to aid the loyal refugees in their return to their homeland and to provide assistance for resettlement once the Indian Territory was secured.⁸¹ Trailing the military troops were 1500 refugees who had gathered all that they possessed in order to return to their homes in time to get their crops into the field.⁸²

Evan Jones also accompanied the expedition as an official envoy of Commissioner Dole and Superintendent William Coffin. He carried with him a letter to John Ross from Superintendent Coffin that stated:

As our mutual friend, Evan Jones, is about leaving with the military expedition that is about marching for the Protection of the Indian Territory, I embrace the opportunity as an Agent of the Government to assure you that the United States Government has no disposition to shrink from or evade any of its obligations to the Indian Tribes that remain loyal to it, and I earnestly hope that the time is not distant when Communications, so long cut off, may be renewed... And I would most respectfully state to your Excellency that Mr. Jones has, during his exile, been the most unceasing advocate of your people and their rights, and is eminently worthy of your consideration and regard.⁸³

Although Evan Jones and his son John were still employed by the American Baptist Missionary Union, their activities by this point had strayed far from their responsibilities as missionaries. As military chaplains, the men could be seen as acting within his religious responsibilities, but it could hardly be argued that this was the mission that their board had envisioned. In his last letters to the Board in May, Evan Jones did not mention the expedition or his role as intermediary for the Federal government. During the length of their involvement in the expedition, neither of the missionaries issued a report or a letter to the missionary board.⁸⁴

Not sooner than the Indian Expeditionary Force entered the Indian Territory than it encountered an auxiliary body of Stand Watie's troops, J.J. Clarkson's Missourians, near Locust Grove on the Grand River. Clarkson's Missourians were completely surprised in their beds by the Ninth Kansas and the First Union Home Guard. Silently, the Union soldiers had surrounded the camp and took aim at the Confederate tents; when they opened fire, the Confederate troops fell into complete disarray. They scattered in their bedclothes, but, being surrounded, they were forced to surrender.⁸⁵ When the shooting was over in Locust Grove, about 100 Confederates were killed or wounded, and Clarkson and 110 men were captured; Union losses were 3 killed and 2 wounded.⁸⁶

A few days later, the Indian Expeditionary Force also came very close to capturing the head of the Knights of the Golden Circle. Near Spavinaw Creek, the Sixth Kansas cavalry surprised Stand Watie as he was eating supper and he narrowly escaped.⁸⁷ Advance guards, seeing Watie in dubious flight, "emptied their revolvers at him with little effect;" however, one of his attendants was killed.⁸⁸ The Federal troops were able, however, able to seize the home of Stand Watie. They also captured Colonel William Penn Adair (Flint Lodge #74), one of the leaders of the Knights of the Golden Circle and close associate of Watie. The remainder of Watie's troops fled to Tahlequah and Park Hill, informing the Confederate Cherokee that Union forces were in their immediate midst.⁸⁹

Colonel Weer and his troops proceeded to Flat Rock on the Grand River, not far from the home of John Ross, where they set up encampment. No sooner had they set up camp than many more of Colonel Drew’s “Pins” turned themselves in to Weer’s troops and asked to be enlisted in the Federal army.⁹⁰ After these men were enlisted, they spread the word among their fellow Keetoowah of the arrival of the federal troops and a new flood of recruits made their way to Weer’s camp. During the next week, so many Keetoowah joined the federal forces that the Second Indian Home Guard had to be expanded. Another unit, the Third Indian Home Guard, was formed under the leadership of Colonel William A. Phillips, a Scotsman and former journalist from Kansas.⁹¹

If the Second Indian Home Guard was composed of Keetoowah, the Third Indian Home Guard was even more so. Lt. Colonel Lewis Downing, Major John Foreman, Captain Smith Christie, Lt. Samuel Houston Benge, Captain Thomas Pegg, Captain Huckleberry Downing, and Captain James Vann led them.⁹² Reverend Lewis Downing, the former Chaplain of Drew’s Regiment, became a federal officer and brought with him nearly two hundred soldiers.⁹³ Whereas Downing had been a chaplain in the Confederate Army, his shift from religious leader to military leader was of some import. At various times, John Jones, Evan Jones, and Budd Gritts served as Chaplains of the Indian Home Guard.⁹⁴

If there was ever a doubt as to the Keetoowah’s loyalty to their treaties with the Federal government and their commitment to each other and to the Cherokee Nation, it was laid to rest. David Corwin, Second Indian Home Guard of the United States Army, was later to write, “We were in constant communication with the loyal portion of the Cherokee and it was then perfectly understood between us, before Colonel’s Weer’s expedition had been finally decided upon, that as soon as the United States troops advanced into the Nation, the loyal Indians, including Colonel Drew’s regiment would join us. They said at that time, and I believe with entire truth, that Colonel Drew’s regiment had been raised [by Ross] in order to protect the loyal portion of the Cherokees from the outrages of Stand Watie’s rebel band.”⁹⁵ The invasion of the Cherokee Nation by the federal army provided the opportunity for a reunion of the disparate Keetoowah brothers. No longer separated by the winds of the war, the Keetoowah collected themselves for the coming struggle to regain their national identity.

In addition to the broken brotherhood, there were other bonds to be renewed. Families ripped apart in the flight to Kansas were being reunited as the refugees returned home. African-Americans from throughout the Cherokee Nation heard of the invading army of liberation and fled to join with them in the struggle against slavery. The Kansas regiments, being composed largely of abolitionist forces, freely accepted these runaway slaves into their midst, giving them shelter and protection.⁹⁶

Although the actual recruitment of “colored men” would not begin in Kansas for a short time, the number of “colored” troops committing to the

federal Indian Home Guards began to swell.⁹⁷ When three hundred Cherokee and thirty African-American troops rode through Park Hill on their way to join up with Weer's forces, there was little doubt as to the nature of this new army.⁹⁸ The impact of the arrival of federal troops catalyzed the slaves throughout the Cherokee Nation and the fear of a slave uprising terrified Southern sympathizers, "The slavery question was annoying in that the slaves were ranging over the country and were insolent."⁹⁹

The fears of a slave uprising were not without some merit. Colonel Weer proposed that a proclamation be issued inviting the Cherokee Nation to abolish slavery by vote and to accept compensation from the United States government as freedmen. He also encouraged General Blunt to write to President Lincoln for an amendment to the Emancipation Proclamation that would allow the "the Indian Nations to avail themselves of its benefits."¹⁰⁰ Though the proclamation was never issued, there continued to be serious problems in the Cherokee Nation. William Potter Ross wrote to Colonel Drew, "I greatly regret the Confusion which exists, and owing to the apprehensions entertained of further Negro difficulties, I will remain here (Park Hill) until I hear from you."¹⁰¹ Some of the returning refugees used the protection provided by the Union troops to seek revenge upon those who had once so viciously pursued them. Many of the homes of the Confederate Cherokee were burned, and several Cherokee were killed. Women and children were forced to flee to Confederate camps for protection.¹⁰²

Over the next week, Colonel Weer sent several requests to Chief John Ross asking him to meet with federal officials to discuss the political position of the Cherokee Nation and the possibilities for reconciliation with the United States. Ross, however, was less than eager to comply.¹⁰³ He realized that the Southern sympathizers were still a dominant force in the Cherokee Nation and would consider his meeting with Weer an act of betrayal. Ross, though protected by a hundred of Drew's men considered "friendly to the Union although ostensibly still serving the Confederacy," still refused to meet with United States officials (he also ignored orders from General Cooper of the C.S.A. to begin involuntary conscription).¹⁰⁴ Mindful that the treaties established with the Confederacy were also conducted with "the authority of the whole Cherokee people," Ross could not act without support. He wrote to Weer: "I cannot, under the existing circumstances, entertain the proposition for an official interview between us at your camp."¹⁰⁵ Throughout the discussions, Chaplains Evan and John Jones of the Indian Home Guard were the mediums of correspondence between Ross and Weer.¹⁰⁶

On July 12, 1862, Colonel Weer sent Captain Harris S. Greeno and a company of soldiers to capture Chief John Ross, his brothers Lewis and William, and the remaining members of Colonel Drew's regiment. Upon riding into Tahlequah, Greeno was met by a "Negro" who informed him that Ross and his followers were waiting for him at Park Hill. On July 15, 1862, Colonel Weer sent Doctor Rufus Gilpatrick, Chief Ross's personal physician and a federal officer, to see if what they had been told was true. It was; Greeno and

his federal troops easily captured Ross and the remaining members of the Keetoowah Society. Among those "captured" were the entire Ross family, Major Thomas Pegg, Lieutenant Anderson Bengé, Lieutenant Archibald Scaper, Lieutenant Joseph Cornsilk, and Lieutenant John Shell.¹⁰⁷ Chief John Ross was placed under "house arrest" only to be immediately paroled.¹⁰⁸

It was now evident to all that the Keetoowah had not joined Drew's regiment to fight for the Confederacy, but to protect the interests of the loyal Cherokee until the Union came to their rescue.¹⁰⁹ What enemies of John Ross suspected was confirmed in their eyes, Ross had been in allegiance with the Keetoowah all along, and Drew's troops were indeed "traitors" to the Confederacy. The easy capture and parole of Ross and his troops infuriated Watie and embarrassed Albert Pike. Pike attempted to defend Ross by stating that either Ross had no choice but to surrender, or, that "he is falser and more treacherous than I can ever believe him to be."¹¹⁰ With respect to the easy surrender of Ross, Annie Abel was later to remark, "there were many people who thought, both then and long afterwards, that the whole affair had been arranged for beforehand and that victor and victim had been in collusion with each other all the way through."¹¹¹

At a council hurriedly gathered at Tahlequah, Colonel Greeno addressed the loyal Cherokees and told them that he understood their plight and if they would now join the Union, he would restore all loyal Indians to their homes and protect their interests. After citing the spate of recent Union victories, Colonel Weer offered up his assurances of protection to those Cherokee who had been loyal to their treaties. Without realizing the irony of the situation, he spoke to the Cherokees, "The successes of the Federal arms are referred to show you that part of the Federal forces employed in these operations will be released for operations in Arkansas and the Indian country, and that it is the firm intention of the Government to exercise its lawful authority in all this region, and to meet, engage and destroy all opposition as rapidly as practicable, and it has been pointed out to you the earnestness with which the government has taken hold of this matter."¹¹² On that day in July, the hopes and the dreams of the Keetoowah for a new nation came one step closer to reality.

Several days later, there was another council; however, this council was of quite a different nature being held solely among the white officers under the leadership of Colonel Weer. Colonel Frederick Salomon wrote to General Blunt of the nature of this council, "Upon this and other information [regarding distance from supply lines and the movement of Watie's troops] the council of war decided that our only safety lay in falling back to some point where we could reopen communication and learn the whereabouts of our train of subsistence...command was imperiled, and a military necessity demanded that something be done, and that without delay."¹¹³ The officers under Weer complained that he was prone to drink and that his drunkenness affected his capabilities as an officer. With the support of fellow officers, Salomon arrested Weer and took command of the troops. Without a doubt, the Federal troops

were in a desperate position being one hundred sixty miles behind “enemy lines” and cut off from their supply lines. It was also quite hot, and troops from Wisconsin and Ohio were not accustomed to the hot, dry prairie climate.¹¹⁴

Though the situation of the Indian Expedition was difficult and may have been perilous, there may have also been other reasons why the white troops mutinied against their commanding officer. Annie Abel reports in her *The Indian as Participant in the Civil War* that the “Germans were particularly discontented and came to despise the miserable company in which they found themselves.”¹¹⁵ An army of renegades and refugees surrounded the white troops and there is little doubt that many of these were full bloods and persons of African descent. Though Lane and his followers such as Weer may have had a commitment to the recruitment and use of “colored troops,” those soldiers who were in the most direct contact with the refugees seemed not to share Lane’s liberal sentiments.¹¹⁶ Salomon and his white troops decided to return to Kansas.

Colonel Salomon next approached Chief John Ross and implored him to join the fleeing expedition and seek the safety of Fort Scott, Kansas. However, Chief Ross, both a prisoner of the United States and yet still the Chief Executive of the Cherokee Nation, found himself once again caught between two fires. After a considerable discussion with Chief Ross and Evan Jones, Colonel Salomon decided not to try to force Ross to come with him to federal territory.¹¹⁷ At two o’clock in the morning on July 19, Colonel Salomon and the “entire white portion of the diverse command commenced a retrograde movement” back towards Kansas.¹¹⁸

Before he left, Colonel Salomon placed Colonel Robert Furnas in charge of the three Indian regiments and ordered them to cover his retreat while he fled north towards Fort Scott, Kansas.¹¹⁹ Though Salomon ordered the Indian troops to disperse and protect him from several points, they consolidated their position at the point where the Creek Nation bordered the Cherokee Nation.¹²⁰ With the bulk of the Federal army now in retreat for Kansas, the loyal Indian troops found themselves once again extremely vulnerable to an assault from the Confederate Cherokee. If the Confederates were to attack, there was little doubt that the remaining federal forces would be driven from the Indian Territory.¹²¹

Believing in Colonel Weer’s promise of protection, hundreds of refugees and loyalists had returned to the Cherokee Nation and made their way back to their former farms and families. The seizing of Confederate lands by the federals and the escalating insurrectionary activities pursuant to the “negro difficulties” had created great instability within the nation. There was great fear that Stand Watie and his soldiers would return to teach the loyalists a frightful lesson. Some of the very same refugees who had returned to the Cherokee Nation now retreated in haste back to Kansas on the heels of the federal troops who had only previously promised to protect them. Even some of the First and Second Indian Home Guard became demoralized and deserted their regiments to return to their homes.¹²²

On July 18, 1862, the Union officers of the Indian regiments met to decide what steps would be necessary to maintain the integrity of the Cherokee Nation. Colonel Furnas ordered the Third Indian Home Guard, composed largely of Keetoowah supporters, to camp on Pryor Creek and serve as a northern perimeter for the remaining regiments. Less than a week later, Colonel William Phillips of the Third Kansas Indian Home Guard learned that detachments of Stand Watie's rebel forces had crossed the Arkansas River and were "committing depredations against those Cherokees who had declared for the Union."¹²³

Dividing his troops into three columns, Phillips and his Third Indian Home Guard set out to engage the Confederate armies near Fort Gibson, now abandoned by the Federal forces. On July 27, Confederate forces near Bayou Meynard fired upon one of the columns of Phillip's troops as they were proceeding towards Park Hill. The Confederate forces then pursued these troops into a trap and soon found themselves surrounded by Phillips's forces. After a brief but sharp conflict at the Battle of Bayou Menard, the rebel forces were routed and Confederate losses were put at 125. These losses included Colonel Thomas Taylor and Captain Jefferson Davis Hicks of Watie's regiment, as well as two Choctaw captains. The Keetoowah suffered but one casualty—a severely wounded private.¹²⁴

General Blunt, hearing of Salomon's retreat, was concerned that Ross and the Federal forces had been left in the Cherokee Nation to fend for themselves with little or no support from those who had promised them protection. On July 26, 1862, he ordered Lieutenant William Cloud and 1500 soldiers back to Park Hill to seize Chief Ross and his entire family and to conduct them to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Preceding Cloud were Evan Jones, John Jones, and Doctor Rufus Gilpatrick; these men convinced Ross to "surrender" and assured him that his country would be protected. On August 3, 1862, Chief John Ross and his party of nearly forty members left for Kansas, carrying with them the official records and treasury of the Cherokee Nation.¹²⁵ Serving as bodyguards for the Ross family was Captain Huckleberry Downing and the men of Company F of the Third Indian Home Guard of the United States of America.¹²⁶

The remaining troops of the Indian Home Guard, finding themselves out of provisions and with little military support, retreated to a point less than fifty miles from the Kansas border. Before they did, they seized nearly six hundred head of cattle and a large number of ponies that Colonel Phillips held for the use of the loyal Indians. As they also engaged in a "retrograde movement," the loyalist troops protected a new group of refugees once again fleeing the Indian Territory.¹²⁷ Those who had returned triumphantly, hoping for the promise of a new nation within their own homelands found that, once again, their nation existed solely as an ideal among the "beloved community." It would be some time before that idea it would become a reality.

The Reverend Stephen Foreman, once a member of the "beloved community," watched the proceedings from his homestead not far from

Ross's home in Park Hill. He reflected the attitudes of many in the Southern Rights Party when he recorded in his diary on July 28, 1862:

The far-famed Evan Jones is said to be at Mr. Ross's now. He came in yesterday escorted by about 1500 northern pins and feds. Something, it is believed, will be done by Mr. Jones and Mr. Ross now that they have gotten together... To me it appears plain that he had been deceiving the South and that the Pins—or his party—the Joneses and the Feds all understood this, knew the time also when he would have to be taken prisoner in order to have things look smooth, and to conceal as much as possible his duplicity...they [the Keetoowahs] were on their way to the Feds camp to join the Northern army—that they were a part of the Pin or Ross party, and in this move they were only carrying out the plan long since laid by Evan Jones and Chief Ross... The two Joneses I thought were the originators of the Pin organization. Chief Ross was knowing to the whole plan and sanctioned every measure...¹²⁸

Yet, nowhere was his contempt greater than for those to whom he had once been so close:

When I think the Joneses are the cause of all our present sufferings and losses and will be the cause of the final overthrow of the Cherokee Nation, I am astonished. I know not what to say. Old Mr. Jones has been among us some forty years, laboring as a missionary. His son John was born among us and speaks the Cherokee language perfectly. He also is a preacher and, with his father, has been laboring for the spiritual good of this people. But where are they now? Why have they gone north with their church members and preachers and are engaged in killing and robbing those who differ with them in opinion? If that is according to the Gospel, keep it away from us.¹²⁹

FRAUGHT WITH DANGER, DISTRESS, AND RUIN

The advance of the Indian Expedition gave the Cherokee people an opportunity to manifest their views by taking as far as possible a prompt and decided stand in favor of their relations with the U States Government. The withdrawal of the expedition and the reabandonment of that people and Country to the forces of the Confederate States leaves them in a position fraught with danger, distress, and ruin.

John Ross to Abraham Lincoln¹³⁰

On August 21, 1862, exactly one year from the time when John Ross announced that Cherokee Nation alliance with the Confederate States of America, a general council was held in Tahlequah. This council of Cherokee, which consisted entirely of Stand Watie and his 700 Confederate soldiers, reaffirmed the Cherokee Constitution of 1839 and reasserted their treaty

with the Confederacy. Declaring all offices of the Cherokee Nation to be vacant, Watie then established himself to be Principal Chief and replaced all "disloyal" Cherokee officials with his own men. The "National Council" also declared all of those that deserted Drew's regiment were to be considered traitors and outlaws.¹³¹ Hannah Hicks, daughter of Samuel Worcester, recorded the event in her diary on August 24, "Stand Watie has been elected Chief; Sam Taylor, second Chief; S[tephen] Foreman, Treasurer, and [they] are now making new laws."¹³²

Among the new laws of the Cherokee Nation was a forced conscription bill passed on August 31, 1862 that compelled all men between the ages of sixteen of thirty-five to enter the Confederate Army. Anyone who did not obey this law would also be considered a traitor to the Confederate States of America and an outlaw in the Cherokee Nation. Watie's troops began scouring the Nation arresting and imprisoning the lucky and killing the unfortunate. On September 3, 1862, General Thomas Hindman ordered Watie to treat all deserters, and anyone who tried to flee to Kansas, as "disloyal" elements and enemies of the Confederacy.¹³³ It seems that the line between the enemies of Stand Watie and those of the Confederacy grew quite thin.

Fort Gibson, Tahlequah, Park Hill, and nearly the entire Cherokee country north to the Springplace Mission were in Confederate hands. Stand Watie and his Knights of the Golden Circle assumed control of the destiny of the Cherokee Nation. The Confederate Cherokee seized Fort Gibson and destroyed a general store owned by a member of the Ross family. After dumping one hundred hogsheads of valuable supplies on the ground, the Watie men took Daniel Ross and Dan Gunter, proprietors of the store, as prisoners. Terror once again ruled the Cherokee Nation, "We hear today that the "Pins" are committing outrages on Hungry Mountain and in Flint, robbing, destroying, and killing. It is so dreadful that they will do so. Last week, some of Watie's men, went and robbed the Ross's place up at the mill; completely ruined them. Alas, alas, for this miserable people, destroying each other as fast as they can."¹³⁴

Loyal Cherokee who attempted to remain in the Cherokee Nation did so at great risk; many either swore allegiance to the Confederacy or fled to the woods. Mrs. William Potter Ross, who had remained behind in the nation, reported to her relatives in the East that the day after they had fled Park Hill, Watie's troops killed two men in the Murrell orchard and a few days later killed several more. William Potter Ross, in writing his son, let him know that even the elderly were not spared, "Your grandmother's house at the mill was broken into and all that she had was stolen."¹³⁵

When Evan Jones returned to the safety of Lawrence, Kansas, he wrote his first report to the American Baptist Missionary Union since late spring. Writing nothing of his role with the Federal officials or the arrest of John Ross, he addressed his concerns for his flock, "I have just returned from the Cherokee Nation to which I have had the sad privilege of making two visits

and seeing a great number of our brethren, sisters, and other friends, among whom I may name our faithful brethren and fellow labourers, Lewis Downing, Smith Christy, and Toostoo. I have also heard from our brother Tanenolee, who, amid the trouble with which the country has been afflicted, has continued to labor for the cause of our redeemer.”¹³⁶ In a later letter, he blamed the desperate situation in the Cherokee Nation on the lack of commitment of the federal government and the impact of the disastrous Indian Expeditionary Force upon empowering Watie and his Confederate Cherokee, “...that unhappy retreat inspired the rebels with new spirit, gave them time to rally, and return with reinforcements to ravage the country.”¹³⁷

With the Confederate Cherokee in charge of the Cherokee Nation and Chief Ross in exile, the exodus to Kansas intensified. In a letter to Commissioner Dole, Ross and Evan Jones described the new flood of refugees:

By that retreat [Solomon’s], the whole country was abandoned to the rebels, who returned anew the plunder of the unprotected families of the loyal men of the Federal army, who were the objects of special hate and abuse, and many hundreds were compelled to abandon home and property and follow their husbands, fathers, and friends, to escape ruffian violence. Most of these women and children, with old and infirm men, with great toil and fatigue, made their way to Drywood, Kansas, on the neutral land, a short distance from Fort Scott, where they quartered several months, exposed to sun and rain and sickly dews, without tent or shelter, and almost without clothing, the results of such sickness and many deaths.¹³⁸

Finally settling in desperation in Drywood, Kansas, members of the Keetoowah Society described their new situation:

They had been robbed of all means of their subsistence, & their lives threatened, & that course seemed the only course to save life, for the country was being fast overrun by guerrilla bands, committing every possible depredation. These refugees were collected on the Dry Wood, near Fort Scott [Kansas], & at one time numbered about 1,700. Their sufferings were great on the way up, but still greater after their arrival. Gen. Blunt furnished them with provisions, but they were compelled to camp out in the open air, as Gen. B had no tents at his command. When the fall rains came on and the winter frosts, these women and children were thus exposed, & were most miserably clad withal. Sickness made dreadful havock among them. The campground at Dry Wood is literally a grave yard.¹³⁹

In November 1862, Evan Jones snuck back into the Cherokee Nation, returned to his former Baptist mission, and brought his family out to Lawrence, Kansas. He was escorted by a small military component provided by Federal authorities; most likely it was Lewis Downing, Smith Christie, Toostoo and

other Keetoowah members of the Third Indian Home Guard. In a letter to the Baptist officials, Jones was thankful for the “gracious protection and guidance of the Divine providence,” but acknowledged that they had “suffered much in privations as well as anxiety.”

Of his Baptist ministers still in the Cherokee Nation, their sufferings were grave indeed, “I have seen many of our Cherokee brethren, and spent several weeks with some of them. They have suffered much but the details would be too long to write. We are much afraid that our very good Brother, Tanenolee, is dead... I have been within seven miles of his house, but have heard that he was robbed of everything by the rebels and driven from his home into the woods while in very destitute circumstances, as are hundreds of others who have been similarly treated.”¹⁴⁰

Shortly after his family left the Nation, the Confederate Cherokee took advantage of Hindman’s order to punish “disloyal” members of the Cherokee Nation. The Baptist Mission was burned to the ground, the press that had produced scriptures and hymns in Cherokee was taken and its type scattered, and even the mission’s crops and orchards were reduced to waste. In burning the Baptist mission, the Knights of the Golden Circle must have believed that the very heart of the Keetoowah Society had been destroyed.

Yet across the border, the “Kituwah spirit” prevailed. At the beginning of December, a new mission was formed near Neosho, Missouri.¹⁴¹ Major John Foreman (Cherokee Lodge #21), of the Third Indian Home Guard petitioned General Blunt for the relief of the refugees, “Major John Foreman represented the extreme sufferings and destitution of these refugees, upon which Gen. Blunt ordered that officer to come to town with four companies of the 3rd. Indian Reg. & whatever number of Refugees might wish to accompany him here to establish a military post, & gather in refugees who desired to come, from Dry Wood & elsewhere, & put them in abandoned houses here.”¹⁴² On Christmas Day, 1862, a large contingent of the refugees arrived at Neosho and was placed under the wing of Major John Foreman, commandant of the post: “Major Foreman has put them in abandoned houses here, &c they have been sheltered from the weather. He has gathered in supplies, partly from the surrounding country.... During the month that we have spent here, they have been well fed, & sheltered from the inclemency of the weather, as well as possible.”¹⁴³

Even in the homes of the “enemy,” the Keetoowah gathered for prayer and consolation. In the midst of great suffering and depredations, there was once again a revival. Though the flesh was weak, the spirit was willing:

After the Federal Army came down, and we had the opportunity once more to mingle with them and found in them a willingness to hear the gospel. This was especially manifest at Neosho, when the refugees were brought there. At that place, J.B.Jones had favorable opportunities to preach to large congregations for several weeks last fall and winter. A good meeting house was reserved for religious exercises. They had

preaching on Sabbaths in Cherokee and English, and on week days prayer and conference meetings, principally in the Cherokee language. These exercises appear to have been favored with the presence of God, and the gracious manifestation of the Holy Spirit... The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered in the Cherokee language; after which quite a number of anxious persons came up for prayer and conversation. They had a Sabbath school, at which one hundred and sixty youth attended. In the Cherokee regiments there is preaching every Sabbath, and in the tent there are prayer meetings or other religious exercises nearly every night...¹⁴⁴

In the tents and camp meetings of the Federal army, the Keetoowah Society kept its commitment to its sacred vows through prayer meetings and other "religious exercises." Their suffering had been great. However, they knew that by the grace of the divine breathgiver and the perseverance of the "Kituwah spirit," they would return home to their lands and their families. Deliverance would come and like a phoenix rising from the ashes, a new nation would be borne for all of "the real people," "For several weeks they had regular and interesting religious services, under the care of the Chaplain of the 2nd Indian regiment, and they cherished hopes of returning to their homes in the spring in season to put in, at least a partial crop. The idea of wasting the season in idleness, living on rations from either the military or civilian department, was no pleasant condition for them to contemplate. Their most anxious desire all the time, had been to return to their homes as soon as possible."¹⁴⁵

A NEW NATION

On August 4, 1862, Colonel James Williams of the Fifth Kansas Cavalry was appointed a recruiting officer "for the purpose of recruiting and organizing a regiment for the United States service, to be composed of men of African descent."¹⁴⁶ By the end of October, there were two regiments of African-american soldiers outfitted in federal uniforms drilling daily at Camp "Jim Lane" in Southern Kansas. Colonel Williams reported to his superiors that the "colored people [are] entering into the work heartily, and evincing by their actions a willing readiness to link their future and share the perils with their white brethren in the war of rebellion, which then waged with such violence as to seriously threaten the nationality and life of the republic."¹⁴⁷

Though James Lane and supporters may have believed that "the Negro may just as well become food for powder as my son," it is certain that the feeling was much less than universal. Williams' black recruits were daily arrested and jailed on fraudulent charges by county officials and the white officers in his new regiment were harassed with frivolous charges such as unlawfully depriving a person of his freedom.¹⁴⁸ Colonel Williams saw as the source of the problem as being "an intolerant prejudice against the colored

race, which would deny them the honorable position in society that every soldier is entitled to, even though he gained the position at the risk of his life in the cause of the nation.”¹⁴⁹

On October 27, 1862, the Kansas Colored Volunteers quieted their critics. In assaulting a rebel stronghold at the Osage River in Bates County, Missouri, the African-american regiment defeated a force of six hundred Confederate soldiers. In spite of assertions about African-american combatants on the eastern front, the Battle of Island Mounds was the “first engagement in the war in which colored troops were actively engaged.”¹⁵⁰ William Truman, a leader of the Confederate forces, reported, “the black devils fought like tigers...and not one would surrender, though they [the Rebels] had tried to take a prisoner.”¹⁵¹

A report of the Battle of Island Mounds from a *New York Times* correspondent highlighted the activities of two especially courageous black soldiers. One of the soldiers, “Sixkiller, a Cherokee Negro” fell with half a dozen wounds “after shooting two men, bayoneting a third and laying a forth *hors de combat* with the butt of his gun.”¹⁵² A second, Sergeant Edward Lowrie (a prominent Cherokee name), “was reloading his gun when three men on horseback ordered him to surrender. As an answer he knocked one of them off his horse with a stunning blow from his rifle, and as the other two charged, he felled them also with the butt of his gun.”¹⁵³

Initially, the Kansas Colored Volunteers was composed largely of refugee African-americans from the Indian Territory.¹⁵⁴ Though certainly there were large numbers of runaway slaves from Missouri and Arkansas in the state of Kansas, the “black indians” from the Indian Territory made up the largest portion of these troops.¹⁵⁵ Many of the African-american soldiers who served in the Kansas Colored Volunteers had previously served in the First Indian Home Guard. It was these experienced military veterans who made up the vanguard of the new colored regiments; it was these “black indians” who were actually the first African-american troops to see combat in the Civil War.¹⁵⁶

On January 13, 1863, at Fort Scott in Kansas, Lieutenant Sabin of the regular army mustered six companies of African-american soldiers into the United States service. By early May, the remaining four companies were organized and the Kansas First Colored Volunteers Infantry Regiment of the United States Army was commissioned. This was nearly four months before the commissioning of the most famous of the black regiments, the Massachusetts Fifty-fourth. The Battle of Island Mounds was nearly nine months before the Fifty-fourth’s assault on Fort Wagner. When the First Kansas was mustered out of the Civil War in 1865 as the 79th U.S. Colored Troops, it was ranked as twenty-first among all Union regiments in the percentage of total enrollment killed in action.¹⁵⁷

In a letter to John Ross in early January, Keetoowah Huckleberry Downing mentioned, “Chilly and D.N.McIntosh propose to surrender, & to come into the Union army, with two regiments of Creeks.”¹⁵⁸ Upon hearing

of their inclinations, Colonel William Phillips of the Third Indian Home Guard informed them to be patient and to manifest no affection for the North for to do so would be premature and foolhardy. He also told the Mvskoke leaders to bide their time until he could send a brigade of federal troops into Indian Territory to cover the “capture” and retreat of further Creek forces.¹⁵⁹ At this point, even some of Stand Watie’s troops were deserting to the North.¹⁶⁰

In early February, Phillips and the Third Indian Home Guard slipped across the border and established Camp Ross at Cowskin Prairie, an area in the Cherokee Nation immediately adjacent to the federal lines. On February 17, 1863, Lieutenant Colonel Lewis Downing called a National Council of the Cherokee Nation; Colonel Phillips stood by to protect the Council as it began its proceedings. This National Council elected John Ross as its chief and Major Thomas Pegg as acting principal chief. Lieutenant Colonel Lewis Downing was chosen president pro-tem of the upper house and Toostoo was selected as Speaker of the Lower House. Reverend John B. Jones, Chaplain of the Second Indian Home Guard, was chosen clerk of the Senate.¹⁶¹ Three of the five members of the new National Council were founding members of the Keetoowah Society.

The first act of the new National Council was to declare that “the treaty with the rebels was declared to have been entered into under duress, and, therefore, to have no binding effect, either in law or in morals. It was, therefore, abrogated and revoked, and declared to be null and void.”¹⁶² The Council then “passed an act expelling every disloyal person, and declared their offices vacant.”¹⁶³ The next act of the Keetoowah Council was one of critical and lasting importance. It declared, “...at that early day (February, 1863)—before any slave State made a movement towards emancipation—the Cherokee Nation abolished Slavery unconditionally and forever, and the enslaving or the holding in slavery of a human being within the limits of the Cherokee Nation, was declared to be a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of from one thousand to five thousand dollars for every offence.”¹⁶⁴ The Act of Emancipation, signed by John Jones, Lewis Downing, Thomas Pegg, and George Foster, stated, “Be it enacted by the National Council: That all Negroes and other slaves within the lands of the Cherokee Nation be and they are hereby emancipated from slavery, and any person or persons who may have been in slavery are hereby declared to be forever free.”¹⁶⁵

As important as it was, the Act of Emancipation would have little effect upon the majority of the slaves in the Cherokee Nation for they were owned by the mixed blood Cherokee who remained loyal to the Confederacy. These Cherokee would have little sympathy for slaves who attempted to take advantage of the actions of the new Cherokee National Council. Stand Watie’s Confederate Cherokee would serve to enforce the will of the slave-owners. However, the Act of Emancipation was of critical and strategic importance for the loyal Cherokee. The abolition of slavery and the freeing

of former slaves within the Cherokee Nation would have a profound impact upon their military allies—the Kansas First Colored Volunteers. Black soldiers would now fight as free men for a Cherokee Nation in which they would once again be citizens.

As the historic Cherokee council was meeting at Cowskin Prairie, a “long line of persons” was weaving its way through the ice and snow for Kansas.¹⁶⁶ Many of those still left in the Mvskoke Nation made the decision that their fortunes did not lie with the South and began to emigrate to the United States of America. As they made their way north, they wore a white badge on their hats that signified their loyalty to the Union. The agreement between Colonel Phillips and Chilly McIntosh provided that those bearing this sign of peace would be protected and spared from all harm. Eventually, nearly half of the Mvskoke Nation made their way towards Kansas. In spite of their previous overtures to the Federal officers, the McIntoshes made no effort to flee to Kansas.¹⁶⁷

In early March, the leaders of the Mvskoke Nation decided to follow the lead of their brethren within the Cherokee Nation with similar proclamations as those put forward at Cowskin Prairie. Chief Opothle Yahola was aged and near death, yet steadfast in his commitment to his treaties. As he refused to acknowledge the treaties of the Confederate Creeks, he saw no need to establish new treaties. However, through the subtle diplomacy of African-american counsel Rev. Harry Islands and the adroit leadership of Sands Harjo, an agreement was reached to negotiate a new treaty. It was the last public act of the great old chief; he died shortly afterwards.¹⁶⁸

Rev. Harry Islands of North Fork Baptist Church was, according to Angie Debo in her *The Road to Disappearance*, a “shrewd Creek Negro” who “apparently looked after the interest of his race.”¹⁶⁹ The treaty recognized the “necessity, justice, and humanity” of the Emancipation Proclamation. In the treaty, the Creek Nation also affirmed that slavery should cease and that they would set aside a portion of their lands for occupancy by the freedmen and “all others of the African race who shall be permitted to settle among them.”¹⁷⁰ It seems apparent, considering the historic role of African Americans within the Creek Nation, that the treaty was in the best interest of all of the members of the Mvskoke Nation regardless of their “race.”

At Cowskin Prairie, the Cherokee National Council also chose three delegates to proceed to Washington, D.C. to assist Chief John Ross in his negotiations with the United States government: Lieutenant Colonel Lewis Downing, Captain James McDaniel, and Chaplain Evan Jones. The Council instructed the delegation to make a treaty with the United States on behalf of the new Council, to obtain unpaid annuities and compensation for losses from Confederate depredations, and to request assistance for the refugees in Kansas. A final demand was for yet another military expedition to free the Indian Territory from its occupying force so that the Cherokee could return to their homes in safety.¹⁷¹

THE TURNING POINT

In late April of 1863, Colonel Phillips received the command that he had been waiting for—the Union Army was to advance in force into Indian Territory and seize it in order for then refugees to be able to return home time to get that year’s crop in. The refugees were, by this time, in a crisis because they had not only depleted the material resources from the surrounding area, but also taxed the welfare and generosity of the people of Kansas. In addition, typhus and smallpox were spreading among the Indians and the Federal officials feared a wider epidemic. General Blunt ordered Phillips’ Indian Home Guard Units, which now numbered five, to return to the Indian Territory taking all of the refugees with them.¹⁷²

On May 2, 1863, the Kansas First Colored Volunteers received orders from General James Blunt to occupy a position near Baxter Springs, formerly the home of the refugees and within a day’s ride from Indian Territory, for the expressed purpose of protecting Colonel Phillips’ supply lines.¹⁷³ The Indian Home Guard had easily taken Fort Gibson in northeastern Indian Territory and established a post there. The “Texas Road,” which Williams’s troops protected, was a vital link in the Union line.¹⁷⁴ The Federal troops of the Indian Home Guard and the First Colored Volunteers camped within twenty miles of each other to provide protection for the Indians returning to their homelands.

The Knights of the Golden Circle, still a force to be reckoned with in the nation, were angry and frustrated. Stand Watie addressed his troops at Webbers Falls in late April “with a heavy heart, for evil times have come upon our country.” He noted “disaster upon disaster has followed the Confederate arms in the Cherokee country.”¹⁷⁵ Watie had attempted to break up the Keetoowah Council at Cowskin Prairie in early January, but had been deterred by the presence of Phillips and Federal troops. Now, the same Federal troops occupied several strategic positions adjacent to the Cherokee Nation and had were assisting the return of the loyal Cherokee and attempting to restore his enemies to the leadership of the Cherokee Nation.

Even as Watie addressed his men, Federal troops were marching on his position. He had planned to have a Confederate Cherokee National Council the following morning to reelect a Principal Chief and to develop a political and military strategy for the upcoming campaigns against the invading federal forces. At dawn on April 25, 1863, the Indian Home Guard under the leadership of Colonel Phillips, having conducted a night march, attacked Watie’s position and, again catching the Confederates in the bedclothes, sent them scurrying with hardly a shot being fired. The Confederate Cherokee National Council was not held.¹⁷⁶

Shortly after their disruption of the Confederate Cherokee National Council, the Keetoowah National Council held a second meeting and followed up on the abolition of slavery—itself a controversial position—with what has

been referred to as “one of the most controversial acts of the war.”¹⁷⁷ The Council authorized the confiscation and sale of all personal property and improvements owned by those who were “disloyal” to the Cherokee Nation by their actions on behalf of the Confederacy. The purpose of the act was to recover land stolen or destroyed by Confederate soldiers and to provide for the relief and assistance of the returning refugees.

However, the confiscation act can also be seen as an attempt to mitigate against the “progressive” influences in the Cherokee Nation that found expression in mercantile capitalism, plantation agriculture, radical individualism, and racial polarization. Historian William G. McLoughlin refers to the act as “an effort to redistribute the wealth by the Keetoowah who dominated the Indian Home Guard regiments.”¹⁷⁸ He went further to state that the intent of the Keetoowah act was to inform the wealthy Cherokee “they would no longer enjoy the large homes and plantations they had possessed before.”¹⁷⁹ These things may be true, but the “confiscation act” can also be seen a revolutionary attempt to reassert and reestablish the “old ways” much of which had been undermined by the “civilization” program of the Federal government and its corresponding effect upon the Cherokee people.

Though the Keetoowah codified the process of “confiscation,” it was actually a process that needed little political justification; during the Civil War in the Indian Territory, “confiscation” was endemic:

About the 21st of May, the rebel Indians under the command of Stand Watie, entered the Territory and robbed the women and children of everything they could find, and took off horses, cattle, wagons, farming utensils, and drove off the inhabitants and laid open their farms to be entered and eaten up by stock. Crops were not sufficiently forward to mature without further cultivation, and were consequently mostly lost. Robbing, sometimes murdering and burning, continued until about the fourth day of July without abatement...The military authorities were, or seemed unable, to afford protection to the nation at their homes. They were compelled to leave their crops and seek protection at Fort Gibson.¹⁸⁰

Stand Watie and his nearly one thousand Confederate troops were able to take advantage of the fact that in spite of the numerical superiority of the federal forces, they were quite unable to be in all places at once. With their men enlisted in the army, the farms were managed by women and children who proved easy prey for the Confederate forces. The crisis in the Cherokee Nation had reached a critical point; something had to be done.

On June 26, 1863, the First Kansas Colored Volunteers made their way from Baxter Springs into Indian Territory, where it joined forces with Major John Foreman and the Indian Home Guard. On July 2, 1863, Major Foreman, commander at the point, sent back a message to Colonel Williams, the officer in charge, that the Indian Home Guard had encountered an undetermined number of Confederate troops under the leadership of Stand

Watie. That evening, as General Lee planned his assault on the Federal position on Cemetery Ridge at Gettysburg, Colonel Williams planned his assault upon the Confederate Cherokee at Cabin Creek.¹⁸¹

At dawn on the following morning, the Confederate soldiers looked out across their lines to see a dense formation of Federal troops, caissons, and artillery. Suddenly, from out of the very midst of the Federal line came a long line of Black and Indian troops bearing the colors and uniforms of the United States of America. Major Foreman and the Third Indian Home Guard led the assault. They had jumped to their feet, yelling and screaming; carrying their weapons high above their heads, they attempted to ford the creek that separated them from the Confederate troops. A surprise Confederate musket barrage caught the vulnerable Keetoowah in a crossfire and they took heavy losses; twice Confederate muskets hit Major Foreman and his horse was shot out from under him. Losses were heavy, and having Major Foreman taken down was a serious blow for the Native American troops; they retired back across the creek.

Just as the Third Indian Home Guard broke and fell back, the First Kansas Colored Volunteers pushed forward from behind the Indians and assumed their former positions advancing across the creek. A second company opened up upon the Confederate position forcing them down behind their entrenchment to provide protection for the oncoming African-american troops. The black regiment quickly broke the Southern earthworks and secured the far bank. The black soldiers then separated as if parted by the hands of Moses and out of their midst swelled a cavalry assault from the Ninth Kansas Cavalry regiment as the First Kansas Colored Volunteers provided supporting fire. The Confederate line broke under the ferocious assault and the Confederate Cherokee fell under a federal pursuit that lasted for nearly five miles.

With a force of only 900 men, Colonel Williams and his rainbow army had defeated a Confederate force more than twice its size. William's losses were one soldier killed and twenty soldiers wounded; Confederate losses were estimated at fifty killed, fifty wounded, and nine prisoners taken. Going into the battle, the Federal troops believed that without victory, there would be no quarter given nor prisoners taken; the Confederate troops operated under the "black flag." Following the battle, the "morale was high, the step lively, and the spirit of soldierly unity grew."¹⁸² In another part of the world, Gettysburg and Vicksburg fell to the Union and the tide of the Civil War changed; the Civil War would drag on for several more years, but the high water mark of the Confederacy had been reached.

Williams's troops, led by the First Kansas Colored Volunteers and the Kansas Indian Home Guards, returned to Fort Gibson located on the border between the Creek and Cherokee Nations. Arriving at Fort Gibson, the Union forces learned that the Confederate Army was consolidating its forces and preparing for a decisive battle to determine the fate of Indian Territory. On July 11, 1863, General Blunt, Commander of the District of the Frontier,

arrived at Fort Gibson with six hundred cavalry soldiers from Kansas and Wisconsin. General Blunt ordered the assembled troops to prepare for a major campaign against the Confederate forces.¹⁸³

On July 17, 1863, in what has come to be known as the “Gettysburg of the West,” three thousand Federal troops under the leadership of William Blunt encountered six thousand Confederate troops led by Douglas Cooper at the Battle of Honey Springs. The First Kansas Colored Volunteers formed the center of the Federal line; the Second Indian Home Guard formed to the right of the First Kansas, and the First Indian Home Guard formed to the left of the First Kansas.¹⁸⁴ The Third Indian Home Guard, having led the charge at Cabin Creek, served as reinforcements for the Federal troops. Chaplains Evan Jones and John B. Jones were present at the battle and reported the results to John Ross. Before the assault on the Confederate troops, Colonel Williams addressed his troops:

This is the day we have been patiently waiting for; the enemy at Cabin Creek did not wait to give you an opportunity of showing them what men can do fighting for their natural rights and for their recently acquired freedom and the freedom of their children and their children’s children... We are going to engage the enemy in a few moments and I am going to lead you. We are engaged in a holy war; in the history of the world, soldiers never fought for a holier cause than the cause for which the Union soldiers are fighting, the preservation of the Union and the equal rights and freedom of all men. You know what the soldiers of the Southern army are fighting for; you know that they are fighting for the continued existence and extension of slavery on this continent, and if they are successful, to take you and your wives and children back into slavery. You know it is common report that the Confederate troops boast that they will not give quarters to colored troops and their officers, and you know that they did not give quarters to your comrades in the fight with the forage detachment near Sherwood last May. Show the enemy this day that you are not asking for quarter, and that you know how and are eager to fight for your freedom and finally, keep cool and do not fire until you receive the order, and then aim deliberately below the waist belt. The people of the whole country will read the reports of your conduct in this engagement; let it be that of brave, disciplined men.¹⁸⁵

When the battle was over, the Union forces had vanquished the Confederate forces, driving them south deep into Mvskoke Nation towards territory that had once been the center of African-american settlements prior to the war.¹⁸⁶ The Southern casualties were 150 killed and buried in the field, 400 wounded and seventy-seven captured. Two hundred stands of arms and fifteen wagons were seized and burned at Honey Springs Depot.¹⁸⁷ In addition, four hundred pairs of handcuffs were found at the depot. A black deserter from the Confederate army, David Griffith, reported that the hand-cuffs were to be used on “colored soldiers they expected to capture and send back south as trophies of their valor.”¹⁸⁸

Colonel Williams, just as Major Foreman before him, was seriously wounded when his horse was shot out from beneath him by Confederate fire. He was carried from the field and taken to the rear. He joined the seventeen Union dead and sixty wounded in the makeshift Federal hospital. When General Blunt approached Colonel Williams, the first thing Williams asked General Blunt was, “General, how did my regiment fight?” General Blunt replied, “Like veterans; most gallantly, Sir!” Hearing of his soldiers’ valor, Colonel Williams responded, “I am now ready to die!”¹⁸⁹

The tide of the Civil War in Indian Territory changed that day. Though the internecine struggle was to drag on for another two years, there was never any doubt as to the outcome of the struggle. As Evan and John Jones watched, the very people who made up the constituency of their mission fought the battle that decided the fate of slavery in the Indian Nation. Though the conflict was over slavery, it was also about something much more—it was about the idea of a nation founded on freedom, kinship, and equality. On that day in July, a new Cherokee Nation was born. As an ex-slave from Kansas noted, you can be free in a lot of places, but until your home is free, freedom has no meaning. This is the heart of the Keetoowah message:

I got free while I was in Kansas... I like it the way I is, free. It’s a good thing, freedom. Do I like the northern folks—if I should go back to Ft. Scott, they’d have to haul me away, I’d die a cryin’. They was awful good to me up there. And I bet all those old timers are gone. And do I love my folks here? Well, I’s born down here, here’s where I belong. You know how it is, when you go away from where you first belong, seems like something calls you back.¹⁹⁰

“The Most Sacred Obligations”

We boldly claim that we have done our duty, to the full extent of our power, as the friends and allies of the Federal Government. More than three fourths of the able bodied men of the loyal Cherokee, fought in the Federal army, which is a vastly larger proportion of men than any state in the Union has furnished for the war. We fought to the end of the war, and when the last rebel was whipped, we were honorably mustered out of the service. The graves of eight hundred Cherokee warriors, fallen by our side in your service, testify that we have done our duty. Now, having done our whole duty to the Government, all we ask is that the Government do its duty to us—that it fulfill its treaty obligations to us—that it fulfill its solemn, reiterated pledges. We ask no gifts, no charities, but simply our rights for which we have fought and bled in your armies, and for which so many of our noblest men have died.

We make our earnest appeal to the President of the United States and to Congress. We entreat you to regard sacredly your past treaties with us, and to enact no law that shall sweep out of existence those most sacred rights which you have guaranteed to us forever.¹

—1866 Cherokee Delegation:
Smith Christie,
James McDaniel,
Thomas Pegg,
White Catcher,
Daniel Ross,
John B. Jones,
Samuel Bengé

HIS TERRIBLE SWIFT SWORD

He went with the Indians down around Fort Gibson where they fought the Indians who stayed with the South. Uncle Jacob say he killed many a man during the war, and showed me the musket and sword he used to fight with; said he didn't shoot the women and children—just whack their heads off with the sword, and I could almost see the blood dripping from the point. It made me scared at his stories.²

The Civil War in the Cherokee Nation began as it did throughout the United States. Proud armies arrayed against each other in magnificent pageants that

so quickly became but fearsome reminders that ideals once so noble fall quickly before the brutal reality of war. In the Cherokee Nation, the Civil War even more quickly disintegrated into an internecine conflict in which the lines between civilian and combatant were conspicuously blurred and the ferocity and terror struck the innocent and the guilty alike. By 1866, the Cherokee Nation, once so proud, had been reduced to ruins:

The events of the war brought to them more of the desolation and ruin than perhaps to any other community. Raided and sacked alternately, not only by Confederate and Union forces, but also by the vindictive ferocity and hate of their own factional divisions, their country became a blackened and desolate waste. Driven from comfortable homes, exposed to want, misery, and the elements, they perished like sheep in a snowstorm. Their houses, fences, and other improvements were burned, their orchards destroyed, their flocks and herds were slaughtered or driven off, their schools broken up, their schoolhouses given to the flames, and their churches and public buildings subjected to a similar fate; and that entire portion of their country which had been occupied by their settlements was distinguishable from the virgin prairie only by the scorched and blackened chimneys and the plowed but now neglected fields.³

Their houses, barns, fences and orchards, after two years of partial or total abandonment, look as hopeless as can be conceived. From being once so proud, intelligent, and wealthy tribe of Indians, the Cherokees are now stripped of nearly all...This is a sad picture, not overdrawn, and which no good man can see and not feel real sorry for their condition.⁴

The Civil War was a disastrous experience for the Cherokee people, "After five years of desolation the Cherokee emerged from the war with their numbers reduced from 21,000 to 14,000, and their whole country in ashes."⁵ Even as early as 1863, one-third of the adult women in the nation were widows and one-fourth of the children were orphans. 3,530 men from the Indian Territory served in the Union Army, and 1,018 died during their enlistment. No state was to suffer greater losses than did the Indian Territory in the Civil War.⁶

These numbers, horrific as they may be, do little to detail the personal agony of the people caught in the winds of a bitter war. On August 21, 1863, Confederate renegade William Quantrill entered an unprotected Lawrence, Kansas with four hundred men and proceeded to burn the town to the ground. As it burned, Quantrill's men went from door to door killing every male citizen they found; within eight hours, the town was destroyed and 187 persons were killed.⁷ Among those killed was the son of Reverend Evan Jones, "My family also has been made to drink the cup of sorrow. In that sad and savage tragedy at Lawrence on the 21st of August, my eldest son fell victim. It was indeed a bitter affliction, and out only consolation was that we had not to sorrow as they that have no hope."⁸

A month later Jones was to again drink from the cup of sorrow, "In addition to the loss of our son by the ruffian band at Lawrence, we have been called to mourn a daughter whose death was hastened by the shock of the carnage at Lawrence and intensified by finding her own brother among the victims. Although we have a good and comfortable hope that they have died in the Lord, yet it I a most painful stroke upon us all."⁹ During the coming winter, two more of Evan Jones's daughters died in Lawrence, "Our family afflictions, stroke after stroke, each entering deeply into our heart, have been repeated in rapid succession. But we would not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when rebuked by him. But I forbear at present to dwell on home sorrows and take the liberty of troubling you with a word of the bitter distresses which have come upon the poor Cherokee."¹⁰ In spite of his personal losses in Kansas and perhaps because of it, Evan Jones kept up his missionary efforts,

In the past few weeks, I have been preaching to the Colored People, of whom there are quite a number here, and in this vicinity. There is a good deal of religious interest among them, and I hope many of them are truly Christians. They have been keeping up meetings among themselves, but they need instruction very much, to rectify their crude and defective doctrinal notions, and to give them more accurate information in regard to scriptural facts.¹¹

My plan is not just to preach to them, which to do intelligibly, is no easy task on account of the amazing ignorance of those who till recently, have been slaves, and the defective and erroneous instruction they have received I am about to form a class of these and many others, who may choose to join them, for the purpose of giving them accurate and further instruction.¹²

Back in the Cherokee Nation, Stand Watie's soldiers moved with ferocity and operated a campaign of terror with impunity. Though never quite of the same ilk as Quantrill, Watie's men were often ruthless, "One day just as Daniel, Lewis, and Jim and others were making their way up from Gibson when a party of Watie's men followed on a couple of horses behind, found a Drew man sitting by the road, killed him, and then placing a rope around his neck hauled him about as children would a sleigh."¹³ Watie even wrote to his wife of their exploits, "Killed few pins in Tahlequah. They had been holding council. I had the old council house set on fire and burned down. Also John Ross's house. Poor Andy Nave [relative of Ross] was killed when he refused to surrender and was shot by Dick Fields. I felt sorry as he used to be quite friendly toward me before the war... They found some negro soldiers at Park Hill and killed two and two white men. They brought in some of Ross's negroes "¹⁴

Though Watie and his men were known for their guerrilla activities, the "Pins" were not of some repute for their assaults upon Confederate

supporters.¹⁵ Morris Sheppard, a slave from Webber's Falls, recalled the exploits of the "Pins," "Pretty soon all de young Cherokee Menfolks all gone off to de war, and de Pins was riding 'round all de time, and it ain't safe to be in dat part around Webber's Falls."¹⁶ Patsy Perryman, a slave in the Flint district, also recollected her encounter with the "Pins," "Mammy said the patrollers and 'Pin' Indians caused a lot of trouble after the war started. The master went to war and left my mistress to look after the place. The 'Pins' came to the farm one day and broke down the doors, cut feather beds open and sent the feathers flying in the wind, stole the horses, killed the sheep and done lots of mean things."¹⁷

Reverend Stephen Foreman also reported to the Confederacy on the "Pins," "The Pins are robbing the people of their negroes, horse, guns, etc Major Murrell, it was said, lost seven blacks and a number of horses and mules."¹⁸ Foreman, himself, was deprived of his "property" by the "Pins," "They first took from before my eyes, my two black men, Joe and Charles, and one horse and a mule."¹⁹ The slaves that were "stolen" from the slaveholding Cherokee were incorporated into the Indian Home Guards or sent back to the refugee camp at Neosho and then on to Kansas, "When he got away into Cherokee country some of them called the "Pins" helped to smuggle him on up into Missouri (Neosho) and over into Kansas, but he soon found that he couldn't get along and stay safe unless he went with the Army. He went with them until the war was over, and was around Fort Gibson a lot."²⁰

Throughout the duration of the war, Chaplain John Jones of the Third Indian Home Guard maintained a mission for the numerous refugees who were gathered at Fort Gibson for protection from the ravages of war.²¹ The mission attended to the sick, destitute, and regularly held religious services for nearly two hundred worshipers in a makeshift church erected on the campgrounds. In addition to services from Jones, the native ministers performed "religious services" as well. The mission also operated a school for freedmen, the first in Indian Territory. It taught nearly eighty students most of whom were displaced residents of the Indian Territory.²²

Large numbers of former slaves and freedmen had returned to the Indian Territory on the heels of Colonel Phillips, Colonel Williams, and the assembled forces of the United States Army. As many as six to eight thousand of these refugees were living in settlements and way stations in and around Fort Gibson. Many families stayed with the husbands who were serving in the federal army while many others simply occupied abandoned property in the immediate vicinity of the protection of the fort. In late October, Acting Principal Chief Thomas Pegg and the Keetoowah Council granted the ex-slaves independent status within the Cherokee Nation. Though blacks were yet to attain full citizenship in the Cherokee Nation, laws were passed that annulled prohibitions against teaching them to read and write, inhibiting them from engaging in labor or commerce, or preventing them from carry ing firearms. The act provided for the relief of

persons of African descent and enabled the Baptist missionaries to operate openly the Freedmen's schools²³

Late in the war, there was a second battle at Cabin Creek involving the First Kansas Colored Volunteers; this battle was to be one of the last significant battles in the Indian Territory. On September 16, 1864, General Richard Gano's Texas troops and Stand Watie's Confederate Cherokee came upon the First Kansas cutting hay for the cavalry within twelve miles of Fort Gibson. Lightly defended by the federal troops, the hay cutters were easy prey for the Confederate forces that once again operated under the "black flag":

Gano and Watie galloped their line to within rifle range, then unlimbered their cannon. A few grape shots scattered the Federal guard, and the exultant victors rode unopposed into the hay-cutters camp. With guns across their saddles, the ragged Confederate Indians jogged up and down through the uncut hay and tall weed patches, shooting hidden Negroes like jackrabbits. Some black men rose from the weeds calling, "O! Good master, save and spare me," but all were shot down. Some were found submerged in the water under the creek banks, only their noses above the surface. These were killed like the others and their bodies dragged out onto the pebble bars.²⁴

When the "battle" was over, the First Kansas Colored Volunteers lost 117 men killed and 65 wounded; as the rebel forces shot and bayoneted wounded Federal troops, they called out to each other, "Where is the First Kansas Nigger now?"²⁵

Though hardly a convincing victory over a determined opponent, Stand Watie's actions in the Second Battle of Cabin Creek earned him universal accolades throughout the Confederacy. General Douglas issued a proclamation highlighting his valor and courage, "The brilliancy and completeness of this expedition have not been excelled in the history of the war. Firm, brave and confident, the officers had but to order and the men cheerfully executed. The whole having been conducted with perfect harmony between the war-torn veteran Stand Watie, the chivalrous Gano, and their respective commands."²⁶ Yet, as Sarah Watie would so poignantly point out, there was a high moral cost to this victory. General Watie later reflected upon his actions, but his resolve was firm:

Although these things have been heaped upon me, and it would be supposed that I have become hardened...it still hurts my feelings. I am not a murderer. Sometimes I examine myself thoroughly and I will always come to the conclusion that I am not such a bad man as I am looked upon. God will give me justice if I am to be punished for the opinions of other people. If I commit an error, I do it without bad intention I call upon my God to judge me; he knows that I love my friends and above all others, my wife and children.²⁷

The Cherokee Nation in 1865 was in ashes. Having been built anew following the disastrous consequences of removal, it stood now as if it had never been. Yet, even greater than the desolation of the land was the pain within the hearts of a people who had once again been divided by the same forces that had reigned terror throughout their recent history. If the Cherokee Nation were to be rebuilt, then the hearts of the people must be healed. If the hearts were to be healed, then “the great work of establishing thorough harmony” must go forward. If it were to go forward, it would be done together as one people, “as if they had been raised from one family.”

“AN INDIAN SHALL NOT SPILL AN INDIAN’S BLOOD”

I hope the war will close soon, and we will get time to sit down in peace...
 This war—it will ruin a great many good people. They will not only lose all their property but a great many will lose their character, which is of more value than all their property...I am almost ashamed of my tribe...
 I want to see the end of this war and then I will be willing to give up the ghost.²⁸

In late May of 1865, a Grand Council of the Southern Indians was held at Armstrong Academy in the western portion of the Indian Territory for establishing a “United Nations of the Indian Territory.”²⁹ This “United Nations” was presided over by the leaders of the Five Nations (as well as some of the Plains Indians) that had fought on the side of the Confederacy. Present at the meeting were Freemasons Stand Watie, William Penn Adair, John Jumper, Samuel Checote, George Stidham, Robert Jones, Peter Pitchlynn, Chilly McIntosh, D.N.McIntosh, and Reverend J.S.Murrow. Originally planned to present a united front in dealing with an impending surrender to the Federal Government, the council quickly took on other meanings.³⁰

Uniting under the principle that “An Indian shall not spill an Indian’s blood,”³¹ the Council authorized the chiefs of the various nations to “extend in the name of this confederation the hand of fellowship to all Nations of Indians.” The delegates were further authorized to “communicate with the proper military authorities of the United States for the purposes of effecting a cessation of hostilities”³² and to encourage the Union Indians to “cooperate with this council in its efforts to renew friendly relations with the U.S. Government.”³³ They also required that any permanent treaty with the United States would require the national councils of each tribe to ratify the terms of surrender. Bloodied yet unbowed, the Confederate Indians made no mention of defeat, wrongdoing, or mistakes in judgment.³⁴

On June 15, 1865, a second meeting of the “United Nations of the Indian Territory” ratified the positions put forward at the earlier meeting. In addition, Stand Watie appointed a commission of six delegates that would “forward the great work of establishing thorough harmony among all Indian tribes.”³⁵ Shortly after the “United Nations” council disbanded, Major

General Francis Herron (Iowa Mosaic Lodge #125) sent Lieutenant Colonel Asa Matthews as federal peace commissioner to Doaksville, in the Choctaw Nation, to come to terms with members of the council. When he surrendered on June 19, Chief Peter Pitchlynn (Knights Templar Washington Commandery #1) expressed the sentiments of many of the Southern Indians, “Our late allies in war, the Confederate armies, have long since ceased to resist the national authorities; they have all been either captured or surrendered to the forces of the United States. It therefore becomes us as brave people to forget and lay aside our prejudices and prove ourselves equal to the occasion. Let reason obtain now the sway of our passions and let us meet in council with the proper spirit and resume our former relations with the United States.”³⁶

On June 23, Stand Watie sent Brother William P. Adair and Brother James Bell to meet with Brother Francis Herron to negotiate terms of surrender for the Confederate Cherokee.³⁷ A few days later, Brigadier General Stand Watie of the Confederate States of America surrendered his sword to Lieutenant Colonel Asa Matthews of the United States Army at Doaksville in the Choctaw Nation.³⁸ Watie’s surrender came more than two months after the surrender of General Lee at Appomattox and more than a month after the surrender of E. Kirby Smith, Commander of troops west of the Mississippi.³⁹ Brigadier General Stand Watie was the last Confederate General to surrender and abandon what by now had clearly become a “lost cause.”⁴⁰

THOROUGH HARMONY

When the Keetoowah heard that Stand Watie and the Knights of the Golden Circle sought a “thorough harmony” among the Indian peoples, it seemed that peace was truly at hand. However, when the Confederate delegation arrived at Fort Gibson to present themselves for surrender to the government, they were bearing arms, bristling with defiance, and walked and talked not like a people who sought reconciliation.⁴¹ The delegation presented John Garrett, the commander of Fort Gibson, with a copy of Stand Watie’s surrender treaty that allowed for an unprecedented surrender “without demanding their paroles or their arms.”⁴² Garrett found the Southern delegation so troublesome that he ordered them to the other side of the Arkansas River and only allowed them into Fort Gibson with the accompaniment of the loyal Cherokee.⁴³

The Keetoowah government that had been established at Cowskin Prairie in February of 1863 was now the legitimate government of the Cherokee Nation. It was incumbent upon this official government to take action and to establish a course for the reconciliation and reestablishment of the Cherokee Nation. Assistant Principal Chief Lewis Downing called the National Council into session, and on July 13, 1865, an act was passed that was hoped would reunite the Cherokee Nation and provide for a lasting peace.⁴⁴ The act concluded with the following statement:

Now, therefore, be it known, that I, Lewis Downing, Assistant and Acting Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation, do hereby offer amnesty and pardon to all citizens of the Cherokee Nation who participated in the Rebellion in the United States, and against the existing Government of the Cherokee Nation, upon the conditions set forth in the foregoing act, and earnestly invite all such citizens to return to the Cherokee Nation, comply with the requirements of said act, and henceforth lend their support to law and order in the Cherokee Nation.⁴⁵

In addition to passing the Amnesty Act, the Council also appointed a committee of delegates to meet with the Watie delegation, “to assure them of amicable feelings” and “their desire for peace.” The Cherokee delegation consisted of William P. Ross, Smith Christie, Budd Gritts, Thomas Pegg, Jones C. C. Daniel, White Catcher, James Vann, and Houston Benge.⁴⁶

The Cherokee delegations met, but there were some serious problems with the arrangements that limited success of the negotiations even before they were started. The first was a provision in the Amnesty Act that supported the previous “confiscation act” and prohibited the “right to possess and recover any improvements” owned by “persons declared to be disloyal to the Cherokee Nation.”⁴⁷ The second was the charge of the Keetoowah negotiating committee to make sure that Watie’s committee did not receive recognition: “the Cherokee Nation is not to be understood by their present action as recognising the said Cherokees in any other capacity than as private persons.”⁴⁸ Given these serious sticking points, as well as the general enmity between the two parties, the negotiations were unable to make any progress throughout the duration of the summer.⁴⁹

Seeking to find some resolution to these problematic issues, a peace conference was called at Fort Smith, Arkansas and scheduled for early September. Notifications were sent to the officers of the various nations.⁵⁰ Andrew Johnson, the new President of the United States, appointed a commission of representatives led by Dennis H. Cooley, the new Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Prominent among the commission was Ely S. Parker, former adjutant to General Grant who had composed the letter of surrender for the Confederacy at Appomattox. Parker was a Seneca and grandnephew of the great Chief Red Jacket. Ely S. Parker [Knights Templar of Monroe Commandery #12 (N.Y.) and Past Worshipful Master Miners Lodge #273 (Galena, IL.—home of U.S. Grant)], would go on to become the first Native American Commissioner of Indian Affairs under future President Grant.⁵¹

When the presidential commission arrived at Fort Smith, they found large delegations from the Five Nations as well as a few delegates from the Plains Indians. The delegations from the Creek were composed of Micco Hutke, Cotchoche, and Lochar Harjo;⁵² from the Seminole—John Chupco, Pascofar, and Chocote Harjo, as well as African-Americans Robert Johnson and Caesar Bruner;⁵³ from the Cherokee—Lewis Downing, Smith Christie, Thomas Pegg, and William P. Ross.⁵⁴ Upon arriving at the peace conference,

the Keetoowah delegation was pleased to learn that the "simple minded full-bloods"⁵⁵ of the Creek Nation had passed a law recognizing African-American members of their community as citizens of the Creek Nation.⁵⁶ When the opening ceremonies for the commission commenced, noticeably absent were the Southern delegates. They decided to gather first at Armstrong Academy and then make a grand entrance at the assembly after the proceedings had begun.⁵⁷

Acting Principal Chief Downing opened the peace conference with an invocation delivered in the Cherokee tongue. What happened next astonished the assembled delegates from the loyal Indians. Commissioner Cooley noted that, since the assembled multitude had signed treaties with the Confederacy, they were considered "traitors" to the United States of America:

By these nations having entered into treaties with the so-called Confederate States, and the rebellion being now ended, they are left without any treaty whatever, or treaty obligations for protection by the United States.

Under the terms of the treaties with the United States, and the laws of Congress of July 5, 1862, all these nations and tribes forfeited and lost all their rights to annuities and lands. The President, however, does not desire to take advantage of or enforce the penalties for the unwise actions of these nations.⁵⁸

On the surface, this was a total insult to the Loyal Indians and seemingly an inconceivable response from the former military ally; however, Commissioner Cooley knew exactly what he was doing. Underneath this outward ploy of assaulting the credibility of the delegates laid a hidden scheme to lay open the Indian Territory for the profiteers of calamity.

The real purposes of the meeting at Fort Smith had been expressed in a letter from a Kansas constituent to his representative in Washington, "white men from here and Kansas City will go along. Treaties will be made—rail-road grants fixed up and things done generally...& we should have a hand in it."⁵⁹ Secretary of the Interior James had sent to the commission for the purposes of assuring the implementation of Bill No. 459, commonly known as the Harlan Bill. The intent of the Harlan Bill was described by historian Annie Abel, "It was a bill for the organization of Indian Territory, a presumably innocent and altogether desirable measure. So those ignorant of the less advertised facts of United States history might think it; but, in reality, it was pernicious in the extreme, designedly deceptive. Its real object was nothing less than the capitalistic exploitation of southern Indian preserves."⁶⁰

Unaware of the real intent of the "peace council," the loyal Indians were shocked beyond belief. They had given up their lands, their lives, and even their future for the preservation of their sacred relationship with the United States of America. Instead of appreciating their losses or offering reparations for the terrible catastrophe that had become the Indian Territory, the Federal

authorities lumped the loyal Indians with the disloyal Indians and set forth a series of demands upon them all.⁶¹ Chief Armstrong of the Wyandot declared the council to be a farce, and wondered why the Federal authorities had not reserved their “talk” for the real enemies—the disloyal Indians due to arrive shortly.⁶²

The Keetoowah delegation rose quickly to their defense and insisted that they had come to the peace council to renew peaceful alliances with their Cherokee brethren and to begin fruitful relations with the United States as a united people. They asserted that although the Cherokee Nation had formed a contingent relationship with the Confederacy in October 1861, the Keetoowah Council had, in early February 1863, abrogated the treaty and reestablished relations with the United States.⁶³ When this plea was ignored, Smith Christie pleaded with the commission, “We beg leave respectfully to say that we have not the proper authority to make a treaty, or to enter into any agreement of any kind with the United States.”⁶⁴ The Keetoowah delegation assured Commissioner Cooley that Chief John Ross was at hand, should be made aware of the federal policy, and be allowed to become the chief negotiator for the Cherokee Nation.

What Commissioner Cooley then said even further astonished the Keetoowah. He viciously attacked Chief Ross, accused him of being an enemy of the United States of America, and intimated that he considered Ross not even worthy of a presidential pardon.⁶⁵ The Keetoowah immediately called upon Chief Ross to come to the council but by the time Ross made it to the convention later in the week, the Southern delegation had arrived as well. When Chief Ross asked to address the convention, Commissioner Cooley would not let him and instead read a declaration from Secretary James Harlan,⁶⁶ “Whereas, we believe him still at heart an enemy of the United States and disposed to breed discord among his people, represent the will and wishes of the loyal Cherokees, and is not the choice of any considerable portion of the Cherokee nation for the office which he claims, but which by their law we believe he does not in fact hold we the under-signed Commissioners sent by the President of the United States...refuse as commissioners to recognize said Ross as chief of the Cherokee Nation.”⁶⁷

Commissioner Cooley then turned to the Southern delegation, which included Freemasons John Jumper, Winchester Colbert, Stand Watie, Samuel Checote, and Peter Pitchlynn, and asked them if they had any comment on the Harlan declaration. Before they could answer, Brother Ross rose to his defense:

I claim to be as loyal a man as any citizen of the United States... I have been forty odd years Chief of the Cherokees, elected time after time. They re-elected me in my absence and I came on to the council at my advanced age, after burying my wife and burying my son. I had three sons in your army, also three grandsons and three nephews. If I had been disloyal I would not have shrunk from going where the enemies of the

United States were. I came on with the hope that I might be useful to my people, to those of my people who had separated from the Nation, and to the Government of the United States. I came here not for the purpose of resisting the policy of the United States... I have never been charged with being an enemy of the United States... Far from a desire to use influence to prejudice any against the interests of the U.S., I resisted to the last moment the policy of disunion that was set out by a portion of the border states of Arkansas and Texas.⁶⁸

No sooner had Ross spoken than Elias C. Boudinot rose to respond to Ross's defense with yet another assault upon his character:

But, Sir, there are serious charges which I will make against him... The fact is the Cherokee Nation has long been rent in twin by dissensions & I here charge these upon the same John Ross. I charge him with it here today & I will do it tomorrow. I will show that the treaty made with the Confederate States was made at his instigation. I will show the deep duplicity & falsity that have followed him from his childhood to the present day, when the winters of 65 or 70 years have silvered his head with sin, what can you expect of him now.⁶⁹

With that declaration, even Cooley had had enough, “The purpose of this council is not to stir up old feelings... I trust that no one may come into this council and attempt to stir up bad feelings which ought to have been buried years ago.” With that admonition, the Council was closed for the day.⁷⁰

Though Commissioner Cooley had admonished Boudinot publicly, the two became fast friends spent the rest of conference engaged in correspondence and communication. That Cooley and Boudinot had formed such a tight bond limited the Keetoowah delegation from being able to accomplish little if anything that was opposed by the Knights of the Golden Circle. In response, the Keetoowah demanded that the commission include a statement of their position in the preliminary accord and that the charges against Ross be dropped. The “peace council” agreed to the first provision, but steadfastly refused to drop any of the charges made against Ross. They also refused to acknowledge any position of responsibility held by Chief Ross.⁷¹

Although the Southern Cherokee delegation signed the Fort Smith treaty, it was solely provisional until a formal council could be held in Washington D.C. and a permanent treaty established.⁷² The conference committee at Fort Smith accomplished nothing; the Keetoowah rejected all concessions and any suggestions of compromise. Loyal members from the Creek Nation also steadfastly refused to sign any accord settled at Fort Smith. Commissioner Cooley had accomplished nothing but embarrassing Ross and undermining the sovereignty of the Cherokee Nation; he adjourned the Fort Smith council, *sine die*.⁷³

The conference had, however, accomplished its hidden purposes. John Ross, Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation and leader of the Keetoowah,

had been broken; following the Fort Smith council, he collapsed and was confined to his bed for nearly a week. Political opportunists had publicly insulted and defamed John Ross, the once proud leader of a grand and courageous people, and yet their only purpose was to decimate an opponent of the Harlan Bill. Elias Boudinot applauded the Harlan Bill as “one of the grandest schemes ever devised for the red man and entitles the author the lasting gratitude of every Indian.”⁷⁴ Chief Ross was disturbed but not destroyed; from his bed in the Cherokee Nation, he wrote to his sister of the incident, “And, let not your hearts be troubled by the extraordinary proceedings of the Hon. Commsrs. at Fort Smith. I regret that such groundless stigma upon my character should be fabricated, and published under official sanction—and feel mortified on acct. of my friends and family in the East. God is just and truth is mighty, when the facts and charges alleged shall be impartially investigated—I bid defiance and fear not the result.”⁷⁵

THE BIRTH OF A NEW NATION

LANE: On a point suggested by my colleague I should like to ask him a question. Does he not know that a large number of black persons have intermarried with the Indians of these nations and become members of the tribes? Does he object to the provision of the bill which permits black people to continue to go in and become members of the tribes?

POMEROY: I understand that Negroes and Indians have intermarried. I do not object to it...

LANE: The finest specimens of manhood I have ever gazed upon in my life are half-breed Indians crossed with negroes. It is a fact...that while amalgamation with the white man deteriorates both races, the amalgamation of the Indian and the black man advances both races; and so far as I am concerned I should like to see these eighty thousand square miles, almost in the geographical center of the United States, opened up to the Indian and the black man, and let them amalgamate and build up a race that will be an improvement upon both.

—Senate Debate on the Harlan Bill, February 23, 1865⁷⁶

In October 1865, the Cherokee Council met in its entirety for the first time since the beginning of hostilities in 1861. The Fort Smith “treaties” actually proved to be simply truces that provided a temporary settlement of affairs and a stable political arrangement until a more permanent treaty could be signed in Washington. As the October council meeting was still dominated by the Keetoowah faction, many of the Knights of the Golden Circle were reticent to return to active political affairs of the Nation until their security could be guaranteed.⁷⁷ The first item that the Cherokee Council entertained was a response to the claims of the federal government that John Ross was not a legitimate representative of the Cherokee Nation. The council released a statement demanding “the United States to do full justice to John Ross Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation upon a fair and impartial investiga

tion."⁷⁸ The Keetoowah Society, with John Ross as its unofficial leader, recognized that their credibility as agents of the Cherokee Nation rested upon the status of Chief John Ross. If the federal government refused to recognize Ross as their appointed leader of the Nation, the Keetoowah stood little chance in negotiations in Washington.⁷⁹

The Cherokee National Council took yet another, and heretofore unprecedented, step; in a grant entitled an "Act Granting Citizenship to Evan Jones and Son, J.B.Jones and their families," the Cherokee Nation declared:

It is now more than forty years since the missionaries of that Missionary Society came into the Cherokee Nation. When the Cherokees were poor and covered with darkness, light with regard to the other world was brought to us by Evan Jones, and at a later date by his son, John B.Jones. And we do bear witness that they have done their work well, and that they have striven to discharge the duties incumbent upon them in doing good to the people and performing faithfully their duties to God. And we bear witness that their work was highly prosperous up to the time when they were driven from the country by the United States agent in 1861. And now, after the close of the war, we are informed that the Missionary Society have determined to resume their work of enlightening our land...Be it enacted by the National Council, that Evan Jones and his son John B.Jones be... admitted to citizenship in this nation, together with their families.⁸⁰

Though citizenship had traditionally been granted only to those who married into the Cherokee Nation, this statement granted citizenship upon persons not of Cherokee descent nor tied by marriage to lines of Cherokee blood. The act was of immediate importance because it established the validity of John B.Jones as a representative of the Cherokee Nation in the upcoming negotiations in Washington. Its lasting importance would be confirmed a year later when the question of citizenship for the ex-slaves of the Cherokee Nation would be addressed.

The status of the African-Americans within the Cherokee Nation was a critical issue and one that proved to be divisive in negotiations with the Knights of the Golden Circle regarding their eventual return to the Nation.⁸¹ One thing that did unite all of the Five Nations, however, was a universal opposition to a provision in the Harlan Bill that would open up of the Indian Territory to colonization by all African-Americans. The Five Nations believed that only those former residents of the Indian Territory should be allowed to continue to reside in the Indian Territory. Secretary Harlan and Senator James Lane cynically proposed to open up this country the former slave in order to solicit support for a bill whose real purpose was to open the Indian land to land speculation by white settlers and railroad interests.⁸²

With respect to the question of ex-slaves within the Cherokee Nation, there were four plans put forward to deal with this complicated and

problematic issue. The Confederate Cherokee sought to remove the freedmen from the Cherokee Nation, at the joint expense of the nation and the Federal Government, and place them in colonies outside of the Indian Territory. A plan proposed by Chief Downing, as a means to compromise with the Southern delegation, recommended providing an area of land within the Cherokee Nation for the relocation of the freedmen until that time that the issue could be resolved by the Cherokee National Council. A third plan, and the one that was eventually to be adopted, was the incorporation of the freedmen into the Cherokee Nation, granting them citizenship, land, and annuities as members of the nation. The last plan, opposed by all but Boudinot, was the Harlan Bill that opened up the Indian Territory to colonization by African-Americans from throughout the United States.⁸³

Lewis Downing's plan of a nation within a nation was not acceptable to the African-american members of the Cherokee Nation who opposed segregation of any kind and desired to stay with their Cherokee families. Downing and his supporters were also relatively sure that the Federal government that had been less than forthright and charitable with the Cherokee would be even less so with a government of ex-slaves.⁸⁴ What was notable about Downing's plan was that it was an attempt to provide a compromise between the Northern and Southern Cherokee and was an indication of what would become characteristic of his leadership in the Cherokee Nation. However, all discussions at this point were just preliminary exercises; whatever was to happen would be decided at the upcoming meeting in Washington.

On January 18, 1866, the Keetoowah delegation consisting of John Ross, Smith Christie, Thomas Pegg, James McDaniel, White Catcher, Daniel H. Ross, John B. Jones, and Samuel Benge met at Joy's Hotel in Washington, D.C.⁸⁵ The delegation composed two documents which they believed would establish their positions on the issues: *Memorial of the Delegates of the Cherokee Nation to the President of the United States and the Senate and House of Representatives in Congress* and *Communication of the Delegation of the Cherokee Nation to the President of the United States*. The first document was a summation of the history of the Civil War in the Cherokee Nation and the second was a testimonial to Chief John Ross's honor and executive ability.

Shortly after arriving in Washington, the Keetoowah delegation received an audience with President Andrew Johnson, Secretary Harlan, and Commissioner Cooley in the President's office in the White House. Thomas Pegg addressed the president and his representatives and presented them with the *Memorial of the Delegates of the Cherokee Nation to the President of the United States and the Senate and House of Representatives in Congress*. The memorial began with a discussion of the Harlan Bill, but quickly moved to the critical issues:

When the rebellion broke out the Cherokees were divided into two parties. *The loyal and the disloyal*. Both had been thoroughly organized for

two or three years—and prepared for the struggle. Under the lead of Stand Watie, lately a General in the rebel army, the disloyal element (small in numbers but backed by strong influences from the rebellious states), had been organized into “Blue Lodges,” and “Knights of the Golden Circle.” The loyal masses, by a general movement of the populace, had organized themselves into a Loyal League, known as the Keetoowah Society, but by the rebels it was called, in derision, “The Pin Society.” The Loyal League embraced the great mass of the men of the Cherokee nation, especially the full-blooded Indians.

The object of this League was resistance to encroachments on Indian rights and Indian Territory and to preserve the integrity and peace of the Cherokee Nation, according to the stipulations of the treaty of A.D., 1846.

The Constitution of the Society bound its members by the most sacred obligations, to an unyielding fidelity to our treaties with the United States, and to an unfaltering support of our National Government, constituted under those treaties. Lodges of this society were formed in every part of our country, and the great majority of the voters of the Nation joined it. Secret meetings were held among the mountains, and in deep forests. The eternal fidelity to our treaty obligations was inculcated on young and old.

By these means, the great majority of the Cherokees were already grounded in their fidelity to the Federal Government. Their friendship with the “North” was enthusiastic. Their opposition to the rebels was intense. While some members of the Society were pro-slavery in their sentiments, yet they loved their country better than slavery—while the great majority of its members were positive and strong anti-slavery men. Many were Christians and were opposed to slavery, not only from patriotic motives, but from religious conviction also.⁸⁶

The rest of the document detailed the history of the Civil War in the Cherokee Nation and asserted that the Keetoowah and the Loyal League had been the center of the resistance to the rebellion. It also stressed that, as the majority of the Cherokee Nation had been loyal to the United States, they should not be punished but, rather, protected and ensured their rights as a sovereign ally of the United States. They concluded the *Memorial* with this statement:

Now that the unity of your own great Republic has been secured, and the blood and toil and suffering of patriotic Cherokees have helped to cement the Union, we ask that you preserve and protect both the integrity and the peace of our Nation, against the machinations of all those who would rend it to fragments.

Our people are already far advanced in civilization, and are all anxious for still further advancement in all that pertains to civilization and Christianity. With the blessing of God, all we want to make us a happy and prosperous people, is that the Government secure to us our rights, immovably.⁸⁷

That the Cherokee delegation would begin a statement in defense of their national interests with a discussion of the Keetoowah Society spoke to the importance of the society in national affairs. It also addressed the importance of such in the hearts of the people and the critical needs for the preservation of the “old ways” of the Cherokee Nation. That it also spoke of the Keetoowah Society as the loyal party, and that such was composed of the “great mass of the men of the Cherokee Nation” would be a critical element in the Cherokee delegation’s argument. By asserting that the “Knights of the Golden Circle” were the “disloyal element (small in numbers but backed by strong influences from the rebellious states),”⁸⁸ the delegation attempted to present the Keetoowah Society in terms synonymous with the Cherokee Nation. They also wanted to assert that the Southern forces were led by “intruders,” “the majority of the regiment were white men, and the majority of those white men were not citizens of the Cherokee Nation.”⁸⁹

In the other document presented to the President and his delegation, entitled the *Communication of the Delegation of the Cherokee Nation to the President of the United States*, the Keetoowah delegates once again referred to the role of these corresponding secret societies. The *Communication* was a testimonial to Chief Ross’s status as legitimate representative of the Cherokee Nation, but it noted that a Southern delegation was now in Washington and attempting to undermine Ross’s credibility. The *Communication* noted the relationship of this current delegation to the Knights of the Golden Circle:

For several years before the outbreak of war, there was in our midsts an element inimical to our institutions...susceptible of becoming exceedingly dangerous when fondled and nursed by such spirits as Albert Pike and backed by the powerful army of General Ben McCulloch. This element was headed by Stand Watie...and stimulated by such sheets as the *Arkansan*, published by his nephew, E.C.Boudinot... This element in their midst, organized into Lodges of the Knights of the Golden Circle.⁹⁰

To meet the challenges of this threat, Chief Ross proclaimed neutrality that “nine-tenths of the whole nation” supported:

In order to uphold the peaceable, friendly policy always inculcated by the Chief with the United States...and alarmed at the teachings of the party to whom we have alluded, the masses of the Nation had organized the Loyal League pledged to an unfaltering support of their principles, and to keep from office and power every man suspected of treasonable designs against the Nation and the Federal Government.⁹¹

When these statements were circulated around Washington, they naturally fell into the hands of the Southern delegation led by John Rollin Ridge and composed of Knights of the Golden Circle Stand Watie, Saladin Watie, Elias C.Boudinot, and William Penn Adair. The ever-wily Albert Pike was also

there to assist them behind the scenes. Boudinot and Adair, responding in early February to the Keetoowah statements, noted that, though the Civil War may have accentuated the divide between these two parties, their struggle went much farther back in Cherokee history. Particularly responding to the opening section detailing "when the rebellion broke out," Boudinot and Adair described it as:

...a malicious misrepresentation from beginning to end...a miserable attempt to represent an infamous, secret inquisition, proscriptive in design and murderous in intention, as a commendable and praiseworthy association. The "Pin Society" was organized five years before the war when the words "loyal" and "disloyal," now so common, were unknown within the broad limits of the Republic and years before the idea of secession was thought of or dreamed of in Indian country...

The purpose of this secret society was to secure and perpetuate the power of Mr. Ross and his friends by arraying the great mass of full bloods against the half-bloods and white men of the Nation; to inflame and incite the innate prejudices of caste among the indians, and thus enable demagogues, speculators of public funds, and murderers to enjoy in security their ill-gotten gains.

It is well understood that at such [secret] meetings, the question of assassinating prominent citizens of the Nation, obnoxious to the order, was frequently discussed and voted upon; murders were committed in pursuance of their decisions.⁹²

The series of petty assaults upon John Ross and the Keetoowah delegation had a single purpose: the Southern delegation sought to end the power of the Keetoowah Society within the Cherokee Nation by permanently dividing it into two nations. If they could establish that the Keetoowah Society threatened their existence, the Knights of the Golden Circle would have the Canadian District and another large district as their own enclave over which "the old dominant party" would have no jurisdiction.⁹³ The Southern delegation, having no official recognition and representing solely the interests of the Knights of the Golden Circle, was permitted by the government to launch a series of baseless charges against John Ross.⁹⁴

Agent Cooley and his associates treated the Southern Delegation as if they were the legitimate representatives and thus succeeded in "hounding to the brink of the grave a trusted leader who, for nearly forty years, with distinction had served his tribe faithfully as chief, and who was responsible more than any other man for the advanced position to which the tribe had attained."⁹⁵ In the end, they accomplished that which they had sought. In early March, John Ross went down; he became bedridden and spent the short remainder of his life operating the affairs of the Cherokee Nation from his deathbed.

However, the Southern delegation led by Elias C. Boudinot, William Penn Adair, and John Rollin Ridge and advised by Albert Pike soon enough fell

subject to their own venom. In a dispute over some twenty-eight thousand dollars, Boudinot wrote to Stand Watie that he had been disgraced by the treachery of Ridge and Adair—they had attempted to steal his share of the money. The Southern delegation was eventually destroyed by the row; Boudinot wrote to Ridge: “all friendly relations between you and me have ceased forever, and that you have proved yourself a faithless and ungrateful friend, a slanderer and a liar, a thief and a coward.”⁹⁶ The Knights of the Golden Circle would soon disappear from the Cherokee Nation.

During the summer of 1866, the Keetoowah delegation faced its own sort of troubles. Judge Thomas Pegg, one of the founding members of the Keetoowah Society and Acting Chief at Cherokee Nation appointed at Cowskin Prairie, passed away in early April. Shortly afterward, the Keetoowah Party submitted a draft of a treaty resolution to Secretary Harlan, who, in a bluff designed to win concessions from the loyal Cherokee, ignored it in favor of a signed treaty from the Southern delegation that he proposed to submit to Congress for approval.⁹⁷ The Southern delegates were elated, “The President has ordered that a treaty be made with us for our own prorata share of the Nation. Ross is trying to beat us in the Senate ... Ross will be beaten there. His day is done. Ours is fast rising and bright. We will get what we asked for.”⁹⁸ The Southern Delegation believed that their goals would be accomplished and that the Cherokee people would be divided into two separate nations. Shortly afterwards, Chief John Ross, “worn out with the labor of years and accumulated sorrows,” began to move rapidly toward his final reward.

Chief Ross and John B. Jones had been in constant communication during the treaty negotiations because of a difference of opinion between the former slaveholder and the idealistic young Cherokee minister. Agreeing on all other points in the treaty, Ross and Jones diverged on the issue of whether African-Americans, free and former slaves, would be admitted as citizens in the new nation. In the middle of the negotiations, Ross—whether to distract or dissuade the young minister—sent him to North Carolina to determine if the Eastern Band of the Cherokee sought to immigrate to the Indian Territory. When the talks made little or no progress towards completion, Jones returned to Washington and reentered the negotiation process.”

By this time, all of the other delegations from the Indian Territory had already negotiated treaties with the Federal government. The treaty with the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations was signed in early April and they received excellent terms of surrender including compensation for slaves lost because of emancipation.¹⁰⁰ The Mvskoke and Seminole Nations, with negotiations handled by African-americans Harry Islands and Robert Johnson, met with Ely S. Parker and Federal representatives from early March to the middle of April. When the negotiations were over, the Mvskoke and Seminole, who had suffered greatly for their commitment to African-american enfranchisement, were asked to sign a confession of war guilt. The Federal Government ignored the losses of the loyal Mvskokean people, and “in view

of such liabilities (ignoring their allegiance to the United States) the United States require of the Creeks a portion of their land."¹⁰¹

The Cherokee Nation returned to the treaty table in early July with a new treaty. Having had their hand forced by the Southern delegation who had agreed to any stipulations in order to gain acceptance of their treaty, the Keetoowah delegation compromised on a number of issues that it felt went against the best interests of the Cherokee Nation. The Keetoowah knew that if there were not concessions to the Federal government, President Johnson and his agents would simply ratify the Southern delegation's treaty and destroy the Cherokee Nation. The Keetoowah delegation made compromises, but refused the separation of the nation; it also excluded land grants to the railroads, and prohibited Harlan's territorial government.¹⁰² Chief Ross and his Keetoowah allies would make concessions, but never would they surrender to any party that would rend the Cherokee Nation asunder.¹⁰³

The treaty established by Ross and the Keetoowah delegation was signed on July 19, 1866. The treaty declared the "pretended treaty" with the "so-called Confederate States" signed in October 1861 to be null and void. Amnesty was declared for all offenses prior to July 4, 1866; the confiscation laws were repealed and the seized land was returned to its former owners. A section of the Cherokee territory was provided for those "disloyal" Cherokee (and any blacks that wished to remain with them) that desired to live apart from the rest of the Cherokee Nation. A United States Court was created in Indian Territory. Slavery was abolished forever within the Nation. Right of way was granted to railroads. A "United Nations" was created within the Indian Territory and "friendly Indians" from the West were allowed to settle in Indian Territory.¹⁰⁴ Lastly, one of the most controversial aspects of the Northern delegation's treaty was its acquiescence to the demands of the government to turn over eight hundred thousand acres in Kansas formerly known as the "Cherokee Neutral Lands."¹⁰⁵

When the Southern delegation learned that a binding treaty had been signed with the Keetoowah delegation and that it had become law, they were incredulous. They had been used, abused, and thrown overboard by the very people in whom they had placed their trust. A later writer was to remark on the negotiations, "From one end to the other, and through all its courses, there has been dishonesty. The poison seemed to pervade the very atmosphere of Indian affairs, to enter it was to die a moral death."¹⁰⁶ William P. Adair, seemingly oblivious to the role that his Knights of the Golden Circle had played in this affair, questioned the loyalty of the Keetoowah delegation even to their own people. Believing they were bribed, he wondered whether there would be consequences, "I think the 'pin' Cherokees themselves will kill their delegation for giving away their country. If they have killed people for selling land and getting value received, what will they do... to their delegation for giving away 7 or 8,000,000 acres of our best country to our worst enemies for nothing."¹⁰⁷

In the treaty, there were several acts that recognized the contributions of the missionaries to Cherokee society and that provided for their future welfare and defense. Article 24 of the 1866 treaty specifically noted the contribution of Evan Jones, “As a slight testimony to the useful and arduous services of Rev. Evan Jones, for forty years a missionary in the Cherokee Nation, now a cripple old and poor, it is agreed that the sum of three thousand dollars be paid to him, under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior, out of any Cherokee fund in or to come into his hands not otherwise appropriated.¹⁰⁸ Article 14 provided one hundred and sixty acres for “every society or denomination that has erected buildings within the Cherokee country for missionary and educational purposes.”¹⁰⁹ Article 30 requested that the United States compensate all missionaries for losses, “resulting from their being ordered or driven from the country by United States agents, and from their property being taken and destroyed by United States troops.”¹¹⁰ It is evident by the treaty that the Keetoowah strongly appreciated the work of the missionaries in general and particularly so the Baptist missionary who was a member of their delegation.

In the end, it appears that either John B. Jones was able to convince Chief John Ross or that the Keetoowah delegation made a collective decision that African-american enfranchisement was a critical part of their new Cherokee Nation. Article 9 of the 1866 treaty declared that:

The Cherokee Nation having, voluntarily, in February, eighteen hundred and sixty-three, by an act of the national council, forever abolished slavery, hereby covenant and agree that never hereafter shall slavery or involuntary servitude exist in their nation otherwise than in the punishment of crime, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, in accordance with laws applicable to all of the members alike. They further agree that all freedmen who have been liberated by voluntary act of their former owners or by law, as well as all free colored persons who were in the country at the commencement of the rebellion, and are now residents therein, or who may return within six months, and their descendants, shall have all the rights of native Cherokees: Provided, that owners of slaves so emancipated in the Cherokee Nation shall never receive any compensation or pay for the slaves so emancipated.¹¹¹

In the Treaty of 1866, an ideology that was alien to Cherokee thought and culture, i.e., that human beings could be held in subhuman bondage solely on the basis of their race, was permanently and totally abandoned.

Without a doubt, the struggle to build an inclusive Cherokee Nation would be a long and hard one and the most important aspect of it would be the effort to seal the breach between the progressives and the traditionalists within Cherokee society. However, on that July day, approximately three years to the day from the first Battle of Cabin Creek, the Cherokee Nation recognized its African heritage by granting citizenship to those who had for

so long been a profound presence in the Cherokee Nation. An idea that had begun in the mountains of North Carolina some forty years before—that of the abolition of slavery within the Cherokee Nation—had finally come to fruition. The struggle for abolition and enfranchisement had ended; the struggle for a unified Cherokee Nation had just begun.

The Treaty of 1866 was signed on July 19, 1866 by federal agents Dennis Cooley and Elijah Sells and by the Keetoowah delegation composed of Smith Christie, John B. Jones, White Catcher, James McDaniel, Samuel H. Benge, and Daniel H. Ross.¹¹² The treaty was taken to John Ross's bedside, where he feebly acknowledged its contents and scribbled his shaky signature; he was by then almost too frail to sign his name.¹¹³ Weakened but still defiant, he continued to have no regrets, "My people have kept me in the harness, not of my own seeking, but of their own choice. I have never deceived them; and now I look back, not one act of my public life rises up to upbraid me. I have done the best I could, and today on this bed of sickness, my heart approves all that I have done."¹¹⁴ The treaty was ratified by Congress on July 27, 1866 and approved by the Cherokee Council on July 31, 1866. The following day, Chief John Ross was called to his final reward.

RECONSTRUCTING A NATION

With the death of Chief John Ross, Lewis Downing became Acting Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation. Downing, a Baptist minister and protégé of Evan Jones, had succeeded Jesse Bushyhead to the pastorate of the Peavine Baptist Church in the Goingsnake District. Speaking but little English, he was one of the founding members of the Keetoowah Society and was a veteran of both the Confederate and Federal armies. With the rise of Lewis Downing to the position of Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation, the Keetoowah Society had become a dominant force in the Cherokee Nation and would remain so into the near future. Few of those gathered in that small church on that April day nearly ten years before could have ever expected that what they had founded would have ever come this far.

In early May of 1866, John B. Jones and Smith Christie left the Cherokee delegation in Washington for a few days to attend the Annual Meeting of the Baptist Home Mission Board. At this meeting, the final transfer of the Indian missions from the Foreign to the Home Mission Board was accomplished. John Jones was appointed "General Missionary for Indian Territory" and given responsibility for all Northern Baptist missions in the Indian Territory. In addition, he was tasked with the development of missions for the religious outreach to the freedmen within Indian Territory. If he were to do so, Jones told the Board, he would need funding to support the ministries of two new Cherokee and of two new Creek preachers. Jones also notified the board that he had written the provision into the Treaty of 1866 that would provide funding for the continuing Baptist mission in the Indian Territory.¹¹⁵

As the Keetoowah delegation returned to the Cherokee Nation from Washington in August of 1866, the nation was as divided as it had ever been. The Southern delegation felt betrayed by the Federal government and refused to assent to the treaty of the Keetoowah delegation. William Penn Adair stated that the treaty “is not binding upon the Southern Cherokees, as we refused to sign it, and fought it to the last and are still fighting it.”¹¹⁶ A critical issue for the Southern delegation was the very same issue that had split John Ross and John Jones, that is, the status of the “black Cherokee” in the new Cherokee Nation. Though the Treaty of 1866 had made provisions for the liberation of slaves and the citizenship of African-Americans within the Cherokee Nation, the issue would continue to be troublesome.¹¹⁷ Elias Boudinot wrote to Stand Watie that the resolution of the “negro difficulties” would rest with the Keetoowah: “They shoulder all the responsibility of the negro matter.”¹¹⁸

With the return of both parties to the Cherokee Nation, all eyes turned to the upcoming General Council meeting. The Cherokee Council would gather and make a sincere effort at “binding up the Nation’s wounds” by electing new leadership, amending the Cherokee Constitution to incorporate the principles of the newly signed treaty, and attempting to rebuild the political and social structure of the Nation. The African-american Cherokee, many just returning from Kansas and Texas, looked to the council to see if what had been promised in Washington would be fulfilled in Tahlequah.¹¹⁹ Considering the losses on both sides during the Civil War and with the nation still bitterly divided, the reconstruction of the Cherokee Nation would be quite difficult.

Chief Lewis Downing was confident that he would be reelected the Principal Chief in the upcoming elections and that he would be able to continue the Keetoowah program for the rebuilding of the Cherokee Nation. However, much to the shock of the Keetoowah, on October 19, 1866 the Cherokee Council chose William Potter Ross (Cherokee Lodge #21) to succeed his uncle as Principal Chief. Although it was Cherokee tradition for worthy nephews to succeed their uncles as chief, the choice of Ross over Downing struck a serious blow to the designs of the Keetoowah for national unity.¹²⁰ Though Reverend Downing had personal prestige and political experience, perhaps he overestimated the influence of one so closely associated with those “ignorant and but slightly progressed in moral and intellectual improvement.”¹²¹

William Potter Ross, a well-educated mixed-blood lawyer and merchant, seemed the perfect choice because he articulated the best of both possible worlds in the Cherokee Nation. Though closely affiliated with John Ross, he was educated at Princeton, a former slaveholder, and was committed to the rapid acculturation of the Cherokee into white society. However, he had little in common with the Keetoowah except for the support of his uncle’s policies; he did not speak, write, or read Cherokee, and had little rapport with the conservatives who made up the core of the Keetoowah. Though

closely associated with the Keetoowah, William P. Ross would prove to be cut from a different cloth.¹²²

However, Ross did have an ace up his sleeve. One of the founding members of Cherokee Lodge #21, he went on to become the Worshipful Master of the lodge in 1851—a time before the lodge would split over the issues that ultimately led to the Civil War. In addition, William P. Ross had been a leader of the reconciliation of the Cherokee Nation following the Treaty of 1846, "He (Ross) and the other headmen of the Cherokee nation were at the capital to arrange a treaty made necessary by the late enforced removal of their tribe from Georgia to the Indian Territory. These headmen were arrayed in two hostile factions, and the negotiations were at a standstill. But at one of the meetings of Federal Lodge (Federal Lodge #1, Washington, D.C.), the rival leaders, all Freemasons, were brought together by the exertions of Worshipful Master S. Yorke and other members, and the treaty was successfully completed."¹²³ In spite of their political, social, and party differences, one of the key elements that brought together the disparate elements of Cherokee Society had been an interest in and promotion of brotherhood by the Freemasonic lodges in the Cherokee Nation. Ross used this background to his advantage.

Many of the leaders of the Keetoowah Society and the Knights of the Golden Circle were former Freemasons in the lodges of the Indian Territory. In addition, many of the government agents, military officials, religious authorities, and influential citizens of the Indian Territory were also Freemasons. Without a doubt, some of the African-Americans living in the Cherokee Nation were made Freemasons in Indian Territory, Kansas, Missouri, New Orleans, or places farther east. That William P. Ross was a power broker and a conciliatory force in the Cherokee Nation under the auspices of the Freemasonic brotherhood is a factor that cannot be ignored.¹²⁴

Unfortunately, if the Cherokee Nation appointed William Ross because they believed that he would—once again—be able to heal the breach that severed the Nation, they had made a serious miscalculation. They underestimated the depth of both the impasse within the Cherokee Nation and Ross's deep contempt for the Knights of the Golden Circle.¹²⁵ It had not been so long since the spectacle at Fort Smith, and William P. Ross would not soon forget the infamy heaped upon the family name and the role that this had played upon the physical health of his uncle. In addition to the family feud that existed between the Ross and Ridge factions, William P. Ross held the Southern Cherokee responsible for the plight of the Nation and its terrible destruction in the Civil War. Little did he know that perhaps if it were not for the pleadings of Sarah Watie that he, himself, would never have lived to assume the responsibility of leadership in the Cherokee Nation.¹²⁶

Immediately upon assuming office, Chief Ross appointed "two suitable persons whose duty shall be to translate into the Cherokee Language the report of the Committee...and also to translate the

aforesaid treaty into the Cherokee Language.”¹²⁷ Amendments to the Cherokee Constitution were made that reflected the agreements of the Treaty of 1866. Difficult as they may have been for the Cherokee to accept, the amendments may have been “the most favorable terms they could.”¹²⁸ Knowing that the times ahead would be difficult and the changes to the Cherokee Constitution would demand his personal involvement in their implementation, Chief Ross personally took part in the design and structure of the amendments.¹²⁹

The first amendment to the Cherokee Constitution proposed by the Council committee struck at the very heart of that which had divided the Cherokee Nation. All references to the institution of slavery that had been written into the Cherokee Constitution since 1827 were stricken. The second amendment granted enfranchisement rights to all former Cherokee slaves who returned to the Nation by January 17, 1867.¹³⁰ Other acts repealed the confiscation laws and nullified all purchases of confiscated property, established a quasi-sovereign area within the Canadian district where the Southern Cherokee could exercise their political autonomy, and spelled out some small electoral and political reforms. Chief Ross called a “General Meeting of the People” at Tahlequah on November 26, 1866 to ratify the amendments and to hear the new treaty read.¹³¹

Chief William P. Ross, in spite of his personal animosity towards the Southern Cherokee, did seek to reconstitute and reunify the Cherokee Nation. Though not necessarily as a Keetoowah, he spoke the Keetoowah message of unity:

For the first time for more than five years the people are assembled in general convention. For the first time since the war have you all met as friends and brothers. I most devoutly thank the Great Ruler of the Universe that it is my privilege to address you as one people. I thank him that amidst the carnage, the horror, and the desolation of those long dark years of conflict, we have not been entirely swept off the face of the earth...

Cherokees! If you firmly resolve to become one people... We are all possessors of a common inheritance so let us enjoy it... Let us not look back upon the dark valley of the past, with its lost friends, blighted hopes and sad and fearful associations... Never did we have more to live for, to labor for, and to gain.¹³²

At this meeting, Riley Keys (Cherokee Lodge #21), Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, was chosen President of the Cherokee Council. Under the guidance of the General Secretary of the Council, the Reverend Budd Gritts, the amendments to the Constitution “were read, considered, and severally approved, and adopted by the Cherokee people.” On December 7, 1866, Chief William P. Ross issued a proclamation declaring the amendments to be part of the Constitution.¹³³

For the first time since the Cherokee Constitution disenfranchised blacks in 1827, African-Americans were returned to citizenship within the Cherokee Nation by the actions of the National Council. At the time of the Treaty of 1866, the population of the Cherokee Nation was close to seventeen thousand; an estimate of the number of persons of African descent within the Cherokee Nation following the Civil War was slightly greater than two thousand.¹³⁴ More than half of the African-Americans in the Cherokee Nation had fled or lost their lives in the Civil War.¹³⁵ If the Cherokee Nation suffered greatly because of the Civil War, then the Cherokee of African descent also made their sacrifices for the war effort as well.

The Treaty of 1866 and the amendments made by the Cherokee Nation remembered those who had been a significant part of the struggle:

All native born Cherokees, all Indians, and whites legally members of the Nation by adoption, and all freedmen who have been liberated by voluntary act of their former owners or by law, as well as free colored persons who were in the country at the commencement of the rebellion, and are now residents therein, or who may return within six months from the 19th day of July 1866, and their descendants, who reside within the limits of the Cherokee Nation, shall be taken and deemed to be, citizens of the Cherokee Nation.¹³⁶

The war being over and the battle won, the Cherokee Nation had come full circle. Thus, the new Cherokee Nation came to reflect the old Cherokee Nation and the ideal of the “beloved community” that had always been at the heart of the Keetoowah message came to be a guiding principle of this nation once again risen from the ashes.

Many of the freedmen returned to their homes and began to settle among the friends and families with whom they had lived before the war. Some of the freedmen stayed with their plantations even though they had been abandoned.¹³⁷ Many of those who had fled returned to their homes to find that the land had been made barren by the bitter winds of war that was no respecter of person or property.¹³⁸ The ex-slaves resettled along the river bottomland and among those whom had always been their friends, as “none but the poorest and lowest of the Indians will live among the Freedmen.”¹³⁹ Within a few years, the Cherokee of African descent had returned to the place that they had been before the Cherokee Nation had become “civilized”:

...freedmen are the most industrious, economical, and in many respects, the more intelligent of the population of the Cherokee Nation... Most of these freedmen have oxteams, and among them blacksmiths, carpenters, wheel-wrights, etc... I have the honor to report that the existing relations between the freedmen of the Indian Territory and their former masters are generally satisfactory. The rights of the freedmen are ac-

knowledge by all; fair compensation for labor is paid; a fair proportion of crops to be raised on the old plantations is allowed; labor for the freedmen to perform is abundant, and nearly all are self-supporting.¹⁴⁰

Within several years, African-american Cherokee were elected to Cherokee Council where they served as representatives for all of people.

One of the most difficult issues to resolve was the status of Cherokee freedmen who arrived in the nation following the six-month deadline. The diaspora following the outbreak of the Civil War had former slaves and free persons of color scattered to far-flung regions of Kansas, Arkansas, Texas, and even into Mexico. That many of these people were unable to return to their home until after the deadline presented a significant problem for the Cherokee Nation in the sense that many of those had been taken forcibly from their homelands by their former slaveowners. In addition, some blacks immigrated to the Cherokee Nation seeking freedom and status never granted in other parts of the United States even though they had never been resident in the Nation prior to the Civil War. These “intruders” created a great deal of resentment among many Cherokee and would prove to be a continuing source of trouble for some forty years.¹⁴¹

A NEW MISSION

On October 31, 1866, the Cherokee Council followed up on Article 14 of the Treaty of 1866 by authorizing the Northern Baptists “to remove their mission station from the Baptist Mission in the Nation to some other locality.” As the Knights of the Golden Circle had burned the Baptist Mission, the Council appropriated three thousand dollars for the construction of a new mission. The Council appointed a committee led by Lewis Downing and Benjamin Snell that was authorized “to erect buildings thereon and other improvements for the purposes of prosecuting their missionary work, and the free use of timber and other building material and fuel is hereby granted.”¹⁴²

There was a debate as to whether the new mission should be located in Tahlequah or at Fort Gibson, but the Joneses, under the guidance of Dr. Elisha Taylor of the Home Mission Board, decided upon Fort Gibson.¹⁴³ Fort Gibson was within a few miles of the old Ebenezer Baptist Church, the first Baptist Church in Indian Territory that had also been the center of the Keetoowah mission to the Mvskoke Nation. It was also the area in which the greatest concentration of freed slaves resided.¹⁴⁴ John Jones’s school was located in Fort Gibson, so it was decided that the new Baptist mission would begin there. His father being advanced in age, John Jones assumed responsibility for the new mission.

The native ministers, as had been the case in its previous missions, would lead the Baptist’s new mission. Smith Christie and Toostoo—being the core of the missionary outreach of the Keetoowah Society with Downing and

Gritts assuming new political responsibilities—began their work at the Fort Gibson mission in early October. Toostoo, would be perfect for the new mission to the Freedmen; John Jones wrote to the Home Mission Board of his capabilities in October 1866:

Toostoo is a full Indian and does not speak English. For many years he has been one of our best and most reliable and efficient helpers in the good work. At the beginning of the rebellion, he was much persecuted for his anti-slavery principles. In the summer of 1862 he came to the Union line [picket line] with a large party of men, entered into the service [Second Indian Home Guard] as a captain, and served to the end of the war in the same company as myself. In garrison, in camp, or in field, I have always found him ready to speak and to work for that dear Saviour whose gospel he is now preaching. His prayers by the side of dying soldiers were subjects of frequent remark by white officers.¹⁴⁵

Having no established places to meet, the Baptist churches once again resorted to the brush arbors, camp meetings, and riverside baptisms that had been at the core of the gospel message in the early Indian Territory. Having rebuilt and reconstituted their churches following removal, the Cherokee churches once again faced the same task. John Jones, Smith Christie, and Toostoo (Spring Frog), as Cherokee Baptist circuit riders, made their routes from their homes in the Flint District in the east to deep within the Creek Nation to the west. Soon the Baptist mission would employ four more native ministers including two who had long served the Baptist mission in the Creek Nation.

One of the new Creek missionaries, James Perryman, had been an associate of John Davise of the Ebenezer Baptist Church and was a contemporary of Monday Durant and Harry Islands in the Creek Baptist Church before the war.¹⁴⁶ For some thirty years, Perryman had been translating the gospel message into the Creek language under the tutelage of Samuel Worcester. Published in 1835, his work *I stutsi in Naktsokv* (The Child’s Book) was the first publication in what would become the state of Oklahoma. Perryman’s son, Joseph, would in later years be chosen Chief of the Creek Nation following the Green Peach War.¹⁴⁷ With the organization of Baptist missions within the Creek Nation following the war, the core constituency of the Keetoowah Society in the Creek Nation had been reestablished.

The Keetoowah Society flourished in the midst of what seemed to be the hardest time for the new Baptist churches; with no church structures to hold their congregations, the ministers moved their mission into the fields and meeting places of their constituency. The lines between the Baptist missions and the Keetoowah Society, if they had ever been that clear, became increasingly blurred. The Keetoowah Society, having risen to political power, could now come out of secret and begin the restoration of the Cherokee Nation in public. Its meetings, which were now public gatherings, served as the focal point for traditional religious and political activity within the

Cherokee Nation. Stomp dances were held, ball-play returned following its long sleep during the Civil War, and women and children were allowed to participate in its meetings. Many times, these meetings served as gathering places at which the *gadugi*, or labor cooperatives, worked collectively to rebuild homes and farms destroyed by the war.¹⁴⁸

In 1866, the Keetoowah Society attempted to reorganize following the destruction and dissipation of the lodges during the Civil War years. If the lodges had been meeting formally during the Civil War at all, they had been doing so in relative isolation and independence of each other, except in the resettlement areas at Neosho, Kansas and Fort Gibson, Indian Territory. Amendments were made to the Keetoowah laws that dealt with their new circumstances. Article 32, a new provision added to the Keetoowah Constitution in 1866, read:

Be it resolved by the Keetoowah Convention, as soon as this law is enacted and shall become a law it will be the duty according to law to visit all the lodges in their respective districts and explain the Keetoowah laws.

Be it further resolved by the Keetoowah convention, that each district captain shall name a small lodge and make up a roll of names of the members of that lodge and report same to the head captains at first meeting held by Keetoowah Convention. The District Captain, or the Secretary, shall call the names on the roll.¹⁴⁹

The effect of such amendment was to reconstitute and reestablish political and social contacts ruptured during the long years of war and displacement and to provide a communication and organizational network for the reconstruction of the Cherokee Nation. With the enemy no longer a serious threat and the Keetoowah in political power, a public effort could be made to rebuild the Keetoowah Society.

In late 1866, there was an important meeting of the Keetoowah Society in the Saline District (about forty miles north of Fort Gibson) to decide the future of the organization. John Smith, son of one of the founders of the Ancient Keetoowah, described the meeting: "All the people camped out there. All the old men were seers. They kept themselves clean with medicine. The medicine men investigated the future of the Keetoowahs."¹⁵⁰ The prophecy of the seers foretold difficult times to come and of future leaders but it focused on an immediate necessity, that of healing the Cherokee Nation by rebuilding the Keetoowah Society, "When they get together, they going to make a strong organization. They gonna get ready to get together."¹⁵¹

William P. Ross, however, was less than receptive to the idea of reconciliation with his former enemies. When it came time to appoint a delegation to Washington to negotiate relations and further settlements with the Federal government, he refused to appoint any representatives from the Southern delegation. In addition to his personal contempt for the "Treaty

Party," he was suspicious of certain people among the Southern delegation whom he believed were in alliance with railroad companies and white interests to undermine Cherokee sovereignty.¹⁵² At a convention held in the southern part of the Canadian District in late December, the Knights of the Golden Circle met to discuss their newfound political disenfranchisement. Realizing that Ross did not intend to grant their membership any political status, the Knights once again sent their own delegation to Washington to negotiate for political power.¹⁵³

The Keetoowah began to realize that, as long as Ross was in a leadership position within the Cherokee Nation, there would be no real reconciliation and no progress as a nation. He was, after all, a Ross. The Knights of the Golden Circle hated him as much as he hated them for the things they had done to his uncle and, as Ross perceived it, to his nation. To the members of the Keetoowah Society, Ross lacked the spirit of the "traditional harmony ethic" which was at the core of the traditional belief system.¹⁵⁴ His personal hatred upset the balance and order of the community and undermined the principles critical to the perpetuation of the "old ways":

Balance, harmony, inclusiveness, cooperation—life regenerating within a parameter of order. The pattern repeats the deepest heart of Mother Nature, where the atom—with its predictable parameter—freely makes its rounds to create new life. Continuance in the midsts of change, cardinal dynamics that sustain the universe... The Cherokee have used these poetics for survival.¹⁵⁵

Having already been through tumultuous negotiations in Washington earlier in the year, the Keetoowah Society knew that the political officials and white interests would use the continuing factionalism against the Cherokee Nation in an attempt to destroy it. If the Cherokee Nation were to survive the onslaught of white settlers, railroads, land speculators, and other commercial interests that lay in its immediate future, the Cherokee people would have to be united.¹⁵⁶ They knew that the only way to survive the upcoming years was to respect the power of the prophecy from the Saline meeting that, "when they get together, they going to make a strong organization."¹⁵⁷

The problem was not with the people of the Cherokee Nation; they had come to learn to live with each other and to exhibit a generosity of spirit and willingness to forgive that is one of the unique characteristics of the Cherokee people. Many of the Southern Cherokee who had fled the Cherokee Nation began to return and take up residence in their old homes even to the extent of the removal of those squatters who occupied their land under the now repealed Confiscation Act. The new Federal agent, John Humphreys, wrote at the beginning of 1867 of the fresh spirit cooperation that had seemed to take hold of the Cherokee Nation; he found a remarkable "disposition to forget the past and unite as one people."¹⁵⁸

If the problem were not with the people but with the leadership of the new Cherokee Nation, then they would have to change that leadership if they wished to build a new nation. In early 1867, Lewis Downing, John B. Jones, and Evan Jones sought to establish a policy of change by forging a new political party based upon the principles of the “old ways” and the promotion of national unity. The reorganization of the Keetoowah Society following the Civil War provided a potent new force for that change and their political power was set in motion towards the defeat of William P. Ross in the national elections upcoming in August. If Ross were to be defeated, it could only be accomplished by a coalition party that united the various political elements in the Cherokee Nation. In addition, only a candidate who spoke openly of reconciliation and reunification could head this effort at reconciliation; in order to provide a new way, there would have to be a return to the “old ways.”

In the spring of 1867, Evan Jones approached Lewis Downing about breaking with the Ross Party and initiating his own candidacy for the Chief of the Cherokee Nation. Downing shared the Jones’ belief that Ross’s vindictiveness had no place in the political effort to reunite the Cherokee Nation.¹⁵⁹ Downing totally supported national unity and was opposed to any discriminatory policies towards any part of the Cherokee Nation and these ideals coalesced in the formation of the “Downing Party” in 1867.¹⁶⁰ The breakaway party, led by Downing and the conservatives, would place their faith in the ethic of harmony that was at the center of the “Kituwah spirit.”

Downing, a Baptist minister, knew that both the conservatives and the African Americans of the Cherokee Nation would support his party’s candidacy for Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation. The strength of the Downing Party’s candidacy lay with those people who had been at the heart of the Baptist missionary outreach within the Cherokee Nation—those people “who as a body were always swayed by impulses rather than by reason.”¹⁶¹ Downing, though not biologically himself a “fullblood,” was a fullblood in the cultural sense and represented the conservative aims and interests in political affairs. As Head Captain of the Keetoowah Society, especially considering the recent reorganization under Article 32, he had a large and potent political organization behind him.¹⁶² He also used his contacts within the Baptist Churches to make an outreach to the African-american members of the Cherokee Nation.¹⁶³ That Lewis Downing had presided over the National Council that had become the first Southern state to end slavery in 1863 was a fact that would not be lost among the Cherokee of African descent. In addition, the fact that Lewis Downing had been in the pulpits of many of their churches during the many long years since removal was also something not soon forgotten.

Yet, to win, Downing needed the support of those who had been his enemy. Therefore, the Keetoowah Society set out to reconcile themselves with those who had for so long been their bitter enemy and with whom so

much innocent blood had been spilled. In spring of 1867, Lewis Downing was sent to Washington as a member of William Potter Ross's council to negotiate with the Federal government. In Washington, Downing met instead with delegates of the Southern Party and discussed his plans to displace Ross as Principal Chief of the Cherokee. The Southern Party, by no means charmed by Lewis Downing and his supporters in the Keetoowah Society, realized that they now had the opportunity to replace Ross. They knew that they had no political opportunities with Ross, but with Downing now reaching out to them, they saw an opportunity for real political power.

In his meetings with the Southern delegation, Downing made several overtures to those who were now out of power in the Cherokee government. The first concession was to merge the two delegations from the Cherokee Nation into one and to present a united front to the Federal government. The second was an agreement to appoint members of the Knights of the Golden Circle to positions of power within the Cherokee Nation should Downing be elected Principal Chief. In return, an agreement was reached that the nominee for the Principal Chief would be a conservative.¹⁶⁴

Elias Boudinot, who supported a territorial government as defined by the Harlan Bill and who was himself a lobbyist for the railroads, would have no part in the negotiations with the Keetoowah Society.¹⁶⁵ However, William Penn Adair (Flint Lodge #74) and James Scales were receptive to the reconciliation attempts because they were offered positions as delegates to Washington should Downing be elected. All deals aside, Adair and Scales must have known that only through unity would there be the strength to defeat the constant flow of congressional action such as the Harlan Bill that would attempt to open up the Indian Territory for white exploitation.

In early April, William P. Boudinot wrote to his uncle Stand Watie, who was by this time more interested in rebuilding his farm than in the political affairs of the Nation. He described the upcoming election, "The Pins are going it pretty lively on the Head right question pro or con. Downing expected to win next August on that hobby in a canter over Ross... The Pin ticket for Chiefs next election is Bill Ross and Jim Beam (Csomana-tah) on one side—Louis Downing and Crabgrass (Captain James Vann) on the other. The offices are worth a little now and with Jones and Ross in the foreground to intrigue, backbite, and blarney, the race is expected with some interest by Southern Lookers on."¹⁶⁶

No doubt in conversation with his brother, Boudinot also wrote to Watie of the reconciliation effort, "If you proceed [to Washington], give my respects to Cornelius, Adair, and Scales. It is reported that the latter are likely to be bought off and that they will be paid a handsome sum by way of 'compromise' with the other delegation so that the latter may swindle without further opposition."¹⁶⁷ However, in spite of his animosity, even Boudinot was forced to admit that the Keetoowah Society was beginning to prevail, "The Pins are generally friendly but are organized in each District with a fair supply of arms, ammunition, and speeches."¹⁶⁸

John Jones was facing one of the most difficult tasks of his career in the ministry. Even though Lewis Downing was Head Captain of the Keetoowah and among the leadership in the Baptist churches, many in his flock were reticent to break with the Ross family whom for so many years had been the leadership of the Cherokee Nation. The fact that they would have to join hands with the very ones who had wrought such destruction in their personal lives this presented the Keetoowah Society with troublesome issues. Soon enough, there was a break within the ranks:

Among the Cherokees an opposition is arising to our religion. A Cherokee, who was distinguished for his Loyalty to the U.S. Government during the war has led the opposition. The Baptists are the special objects of his hatred because they appear to be more prosperous. He tells the people that the Christian religion was devised by white men for the purpose of deceiving the Indians and getting their lands; that the white men have a fixed reward for every one they baptised, and this is the reason why they are so zealous. He says that Christianity has a great deal about God which is true, but it has just enough falsehood to make it dangerous. That if the Baptists prevail, the whites will extend a territorial government over the Cherokees in a short time. Many wicked men who know better, have taken up this story and are circulating it for political effect because Colonel Downing, a prominent Baptist, is a candidate for Chieftancy.¹⁶⁹

John Jones, in spite of dissension within the ranks, continued to press the issue. Even though the Keetoowah Society was making deals with its former enemies, it was in the interest of the unity of Cherokee society and the preservation of the “old ways.” The “Downing Party” was the party of national unity and inclusion, bringing together freedmen, full blood, and mixed blood in a way that had not been known since before removal. Though many members of the Keetoowah Society still clung to the Ross family, the prospect for ending four decades of dissension within the Cherokee Nation offered real promise to a significant portion of the population.

The work of John B. Jones during the summer of 1867 to seal the breach that had for so long rendered the Cherokee Nation asunder is seen as one of the Baptist missionary’s greatest efforts and his most lasting contribution to the Cherokee Nation. John Barlett Meserve noted that “Faithful John Buttrick Jones rendered no greater service to the Cherokees than he did during the summer and fall of 1867.”¹⁷⁰ William G. McLoughlin, in *Champions of the Cherokees*, states, “...On the whole the Joneses’ efforts to bring about a reconciliation, even though it split the Ross Party and alienated some fullbloods, was a success—perhaps one of their more dramatic successes in Cherokee politics.”¹⁷¹

Soon, even the Southern delegation began to believe that there was hope for this new nation, “At this time I think our prospects in Washington are much better than they have ever been, provided we can beat Bill Ross for

Chief which I feel assured can be done with proper management... Should the opposition to Ross act in concert and defeat him, I feel confident in our success in closing out Cherokee business in Washington." Whether the Knights of the Golden Circle believed that the war was over or simply sought to remove, conclusively, the Ross family from their dominance in the political affairs in the Nation, we may never know. What we do know is that even Stand Watie believed in the promise of a new Cherokee Nation enough to cast his lot with the Downing Party.¹⁷²

The election of August 1867 was a tightly contested battle in which tempers flared. According to an eyewitness, fights—participated in by both men and women—were the order of the day. When it was announced the Lewis Downing had defeated William Ross, sporadic fighting broke out in all nine districts between "Downing men" and "Ross men."¹⁷³ When all was said and done, Lewis Downing had become the first "fullblood" to be elected to the position of Principal Chief since the Constitution of the Cherokee Nation was written in 1827.¹⁷⁴ The long war was over; peace had come to the nation.

From all over the Indian Territory, the Southern Cherokee returned to their homes. Even Stand Watie, the former Confederate General, returned to the Nation and settled near Webber's Falls in the Canadian District. Sarah Watie, who had once said, "I don't believe I could live one year longer if I knew that we could not be settled...I am so perfectly sick of the world,"¹⁷⁵ now found something to live for in this new land. Saladin Watie wrote to his father in late 1867, "I think we have got along very well so far...better than all mama has grown stout and healthy. She steps about like some sixteen year old girl."¹⁷⁶

In 1858, a small group of men gathered at the Peavine Baptist Church and committed themselves to the following creed:

Few members of men of the society met secretly and discussed the condition of the country where they lived. The name Cherokee was in danger. The Cherokee Nation was about to disintegrate. It seemed intended to drown our Cherokee Nation and destroy it. For that reason, we resolve to stop it from scattering or forever lose the name Cherokee. We must love each other and abide by treaties made with the Federal government. We must cherish them in our hearts. Second, we must abide by the treaties made with other races of people. Third, we must abide by our constitution and laws and uphold the name of the Cherokee Nation. Right here we must endeavor to strengthen our society. Our society must be called Keetoowah.¹⁷⁷

In the nearly ten years that had passed, this loyal group of dedicated partisans had given all for the preservation of their Cherokee Nation. Dedicated to the idea of the "old ways" and the importance to the "Kituwah spirit," the members of the Keetoowah Society struggled, fought, and even died to protect the ideals that had so long been a part of the national consciousness.

When Lewis Downing approached the National Council for the first time in November of 1867, he did so as the Head Captain of the Keetoowah Society, Baptist minister, and incredibly enough as the Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation. In his first address, he called upon the Council to restore the “beloved community” that had so long been critical to the Cherokee way of life and to establish “thorough harmony” within the Cherokee Nation:

The very great importance of the entire unity of our Nation cannot have escaped your attention. Our laws should be uniform, the jurisdiction of our Courts should be the same over every part of our Nation and over every individual citizen. It is for the interest of the people of Canadian District as well as for the interests of the people of other Districts, that every line of distinction be blotted out. That we should be one in our laws, one in our institutions, one in feeling, and one in destiny. I, therefore recommend that the Council adopt immediate measures for bringing about the removal of such distinctions.¹⁷⁸

In assessing the contributions of the Keetoowah Society in *The Cherokees and Christianity*, William McLoughlin stated that he believed that, “Its original objectives had been achieved. The fullblood majority was in control of the Nation. The institution of slavery had been abolished. The gap between the wealthy slaveholders with their large plantations and the non-slaveholding farmers with one horse and a plough had been substantially narrowed.”¹⁷⁹ All of this is true and, indeed, the Keetoowah Society had attained its goals. Another interesting viewpoint comes from Rochelle Ward, the daughter of a slave from the Flint District in the Cherokee Nation, who poignantly sums up what is perhaps one of their more significant contributions: “Chief Downing ...was a big man after the Civil War when the Indians stopped fighting among themselves.”¹⁸⁰ However, Janey Hendrix, in her *Redbird Smith and the Nighthawk Keetoowahs*, gives us perhaps the best summary of the entire story:

They continued to cling to the old ways because they thought that these were the best ways; the ways that the Creator intended them to follow. They felt that departing from this path could only bring sorrow. They felt that the departure of the people from the righteous path was what had already brought sorrow to the people...These three ethnic groups became more and more intertwined until finally they had a new culture which was not quite like what any of them had known before removal, and yet was one that they could all accept.¹⁸¹

CONCLUSION

Identity and Ideology

The great tragedy that has befallen many peoples has been the loss of their cultural identity. In the attempt to make them acceptable, dominant peoples have often required of the subordinate people that they abandon their traditional ways and adopt those of the dominant culture. Furthermore, many peoples finding themselves in a subordinate position to the “superior” people fall into a posture of subserviency, and wish nothing than to become like those who dominate them. Soon they come to look upon “the old ways” as inferior, even something of which to be ashamed. In this way the ancient virtues and contributions, of religion, folklore, philosophy, language, arts, manufactures, and much else, have been abandoned or rejected and lost.¹

—Ashley Montagu, *Statement on Race*

For a thousand years, a self-understanding forged deep within the heart of Cherokee culture, history, and religion presented an ideal of Cherokee identity that provided a cohesive unity for an often loosely associated confederation of communities. With the arrival of European colonists on the Southeastern frontier and their corresponding effort to bring “civilization” to the Cherokee people, a competing ideology arose within the Cherokee that presented a different idea as to what it meant to be a Cherokee. From the beginning of the “civilization” program in 1789 even unto the modern era, the struggle to define what it means to be a “Cherokee” has been at the center of an ongoing and often tumultuous conflict of ideals and ideology.

Prior to their contact with the forces of civilization, the Cherokee people defined themselves in accordance with the ancient traditions that provided structure for their community and meaning for their existence. They were born of a mother into her clan and this system of kinship created bonds of identity that transcended the particularities of time and place. The clan structure shaped self-identity and social roles among its members and further provided a means of identity and an organized system of relationships within the larger community. The clan leadership also provided the system of governance for the local community through regional councils; these regional councils were organized into a loose confederation of city/states bodies that came to be known as the Cherokee Nation.

The basis of identity for the Cherokee people prior to contact with

European civilization was a web of interdependent relationships patterned on the dynamic interactions exemplified in the natural world that surrounded them. The center of Cherokee existence was harmony; balance and order was created from an interconnected network of mutuality. An appreciation for the dignity and the contribution of each partner in the communal order promoted a cohesive social system, an inclusive political structure, an egalitarian economic commonwealth, and a reverence for the natural environment. Identity came from knowing one's place in this network of dynamically interconnected relationships and understanding that role and its contributions to the enhancement and advancement of the cycle of existence.

Central to the perpetuation of order was adaptation and forgiveness. Traditional society believes that revelation is a very specific phenomenon; different understandings are given to different people and each contributes to the synthetic comprehension that makes up "reality" in traditional society. As "objectivity" came from "inter-subjectivity," there was a great tolerance for diversity of opinion:

Are you the keeper of right and wrong? That is not the ways of the Cherokee. We believe that the keeper of right and wrong is the Great Spirit or God. My grandmother used to teach me that to look back and try to decide "right" or "wrong" would ruin the Cherokee. That we needed to "be where we are and go on." This is the problem with the tribe today. We are too involved in the ways of the whites, which is the way of "right" and "wrong." And this, according to my grandmother, is the road that leads to "nowhere." That is a traditional Cherokee belief.²

The recognition of the contingent nature of "truth" in traditional religion promoted a spirit of reconciliation and forgiveness in Cherokee society. The Cherokee Nation depended upon this ethic of tolerance and forgiveness in order to preserve the harmony critical to the preservation of traditional society.

The interconnected network of mutuality, an appreciation of the value of particularistic revelation, and the promotion of a mutuality and harmonious intercourse all beings worked to promote a collective understanding of what it meant to be a Cherokee. At the root of this collective identity was a common culture based in a shared worldview that centered upon the land, the family, language, religion, community, and ultimately *Ani-Kituhwagi*—the Cherokee people. At the dawn of "civilization," to be a "Cherokee" was to be one whose identity rested in their ties to these essential elements of Cherokee culture and to the unity of the Cherokee people. In the holistic worldview of the Cherokee people, the term *Ani-Kituhwagi* was more than just a political or national identity; it was also a sacred one.

With the founding of the United States, powerful forces came to bear on the Cherokee people, indeed on all traditional people, and the way of life that endured for thousands of years came under a unique and distinct threat.

The “civilization” program of the federal government sought to change the way of life of the indigenous people and render asunder their traditional ways of being; they would be “reduced” to civilization. A critical component of the ideology of civilization stated “missionaries of excellent moral character should be appointed to reside in their nation who should be well supplied with all the implements of husbandry and the necessary stock for a model farm.”³ The use of African bondsmen to develop large agricultural plantations was a part and parcel of the “civilization” program.

These “model farms” soon grew into plantations and the owners of these plantations as well as the merchants and government agents that served grew wealthy and economic disparity began to spread among the Cherokee people. Inter-marriage among the Cherokee and the whites that served among them increased; mixed-blood natives spoke English and began to adopt the social and cultural patterns of the dominant culture. Among these institutions was the “peculiar institution”; as the program of civilization pursued its goals, slavery spread among the Cherokee. Gradually the Cherokee developed a landed elite and a mercantile class that formed an aristocratic element that rose to dominance in national affairs. It was among this group of the rich and powerful, the “progressives” of the Cherokee Nation, that slavery became most accepted.

Within fifty years of the introduction of the government’s “civilization” program in the Cherokee Nation in the latter half of the eighteenth century, the nation was thrown terribly out of balance. Where once there had been harmony, there was now discord. Where once there was equality, now there was social, political, economic, and racial hierarchy. The commonwealth had fallen victim to rampant individualism and collective responsibility was eclipsed by personal aspiration; this was nowhere more apparent than in the crisis that led up to the loss of the Civil War. At the cross of the ideology of “civilization,” the very nature of Cherokee identity would be sacrificed.

The people were divided, fractured within and among themselves. “Civilization” brought with it a terrible legacy. By the middle of the nineteenth century, much of that which had epitomized Cherokee culture and tradition was eclipsed by the onslaught of Christian religion and mercantile capitalism. A profoundly different self-understanding was being developed in the Cherokee Nation as to what it meant to be a “Cherokee.” As the people who adopted the principles of “civilization” moved into the forefront of Cherokee society, they attempted to define Cherokee identity in terms of the people they sought to emulate. As the people of the United States came to define themselves as “Americans,” they ever more did so in terms of opposition to an internal and unequal “other” that found expression in the form of persons of African descent. Progressively more, survival for the Cherokee elite meant becoming an “American”; for many of them, becoming an American meant ceasing to be Cherokee.

A nation divided could not long endure. Just as with the United States, it was ultimately the issue of slavery that ripped the Cherokee Nation into two

divided and warring camps. Though the fracture had existed long before the ante-bellum crisis over slavery, it took this additional pressure to break open the fracture and turn it into a fissure. Nothing came to epitomize the difference between those who sought “civilization” and those who sought resistance to the white man’s ways than the issue of slavery:

The institution of slavery helped shape the economic class structure and conflicting value systems, which produced the persistent factionalism in the Cherokee Nation. One group of Cherokees clung to the traditional values which emphasized order, harmony, kinship, and economic equilibrium, and which scorned material wealth and political power, while another group abandoned those beliefs and adopted European values. The issue of slavery had not been hotly contested in the Nation before the outbreak of war, but the institution immediately came to represent all that the traditionalists despised in the white man’s “civilization.”⁴

“Civilization” had forced some people in the Cherokee Nation to give up their cultural identity just as they had given up their land. Believing themselves to be in a subordinate position to the “superior” people, they fell into a posture of subservience, and many wished nothing than to become like those who attempted to dominate them.

The Keetoowah Society was possessed of a different vision of what it meant to be a “Cherokee”—one that stressed the importance of the “old ways” in the preservation of the integrity of the individual Cherokee as well as the unity and sovereignty of the Cherokee Nation. National unity depended upon the definition of a true “Cherokee” as one bound to a traditional culture and tied to the community by the power of the “Kituwah spirit.” The “Kituwah spirit” was a way to transcend the differences between political parties, religious beliefs, skin color, and even clan affiliations; it allowed for the weaving together of the many and varied Cherokee people into a total community who though different, lived as one.

Three religious forces that seemed to share a common vision of Cherokee identity shaped this movement and helped it find expression in the political and social affairs of the Cherokee Nation. At the core of the Keetoowah movement was traditional religion and the ancient ideals, spirituality, and ceremonies of the “old ways”—nationalism, the harmony ethic, the network of dynamic interrelationships, reconciliatory forgiveness, and the holistic bonds found in common rituals. The Baptist churches, shaped within the cultural nexus of the “beloved community” of the Aframerindian church, shared many of these ideals, but also provided for an “approved” public identity, leadership development mechanisms, community forum, extranational support system, and grassroots organizing effort for the “secret society.” The brotherhood of Freemasonry offered a model of organizational framework, a method for conducting lodge ritual and business, and a system of signs and tokens for recognition of “members.” In

accordance with traditional Cherokee belief systems, the Keetoowah Society was a harmonious fusion of interrelated parts.

It was this inclusive vision of a Cherokee identity that transcends skin color, religion, creed, or national origin that allowed the Keetoowah to emerge victorious from the “fratricidal war” that ripped apart the Cherokee Nation in the middle of the nineteenth century. Facing overwhelming odds and an armed force bent upon its destruction, the Keetoowah had little choice but to feign acquiescence and accommodation to the Confederate States in order to preserve the unity of the Cherokee Nation. However, when it came to the point of killing those very same people to whom they had sworn allegiance to, the members of the Keetoowah Society switched sides and expressed their commitment to those that shared the bonds of the “old ways” and the maintenance of the cultural integrity and political sovereignty of the Cherokee Nation.

Ultimately, it was their commitment to the “old ways” that allowed the Keetoowah Society to emerge victorious from the bloody Civil War that laid such waste to the Cherokee Nation. When the Keetoowah issued a statement on February 17, 1863 abolishing slavery and granting citizenship to Cherokees of African descent, it set in motion the forces that would turn the tide of the war.⁵ The combined forces of the “rainbow army” were a powerful presence in the Indian Territory and carried the day in battle after battle. When the battles were finally over and victory had been totally secured, “the people” set about to bring peace to the troubled land by restoring order and reestablishing the government that had been in absence for so many years. Central to that process was the harmony ethic and the spirit of reconciliation that were so critical to the “old ways” as they found expression in the unifying energy of the “Kituwah spirit.” National unity, so elusive in the Cherokee Nation, seemed at last at hand.

Knowing that if they were to restore order and balance to the Cherokee Nation, the Keetoowah Society would have to seal the breach that divided the people and prevented unity; they knew that they would have to call upon that traditional ethic so quintessentially Cherokee, e.g., the “disposition to forget the past and unite as one people.”⁶ In the worldview of the traditional Cherokee where polarity was understood as completion rather than opposition⁷ and where the guiding principle is to “be where we are and go on,” the only future lie with reconciliation. Ultimately, they knew that even among the “progressive” Cherokee where “civilization” had made such inroads, they were, in their hearts, still Cherokee. Though the “progressive” Cherokee might think themselves different from the “fullblood” Cherokee, to those in positions of power in Washington, there was little difference between the two except that it served their political and social interests. When it was expedient to treat the Cherokee as a people, the federal government did so; when it served their interests to divide them, they did this also. At the end of the Civil War, the Cherokee people knew that their only future lay in a unified nation and a collective identity.

In the end, it could be no other way. The alien ideology that entered the Cherokee Nation because of the “civilization” program of the late eighteenth century could not succeed in defeating traditional values. Whereas progressive values were dualistic and oppositional, traditional values are holistic and inclusive; progressive values were hierarchical and demand accommodation, traditional values are relational and integrative; traditional values promote community and mutual benefit, progressive values were individualistic and egocentric. Though progressive values might have attained power and position, they could not have endured in the Cherokee Nation because they are so diametrically opposed to the Cherokee way of life. That they existed at all among the Cherokee people speaks to an appreciation of the value of the ethic of harmony critical to the preservation of traditional society. In addition, perhaps, “civilization” among the Cherokee might have been more successful among “the people” if, as Vine Deloria notes, its advocate’s actions would have spoken louder than their words:⁸

Indeed, much has been advanced on what you term civilization among the Indians; and many proposals have been made to make us adopt your laws, your religion, your manners and your customs. But, we confess that we do not yet see the propriety, or practicability, of such a reformation, and should be better pleased with beholding the good effects of these doctrines in your own practices than with hearing you talk about them...⁹

Epilogue

Bernice Riggs is a descendant of Cherokee Freedmen Ike Rogers who served in the Union Army in the 79th U.S. Colored Troops and she has established ancestry “by blood” with the Vann family, a prominent family in the Cherokee Nation. On June 12, 1998, an appeal was filed on her behalf before the Judicial Appeals Tribunal, the Supreme Court of the Cherokee Nation, seeking restoration of the terms established under the Treaty of 1866.¹ The Treaty of 1866 provided that “all freedmen who have been liberated by voluntary act of their former owners or by law, as well as all free colored persons who were in the country at the commencement of the rebellion, and are now residents therein, or who may return within six months, and their descendants, shall have all the rights of native Cherokees.”² The appeal before the J.A.T. of the Cherokee Nation sought to assert the preeminence of the articles of Treaty of 1866 over provisions contained within a controversial 1974 constitutional convention in the Cherokee Nation that virtually eliminated citizenship for Cherokee of African descent.

Interestingly enough, the appeal was filed before the Judicial Appeals Tribunal of the Cherokee Nation without either the Cherokee Nation or her own attorneys notifying the plaintiff that the case was being heard. In addition, evidence provided by noted genealogist Angela Walton-Raji that verified that the plaintiff’s parents were on the 1880 Roll of Authenticated Cherokee Freedmen and that Mrs. Riggs, her parents, and her grandparents had ties to the Rogers and Vann families of the Cherokee Nation was not entered into evidence. Lastly, the very registrar who denies Cherokee of African descent the right to participate in national elections was also seated as one of the judicial officials who would be deciding the case.

Some three years after the appeal was originally filed, the Judicial Appeal Tribunal finally released its decision. The Judicial Appeals Tribunal ruled that:

1. The Cherokee Nation has a sovereign right to determine its citizenship eligibility criteria, and this was done in passage of the original Constitutional language in 1974 that says that one must trace kinship to a person on the “Cherokee Blood” roll.
2. Future such cases will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

The only thing that is more intriguing than the secrecy that surrounded the

original case is the fact that it took three years for the ruling to be announced. As neither evidence offered by the plaintiff nor her testimony were considered important to the proceedings of the J.A.T., one wonders why there was such due deliberation.

During the preparation of this text, I was contacted by Vanetta Watie—a black descendant of Stand Watie—who being frustrated in her attempts in researching her genealogy through official channels at the Cherokee Nation posed the following question, “I don’t understand what we’ve done to them? Why don’t they want us (descendants of Freedmen) in their Tribe?”³ She also wondered why there was such great difficulty for the Judicial Appeals Tribunal to come to a conclusion regarding the citizenship of Cherokee of African descent. Unfortunately, I could not answer her questions. Admittedly, the answers are not easy to find.

Yet, somehow we must find the answers. It has been nearly one hundred fifty years since the Treaty of 1866 declared “All freedmen, as well as all free colored persons.. shall have all the rights of native Cherokees.”⁴ Does the fact that these rights and privileges have yet to be granted speak to the enduring legacy of “civilization” among the Cherokee? Is not the continued exclusion of these Cherokee of African descent from citizenship in the Cherokee Nation an indictment of the nation for having fallen short of the very values of the “old ways” that have traditionally been the center of Cherokee society? Until the rights of these freedmen and all free colored persons and their descendants in the Cherokee Nation have been ultimately and finally secured, then this story—epic as it is—is yet unfinished.

Across the years, the voices of the ancestors speak to the present. They call upon us to remember their struggle and their sacrifice and urge us to honor their commitment by fulfilling our responsibility to them that they would not have died in vain. Finally, as those Cherokee voices in 1866 spoke to the federal government of their having done their duty, the voices of those black Cherokee who fell among the eight hundred warriors speak to the current government of its duty. It is a call to responsibility that we must not ignore:

Now, having done our whole duty to the Government, all we ask is that the Government do its duty to us—that it fulfill its treaty obligations to us—that it fulfill its solemn, reiterated pledges. We ask no gifts, no charities, but simply our rights for which we have fought and bled in your armies, and for which so many of our noblest men have died.⁵

Notes

INTRODUCTION

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4. Bill Johnson, "Descendants of Slaves Claim Treaty Ignored," *The Daily Oklahoman*, Oklahoma City, OK., June 24, 1984.
5. Craig Gaines, *The Confederate Cherokees: John Drew's Regiment of Mounted Rifles*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989), 124.
6. For the complete text of the treaty, see Emmet Starr, *History of the Cherokee Indians and their Legends and Folklore*, (Oklahoma City, OK.: The Warden Company, 1921), 167 ff.
7. J. Anthony Paredes, "Paradoxes of Modernism and Indianness in the South-east," *American Indian Quarterly* 19, no. 3(1995): 341; Susan Greenbaum, "What's in a Label? Identity Problems of Southern Indian Tribes" *Journal of Ethnic Studies* 19, no. 2 (1991):107-126.
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9. "How do you explain to someone that there's no half-way point being Cherokee? You either are or you aren't. It's not a question of how many Europeans vs. how many Cherokees one has in the ole' family tree. Most all of us can play that game. It's not even a question of where you live. It IS a question of loyalty. You either have a loyalty to our people, or you don't. It IS a question of commitment. That means getting involved and not letting self-interested individuals take the people for a ride while you sit by. It means that no matter where you go, you come home to family and friends and you want to make a difference. Its the way you live and the way your family has lived. It's knowing who your relations are and where you fit into our society. You can't suddenly "become" Cherokee. It's

not a club with a membership card and dues. It's something you're born with and if you really are Cherokee, it's something you can't ignore." [Jason Terrell, *The Cherokee Observer* 4, no. 4 (1996) Tahlequah, OK, April, 1996].

CHAPTER ONE: RED, WHITE, AND BLACK IN THE OLD SOUTH

1. bell hooks, *Black Looks: Race and Representation* (Boston: South End Press, 1992), 183.
2. Ranjel in Edward Gaylord Bourne, ed., *Narratives of the Career of Hernando de Soto in the Conquest of Florida as told by a Knight of Elvas, and in a Relation by Luys Hernandes de Biedma, Factor of the Expedition; tr. by Buckingham Smith, together with a[n] account of de Soto's Expedition based on the Diary of Rodrigo Ranjel, his secretary, tr. from Oviedo's Historia General y Natural as Indias* (New York, A.S.Barnes and Company, 1904), vol. ii, 100.
3. Gentleman of Elvas in J.Franklin Jameson, *Original Narratives of Early American History: Spanish Explorers in the Southern United States* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907), 172–176.
4. Charles Hudson, *The Southeastern Indians* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1976), 111.
5. Bourne, 100.
6. Ibid.
7. R.R.Wright, "Negro Companions of the Spanish Explorers," *American Anthropologist* 4 (1902):217–28.
8. Bourne, 101.
9. Bourne, 105.
10. Jameson, 175.
11. Bourne, 104.
12. Jameson, 177.
13. Ibid.
14. Bourne, 104.
15. Jameson, 177.
16. Ibid.
17. "Thus we observe that relations between Negroes and Indians have been of significance historically, through influencing on occasion the Indian relations of the United States government, and to a much larger extent biologically, through modifying the racial make-up of both the races and even, as some believe, creating a new race which might, perhaps, for want of better term, be called "Aframerindian." Kenneth Wiggins Porter, "Notes Supplementary to 'Relations between Negroes and Indians,'" in *The Journal of Negro History* 17, no. 1 (January, 1933): 321.
18. William Willis, "Anthropology and Negroes on the Southern Colonial Frontier," in James Curtis and Lewis Gould, eds., *The Black Experience in America* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1970), 47–48.
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21. Jack Forbes, *Africans and Native Americans: The Language of Race and the Evolution of Red-Black Peoples*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 6–7.

22. R.A.Jairazbhoy, *Ancient Egyptians and Chinese in America* (London: George Prior Associated Publishers, Ltd., 1974), 13–16; Harold G.Lawrence, “Mandinga Voyages Across the Atlantic,” in Ivan Van Sertima, *African Presence in Early America* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1993), 169–214.
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33. Jack D.Forbes, “The Use of Racial and Ethnic Terms in America: Management by Manipulation,” *Wicazo Sa Review* 11, no. 2 (1995):53–65.
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57. Gary C.Goodwin, *Cherokees in Transition: A Study of Changing Culture and Environment Prior to 1775* (Chicago: University of Chicago Department of Geography. 1977), 9–11.
58. James Mooney, “Myths of the Cherokees” (Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1900), 11.
59. Charles Hudson, “Cherokee Concept of Natural Balance,” *Indian Historian* 3, no. 4 (1970): 51–54; Thomas P Hilton, “The Effect of the Cherokee Ethos on Their Utilization of Economic Resources,” *Chesopiean* 17, no. 4–5 (1979): 77–81.
60. Vine Deloria, “Native American Spirituality” in *For This Land: Writings on Religion in America* (New York: Routledge Press, 1999), 131. Perhaps the best work on the Cherokee and their relationship to the environment is Sarah Hill’s *Weaving New Worlds: Southeastern Cherokee Women and their Basketry* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).

61. Jean Chaudhuri and Joyotpaul Chaudhuri, *A Sacred Path: The Way of the Muscogee Creeks* (Los Angeles: UCLA American Indian Studies Center, 2001), 5.
62. Deloria, 131.
63. Chaudhuri, 96.
64. John Loftin, "The 'Harmony Ethic' of the Conservative Eastern Cherokees: A Religious Interpretation," in *Journal of Cherokee Studies* (Spring, 1983): 40–44
65. Robert K. Thomas quoted in Loftin, 41.
66. John Gulick, ed., *Cherokees at the Crossroads* (Chapel Hill: Institute for Research in the Social Sciences, 1960), 146–150.
67. Loftin, 42.
68. Ibid.
69. Chaudhuri, 22.
70. I use these words in a conscious relationship between the Cherokee ideal of harmony and Martin Luther King's notion of the "beloved community" which he expressed in his 1958 work *Stride Towards Freedom*. [Martin Luther King, Jr., *Stride Towards Freedom: The Montgomery Story* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1958), 219–220].
71. Mary C. Churchill, "The Oppositional Paradigm of Purity versus Pollution in Charles Hudson's *The Southeastern Indians*," *American Indian Quarterly* 20 (Fall 1996): 563. For Hudson's response see Charles Hudson, "Reply to Mary Churchill," *American Indian Quarterly* 24, no. 3 (2000): 494–502.
72. Joseph Epes Brown, *The Spiritual Legacy of the American Indian* (New York: Crossroads, 1982), 71.
73. Marilou Awiatka, *Selu: Seeking the Corn-Mother's Wisdom* (Golden, CO.: Fulcrum Publishing, 1993), 181. Paula Gunn Allen refers to this structured society as "gynocratic." "In gynocratic tribal systems, egalitarianism, personal autonomy, and communal harmony were highly valued, rendering the good of the individual and the good of the society mutually reinforcing rather than divisive. Gynecentric communities tend to value peace, tolerance, sharing, relationship, balance, harmony, and just distribution of goods." [Paula Gunn Allen, *Grandmothers of the Light: A Medicine Woman's Sourcebook* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1991), ix.]
74. John Swanton, *The Indians of the Southeastern United States*, (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1946), 715.
75. Charles Hudson, *The Southeastern Indians* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1976), 260.
76. Nearly every work on Cherokee Society begins with a discussion of the mythology of Selu and Kana'ti. Perhaps the most striking rendering is Paula Gunn Allen's "River, Blood, and Corn" in her *Grandmothers of the Light: A Medicine Woman's Sourcebook*, pages 66–70.
77. Louis Phillipe, *Diary of My Travels in America*, Trans. by Samuel Becker (New York: Delacorte Press, 1977), 73; Adair, 438; Bartram, "Observations," 165; Timberlake, 68.
78. Bartram, "Observations," 152; Adair 439–440.
79. Longe, 24, Louis Phillipe, 75; Bartam, "Observations," 155.
80. Hill, 80–84.
81. Adair, 435. See also Joan Greene and H.F. Robinson, "Maize Was Our Life: A History of Cherokee Corn," *Journal of Cherokee Studies* 11, no. 1 (1986): 40–52.
82. Bartam, "Observations," 160.

83. Bartam, "Observations," 160.
84. Adair, 436.
85. Claudio Saunt, in his work, *A New Order of Things: Property, Power, and the Transformation of the Creek Indians, 1733–1816* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) states that the Creeks, and by extension other Southeastern Indians, believed that the people claimed rights to the crops their labor produced but not to the land itself. The land was "worked in common, but harvested in severalty, was not owned as much as it was used." [Saunt, 49]
86. Bartram, "Observations," 159.
87. Ibid.
88. "Communism freed the Indian from ambition to acquire wealth as anarchy freed him from temptation to seek power. It made him improvident of the future, minimized class distinctions, reemphasized cooperation, promoted tribal solidarity.... He held women in high regard, admitting them to share his private labors as well as his public counsels, imparting to them secrets which they frequently, unpenalized and apparently uncriticized, revealed, and conceding to them a freedom of action and immunity to regulation such as modern women have nowhere obtained" [R.S. Cotterill, *Southern Indians: The Story of the Civilized Tribes before Removal* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1954), 13–14.]
89. "There is not a pauper in that Nation, and that Nation does not owe a dollar. It built its own capital, in which we had this examination, and built its schools and hospitals. Yet, the defect in this system was apparent. They have gone as far as they can go, because they hold their land in common. It is Henry George's system, and under that there is no enterprise to make your home any better than that of your neighbors. There is no selfishness, which is at the bottom of civilization. Till these people will consent to give up their lands, and divide them among their citizens so that each can own the lands he cultivates, they will not make much progress" [Senator Henry Dawes quoted in Janey Hendrix, "Redbird Smith and The Nighthawk Keetoowahs," *Journal of Cherokee Studies* 8, no. 2 (Fall, 1983): 24].
90. Louis Phillipe, 88.
91. Adair, 438.
92. Sarah Hill, 78–80.
93. Jameson, 168.
94. Louis Phillipe, 73.
95. Bartram, "Observations," 152. They saw the males hunting, fishing, ball-play, and warfare as mechanisms of entertainment as opposed to methods of survival.
96. Bartram, "Observations," 152, 165; De Brahm's, 114; Adair, 330.
97. DeBrahm's, 114.
98. Onitositah (Corn Tassel), quoted in Lee Miller, ed. *From the Heart: Voices of the American Indian* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995), 131.
99. Louis Phillipe, 73.
100. De Brahm's, 108.
101. De Brahm's, 108.
102. Adair, 406.
103. Adair, 171.
104. DeBrahms, 109.
105. Ibid.
106. Ibid.
107. Bartrams, "Observations," 153.

108. Hudson, 269.
109. Allen, xiv.
110. Chaudhuri, 48.
111. David Cornsilk, "Footsteps—Historical Perspective: History of the Keetoowah Cherokees," *Cherokee Observer*, Online, Available HTTP: <<http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Prairie/5918/keetoowah/octissue97.html>> (accessed: August 29, 1998); Wilma Dunaway, *The First American Frontier: Transition and Capitalism in Southern Appalachia, 1700–1860* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 29–31.
112. Timberlake, 94.
113. Ibid.
114. Hudson, 185–193.
115. William H. Gilbert, Jr., "The Eastern Cherokees," *Anthropology Paper #23, Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin* (133): 169–413.
116. There could be many more clans. "The Cherokee Vision of Eloah" records that there were twelve, but that five are reportedly lost. [Howard Meredith and Virginia Milan, "A Cherokee Vision of Eloah," *Indian Historian* 8, no. 4:19]. See also Swanton, 654–657; Mooney, 212–213.
117. Louis Phillipe, 77; Timberlake, 90; John Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, Hugh T. Lefler, ed. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1967), 57.
118. Hudson, 193.
119. William Bartam, *The Travels of William Bartram*, edited with commentary and an annotated index by Francis Harper. Naturalist's ed. (Athens, University of Georgia Press, 1998), 311.
120. Vine Deloria, "Native American Spirituality" in *For This Land: Writings on Religion in America* (New York: Routledge Press, 1999), 131.
121. Mooney, 491.
122. Hudson, 185.
123. Hudson, 127.
124. John P. Reid, *A Law of Blood: Primitive Law in the Cherokee Nation* (New York: New York University Press, 1970), 37–48.
125. Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700–1835* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 59.
126. Jameson, 176.
127. Lee Sultzman, *First Nations Histories: The Cherokee*, Online, Available <<http://dickshovel.netgate.net/Cherokeeel.html>>, (accessed: August 22, 1998); Swanton, 110.
128. Some have conjectured that this "cave people" may have associations with the "temple mound" culture of the American Southeast. Although the Cherokee did inhabit and build mounds, the oldest mounds in the area seem to be of Mvskokean origins as opposed to Cherokee. (Goodwin, 34–36)
129. Adair, 237.
130. Mooney, 182.
131. Mooney, 181.
132. Adair, 237.
133. David Corkran, "The Sacred Fire of the Cherokees" *Southern Indian Studies* 5 (1953): 21–26.
134. Mooney, 240–242
135. Adair, 101.
136. John Swanton, *Myths and Tales of the Southeastern Indians* (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995), 87.
137. Mooney, 396–396.

138. Bartram, "Observations," 149.
139. William Richardson, "An Account of my Proceedings," Wilberforce Eames Indian Collection, New York Public Library, New York, New York.
140. Bartram, *Travels*, 323. See also Ruth Y. Wetmore, "The Green Corn Ceremony of the Eastern Cherokees," *Journal of Cherokee Studies* 8, no. 1 (1983): 45–56.
141. *Ibid.*
142. The "black drink" was made by the women of the community. It consisted of a variety of holly that grew along the eastern seaboard. Its main ingredient was caffeine. It served as a stimulant, a diuretic, and sometimes an emetic. William Richardson, one of the first missionaries to the Cherokee, described the drinking of the black drink as being "taking physick." [Richardson, "An Account of my Proceedings"] The effects of "taking physick" were a more rapid and clear flow of thought, more sustained intellectual effort, and a sharpened reaction time. [Hudson, 226–229]
143. Bartram, *Travels*, 323.
144. Adair, 117. In 1828, Baptists missionary Evan Jones witnessed a similar process:
- Went to a Town Meeting for the early Spring Ablutions. The Adoneeskee, or priest, allowed me to accompany them, but when we came near the water, he directed me to take another path, and coming to the place a stool was set down with a deerskin on it and some beads on the skin. The Adoneeskee, or priest, muttered something which nobody could hear for about 20 minutes, the people standing with their faces towards the water. Then, with great solemnity, he walked into the water and scattered the sacred beads into the stream in all directions. The women then commenced plunging their children into the water; those who were large enough plunged in themselves. The men went a little distance and dipped themselves and the women went to a separate place and did likewise. This done all retired to the home of the Adoneeskee and after listening to a long speech from the old man, commenced eating cold venison which was prepared for the occasion.
- Evan Jones, *Journal*, February 29, 1828, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans, [microform], 1825–1865," American Baptist Historical Society, Rochester, N.Y.
145. Alan Edwin Kilpatrick, "Going To the Water: A Structural Analysis of Cherokee Purification Rituals," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 15, no. 4 (1991): 49–58; Alan Kilpatrick, "A Note on Cherokee Theological Concepts," *The American Indian Quarterly* 19 (June 1995): 394.
146. De Brahms 107–108; Richardson.
147. James Mooney, "The Cherokee River Cult," *The Journal of American Folklore* 13 (January–March 1900): 48.
148. James Mooney, "The Cherokee Ball Play," *Journal of Cherokee Studies* 7, no. 1 (1982): 10–24; Mark Reed, "Reflections on Cherokee Stickball," *Journal of Cherokee Studies* 2, no. 1 (1977): 195–200; Catherine Cochran, "Traditional Adult Cherokee Games," *Journal of Cherokee Studies* 13 (1988): 19–45.
149. Louis-Phillipe, 91–94
150. Theda Perdue, *Nations Remembered: An Oral History of the Cherokees, Chickasaws, Choctaws, Creeks, and Seminoles in Oklahoma 1865–1907* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993), 68.
151. Jack and Anna Kilpatrick, *Friends of Thunder: Folktales of the Oklahoma Cherokees* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, [1964] 1995), 3.

152. Bartram, *Travels*, 310.
153. "David in his will left Solomon 3,000 quintals of gold from the Indies to aid in building the temple; and, according to Josephus, it was from these same lands. Jerusalem and the Mount of Zion are now to be rebuilt by Christian hands, and God through the mouth of the prophet in the fourteenth Psalm said so." Columbus hoped to use the riches from the Americas to finance a new Crusade in order to recover Jerusalem from the hands of the infidels. [Christopher Columbus, "Columbus's Lettera Rarissima to the Sovereigns" in *Journals and Other Documents on the Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus*, Translated and edited by Samuel Eliot Morrison, (New York: The Heritage Press, 1963), 383–384].
154. Christopher Columbus, "Letter to Gabriel Sanchez" in *Old South Leaflets*, Volume II, Number 34 (Boston: Directors of the Old South Work, n.d.), 7.
155. Columbus, "Letter to Gabriel Sanchez," 6.
156. "Civil and sacred interests were intertwined in a system so thorough and so complex as scarcely to be separated, so permanent and pervasive that organic union escapes any but a careful observer." W.Eugene Shiels, *King and Church: The Rise and Fall of the Patronato Real* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1961), 9.
157. "Bull of Grenada" in Shiels, p. 66.
158. Woodbury Lowery, *The Spanish Settlements within the Present Limits of the United States: 1513–1561*, (New York: Bolton and Ross, 1905), 162.
159. Lowery, 169.
160. Jameson, 160.
161. Bourne, 60, 94–9, 103–105.
162. J.B.Davis, "Indian Territory in 1878," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 4 (1926): 264.
163. "...It has become evident through long experience that nothing has sufficed to bring the said chiefs and Indians to a knowledge of our Faith (necessary for their salvation), since by nature they are inclined to idleness and vice, and have no manner of virtue or doctrine." "The Laws of Burgos," 1512 in Lewis Hanke, ed., *History of Latin American Civilization: Sources and Interpretations, 2 Vols.* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1967), vol. 1, 135.
164. Gustavo Gutierrez, *Las Casas: In Search of the Poor of Jesus Christ*, Translated by Robert Barr, (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1993), 291.
165. Aristotle quoted in Tzvetan Todorov, *The Conquest of America* (New York: Harper and Row, 1984), 152. See also James Hanke, *Aristotle and the American Indian* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1970).
166. Juan Gines de Sepulveda, *Democritus Alter* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Cientificas, Instituto Francisco de Vitoria, 1984), 33. See also Jose A.Fernandez-Santamaria, "Juan Gines De Sepulveda on the Nature of the American Indians" *Americas* 31, no. 4 (1975): 434–451.
167. Bartholomeo de Las Casas, *In Defense of the Indians* Translated, edited and annotated by Stafford Poole (Dekalb: Northern University Press, 1974), 42–43.
168. For excellent discussions of this issue, see John Henrik Clark, "Race: An Evolving Issue in Western Social Thought," *Journal of Human Relations* 18, no. 3 (1970): 1040–1054; Louis Ruchamps, "The Sources of Racial Thought in Colonial America," in *The Journal of Negro History* 52 (1967): 251–273.
169. Wilbur R.Jacobs, "Columbus, Indians, and the Black Legend Hocus Pocus," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 17, no. 2 (1993): 175–187.
170. Daniel P.Mannix and Malcolm Cowley, *Black Cargoes: A History of the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1523–1865* (New York: 1962), 22.

171. Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975), 6.
172. David Wallace, in his *South Carolina: A Short History—1520–1948*, put it this way “The temporary basis of wealth that was ultimately to prove a lasting curse, Negro slavery, had perfectly naturally begun with the landing of the first colonists.” David Wallace, *South Carolina: A Short History—1520–1948* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1951), 31.
173. See Almon Lauber, *Indian Slavery in Colonial Times within the Present Limits of the United States* (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1933); Barbara Olexer, *The Enslavement of the American Indian* (Monroe, N.Y.: Library Research Associates, 1982).
174. Washington, 128–130.
175. Peter Wood, *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 through the Stono Rebellion* (New York: W.W. Norton Company, 1974), 39.
176. “This traffic was an inhuman method of getting rid of troublesome neighbors, yet the planters pleaded necessity in its vindication. It is certain that the reward for indian prisoners encouraged bold adventurers, and the sale of them made profitable trade.” [David Ramsay, *Ramsay’s History of South Carolina from its First Settlement in 1670 to the year 1808* (Newberry, S.C.: W.J. Duffie, [1900] 1983), 86.]
177. William R. Snell, “Indian Slavery in Colonial South Carolina.” Ph.D. Dissertation, Univ. of Alabama, 1972; Donald Grinde, Jr., “Native American Slavery in the Southern Colonies,” *Indian History* 10, no. 2 (1977): 38–42.; Rodney M. Baine, “Indian Slavery in Colonial Georgia” *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 79, no. 2 (1995): 418–424.
178. Washington, 129.
179. Verner Crane, *The Southern Frontier, 1670–1732* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1928), 113.
180. Crane, 20. 181. John Archdale, “A New Description of That Fertile and Pleasant Province of Carolina,” in Alexander S. Salley, Jr., *Narratives of Early Carolina, 1650–1708*, (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1911), 285.
182. Nash, 118.
183. Lauber, 133.
184. William Anews quoted in Barbara Olexer, *The Enslavement of the American Indian* (Monroe, N.Y.: Library Research Associates, 1982), 172.
185. Gideon Johnston quoted in Crane, 179.
186. Swanton, 209; See also Richard L. Haan, “The Trade Do’s Not Flourish As Formerly’: The Ecological Origins of the Yamasee War Of 1715,” *Ethnohistory* 28, no. 2 (1982): 341–358; John H. Hann, “St. Augustine’s Fallout from the Yamasee War,” *Florida Historical Quarterly* 68, no. 2 (1989): 180–200.
187. Mooney, 30–31.
188. H.T. Malone, *Cherokees of the Old South: A People in Transition* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1956), 20.
189. Mooney, 32.
190. *Ibid.*
191. Lauber, 136.
192. Swanton, 112; Robert L. Ganyard, “Threat from the West: North Carolina and the Cherokee, 1776–1778,” *North Carolina Historical Review* 45, no. 1 (1968): 47–66.
193. Interestingly enough, these twenty Africans brought into the United States were part of a plan by Virginian, Sir Edwin Sandys to finance a fledgling school for Indians that would be named William and Mary. Whenever colonists from Carolinas and Virginia seized Native American children as captives of war,

- they sent them to be educated at this Indian school. [William Morgan, *American Slavery American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1975), 98; Olexer, 89]
194. The colonists considered Indian slaves “sullen, insubordinate, and short lived,” [A.B.Hart quoted in Sanford Wilson, “Indian Slavery in the South Carolina Region,” *Journal of Negro History* 22 (1935): 440]. The article further describes Native American slaves as “not of such robust and strong bodies, as to lift great burdens, and endure labor and slavish work.” Native Americans were not without some commercial value; at the slave markets, they were traded at an exchange rate of two for one for African Americans.
 195. George Washington Williams, *History of the Negro Race in America from 1619 to 1880: Negroes as Slaves, as Soldiers, and as Citizens* (New York: The Knickerbocker Press, 1882), 123–180.
 196. David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966), 176.
 197. Booker T. Washington in *The Story of the Negro: The Rise of the Race from Slavery* describes it thus: “During all this time, for a hundred years or maybe more, the Indian and the Negro worked side by side as slaves. In all the laws and regulations of the Colonial days, the same rule which applied to the Indian was also applied to the Negro slaves... In all other regulations that were made in the earlier days for the control of the slaves, mention is invariably made of the Indian as well as the Negro.” (130).
 198. J.Leitch Wright. *The Only Land They Knew: The Tragic Story of the American Indian in the Old South* (New York: Free Press, 1981), 258.
 199. Kathryn E.Holland Braund, “The Creek Indians and Slavery,” *The Journal of Southern History* 57, no. 4 (Nov. 1991), 602–603; Wood, 39.
 200. Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 68.
 201. John Norris, quoted in Crane, 113.
 202. Wright, *The Only Land They Knew*, 148–150, 248–278.
 203. Melville Herskovits, *The American Negro: A Study in Crossing* (New York, Alfred A.Knopf, 1928), 3–15.
 204. See Leland Ferguson, *Uncommon Ground: Archeology and Early African America, 1650–1800* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992).
 205. Tom Hatley, *The Dividing Path: Cherokees and South Carolinians through the Revolutionary Era* (New York; Oxford University Press, 1995), 233. Attakullakulla’s position towards African Americans should also be framed within his lack of understanding towards the European disenfranchisement of women. When he addressed the South Carolina Governor’s Council to sign a peace treaty, he noticed that there were no women present and demanded to know why this was. He derided the council: “White men as well as red were born of Women!” and “desired to know if that was not the Custom of the White People also.” (Hatley, 149)
 206. The Chickamauga towns, who spoke the Kituwhan dialect, were composed of those Cherokees who had fled west from the encroaching Virginians and established five new towns on the western border with the Creek Nation. These towns were noted for their racial diversity and openness to people of all nationality. They were seen as being “ethnically open in a way that the older [Cherokee] towns were not.” (Hatley, 225).
 207. Gregory Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance: The North American Indian Struggle for Unity 1745–1815*, (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 159.
 208. Wood, 99.

209. Statutes of S.C. quoted in Williams, *History of Negro Race in America*, 290.
210. Robert Meriwether, *The Expansion of South Carolina* (Kingsport Tennessee: Southern Publishers, 1940), 6.
211. John Stuart quoted in William Willis, "Divide and Rule: Red, White, and Black in the Southeast," *Journal of Negro History* 48 (1963): 161.
212. Willis, 162.
213. John Hope Franklin, *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of American Negroes* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1947), 86; Carter G. Woodson, *The Negro in Our History* (Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, 1922), 187–193.
214. Herbert Aptheker, "Maroons within the Present Limits of the United States," *Journal of Negro History* 24 (1939): 167–184; Richard Price, "Resistance to Slavery in the Americas: Maroons and Their Communities," *Indian Historical Review* [India] 15. no. 1–2 (1988–89): 71–95.
215. J. Leitch Wright, *The Only Land They Knew: The Tragic Story of the American Indian in the Old South* (New York: Free Press, 1981), 278; Lauber, 119. For more information on the Stono revolt, see Edward A. Pearson, "'A Countryside Full Of Flames': A Reconsideration Of The Stono Rebellion And Slave Rebelliousness In The Early Eighteenth-Century South Carolina Lowcountry," *Slavery & Abolition* [Great Britain] 17, no. 2 (1996): 22–50; Harold D. Wax, "The Great Risque We Run: The Aftermath Of Slave Rebellion At Stono, South Carolina, 1739–1745," *Journal of Negro History* 67, no. 2 (1982): 136–147.
216. "The Cusabo," *SCIWAY: South Carolina Indians*, Online, Available <<http://www.sciway.net/hist/indians/cusabo.html>>, (accessed, December 23, 2002).
217. William Henry Lyttleton quoted in Hatley, 111.
218. Hatley, 112.
219. Aptheker, 197.
220. Thomas Jefferson, "Notes on the State of Virginia" in *Thomas Jefferson: Writings* (New York: Library Classics of the United States, Inc, 1984), 266–270. See also Alexander O. Boulton, "The American Paradox: Jeffersonian Equality And Racial Science," *American Quarterly* 47, no. 3 (1995): 467–492
221. James Glen, quoted in Willis, "Divide and Rule: Red, White, and Black in the Southeast," 165.
222. Wood, 116.
223. Winthrop Jordan, *White over Black: American Attitudes Towards the Negro, 1550–1812* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1968), 67.
224. Woodson, 344.
225. Laurence Hauptman, *Between Two Fires: American Indians and the Civil War* (New York: Free Press, 1995), 3. See also Gerald Sider, *Lumbee Indian Histories: Race, Ethnicity, and Indian Identity in the Southern United States* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993).
226. Kenneth Wiggins Porter, "Negroes on the Southern Frontier, 1670–1763," *Journal of Negro History* 27 (1942): 57–58.
227. The Catawba were particularly noted for their capabilities as slave catchers. In 1765, the Governor of South Carolina sent the Catawba after a group of fugitive slaves in the mountains. This vigorous maroon colony in the Blue Ridge Mountains was harassed by the Catawba "partly by the Terror of their name, their diligence, and their singular sagacity in pursuing Enemies through such Thickets" (Laurence Hauptman, *Between Two Fires: American Indians and the Civil War* (New York: Free Press, 1995), 89.
228. David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966), 181.
229. Nuquasee quoted in Crane, *Southern Frontier*, 300.

230. David Brion Davis, "Constructing Race: A Reflection," *William and Mary Quarterly* 54, no. 1 (1997): 7–18; Kathleen M. Brown, "Beyond the Great Debates: Gender and Race in Early America," *Reviews in American History* 26, no. 1 (1998): 96–123.
231. Audrey Smedley, *Race in North America: Origin and Evolution of a World-view* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993); Reginald Horsemann, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981).
232. Onitositah (Corn Tassel, 1777) quoted in Lee Miller, ed. *From the Heart: Voices of the American Indian* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995), 131.

CHAPTER TWO: "CIVILIZATION" AND ITS DISCONTENTS

1. Joseph Samuel Badgett, Works Progress Administration: Arkansas Writers Project, *Slave Narratives* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1932).
2. See Nancy Ruttenburg, "George Whitefield, Spectacular Conversion, and the Rise of Democratic Personality" *American Literary History* 5, no. 3 (1993): 429–458; David T. Morgan, Jr., "George Whitefield and the Great Awakening In the Carolinas and Georgia, 1739–1740," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 54, no. 4 (1970): 517–539.
3. John Marrant, *A Narrative of the Life of John Marrant, of New York, in North America With [an] account of the conversion of the king of the Cherokees and his daughter* (London: C.J. Farncombe, n.d), 5–7.
4. *Ibid.*
5. Marrant, 18.
6. Arthur Schomburg, "Two Negro Missionaries to the American Indians, John Marrant and John Stewart," *The Journal of Negro History* 21, no. 1, (January, 1936): 400.
7. Marrant, 20–23.
8. John Marrant, quoted in John Saillant, "'Wipe away All Tears from Their Eyes': John Marrant's Theology in the Black Atlantic, 1785–1808," *Journal of Millennial Studies* Volume I, Issue 2, Online, Available HTTP: <<http://www.mille.org/publications/winter98/saillant.PDF>>, (accessed: December 28, 2001).
9. *Ibid.*
10. For more on Phyllis Wheatley, see John Henrik Clarke, "The Origin And Growth Of Afro-American Literature," *Journal of Human Relations* 16, no. 3 (1968): 368–384; Marilyn Jensen, "Boston's Poetic Slave," *New-England Galaxy* 18, no. 3 (1977): 22–29; John C. Shields, "Phillis Wheatley's Subversive Pastoral" *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 27, no. 4 (1994): 631–647.
11. Bernd Peyer, "Samson Occom: Mohegan Missionary and Writer of the 18th Century," *American Indian Quarterly* 6, no. 3–4 (1982): 208–217; Michael Elliott "This Indian Bait': Samson Occom and the Voice of Liminality," *Early American Literature* 29, no. 3 (1994): 233–253.
12. Prince Hall, Peter Bess, and others. "To the Honorable Council and House of representatives for the State of Massachusetts Bay, in General Court assembled, January 13, 1777." in A.G. Clark, Jr., *Clark's History of Prince Hall Freemasonry 1775–1945* (Des Moines: United Grand Lodge of Iowa, F. & A.M., 1947), 22.
13. Eventually, the slave trade was abolished in Boston in 1788 due to the work of an interracial group led by Prince Hall. [William Muraskin, *Middle Class Blacks*

- in a White Society: Prince Hall Freemasonry in America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 32–35].
14. Ibid.
 15. R.W.Bro. Raymond T.Coleman, F.P.S., Grand Historian, “A Brief History of Prince Hall Freemasonry in Massachusetts,” Online, Available HTTP: <<http://www.princehall.org/glhistory.htm>>, (accessed: December 28, 2001).
 16. Muraskin, 35.
 17. Gayraud Wilmore, *Black Religion and Black Radicalism: An Interpretation of the Religious History of Afro-American People* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1989), 80–84.
 18. Edwin Scott Gaustad, *A Religious History of America* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1990), 96.
 19. Booker T.Washington, *The Story of the Negro: The Rise of the Race from Slavery, Vol. 1* (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1909), 151.
 20. See Harry E.Davis, *A History of Freemasonry Among Negroes in America* (N.Y.: United Supreme Council, Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite Freemasonry, Northern Jurisdiction, U.S.A., 1946); Martin Delaney, *The Origins and Objects of Ancient Freemasonry, Its Introduction into the United States and Legitimacy among Colored Men* (Pittsburgh, n.p., 1853); Loretta J.Williams, *Black Freemasonry and Middle-class Realities* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1980).
 21. John Marrant, *A Sermon Preached on the 24th Day of June 1789, Being the Festival of St. John the Baptist, At the Request of the Right Worshipful the Grand Master Prince Hall, and the Rest of the Brethren of the African Lodge of the Honourable Society of Free & Accepted Masons in Boston* (Boston: The Bible & Heart, 1789), [microfilm] Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York, N.Y., 5.
 22. Saillant, “Wipe away All Tears from Their Eyes”
 23. Marrant, *A Sermon Preached on the 24th Day of June 1789*, 7.
 24. See Henry Louis Gates, “The Blackness of Blackness—A Critique of the Sign and the Signifying Monkey,” *Critical Inquiry* 9, no. 4, (1983); Rafia Zafar, “Capturing the Captivity: African Americans among the Puritans,” *The Journal of the Society for the Study of the Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States* 17, no. 2, (1991–1992 Summer): 19–35; Benilde Montgomery, “Recapturing John Marrant,” in Frank Shuttleton, ed., *A Mixed Race: Ethnicity in Early America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 105–15.
 25. David Ramsey, *The History of South Carolina: From Its First Settlement in 1670, To the Year 1808* (Newberry, S.C.: W.J.Duffie, 1858), 159.
 26. James O Donnell, *Southern Indians in the Revolutionary War* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1973), 62.
 27. “Trade and Intercourse Act, March 30, 1802” in Francis Paul Prucha, *Documents of United States Indian Policy* Second Edition (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1990), 19.
 28. Henry Know and George Washington were both Freemasons.
 29. Henry Knox to George Washington, July 7, 1789 in *American State Papers: Indian Affairs, Vols. I and II, Documents, Legislative and Executive of the Congress of the United States*, Walter Lowrie, Walter S.Franklin, and Matthew St. Clair Clarke, eds., (Washington, D.C.: Gales and Seaton, 1832, 1834), Vol. I, 53.
 30. In a letter from George Washington to fellow Freemason Richard Henry Lee, he discussed the Countess of Huntingdon’s plans for spreading Christianity among the Indians. He firmly believed that before the Indians could be brought

- to Christianity; in order to do so, they would have to be first “reduced to civilization.” [George Washington, *Letter to Richard Henry Lee*, Feb. 8, 1785, American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, PA],
31. Joy Bilharz, “The Changing Status of Seneca Women,” in Laura Klein and Lillian Ackerman, *Women and Power in Native America* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995), 103; Richard Satler, “Muskogee and Cherokee Women’s Status,” in Klein and Ackerman, 223.
 32. R. Douglas Hunt, *Indian Agriculture in America* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1987), 33.
 33. Rennard Strickland, “From Clan to Court: Development of Cherokee Law,” *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 31, no. 4, (1972): 316–327; Michelle Daniel, “From Blood Feud to Jury System: The Metamorphosis of Cherokee Law from 1750 to 1840,” *American Indian Quarterly* 11, no. 2 (1987): 97–125.
 34. Wilma Dunaway, *The First American Frontier: Transition and Capitalism in Southern Appalachia, 1700–1860* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 49–50.
 35. Hunt, 96.
 36. Second Congress. No. 19. [1st Session. Cherokees, Six Nations, And Creeks. Communicated To The Senate, October 26, 1791], *American State Papers: Indian Affairs, Vols. I and II, Documents, Legislative and Executive of the Congress of the United States*, Walter Lowrie, Walter S. Franklin, and Matthew St. Clair Clarke, eds., (Washington, D.C.: Gales and Seaton, 1832, 1834), Vol. I, 125.
 37. First Congress. No. 9. [2nd Session. Southern Tribes. Communicated To Congress January 12, 1790], *American State Papers*, Vol. I, 65.
 38. Gregory Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance: The North American Indian Struggle for Unity 1745–1815*, (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 158–159.
 39. First Congress. No. 1. [1st Session. The Six Nations, the Wyandots, and Others. Communicated to the Senate May 25, 1789] *American State Papers*, Vol. I, 53–54.
 40. As noted above, both Henry Knox and George Washington were Freemasons. An interesting element in the “civilization” program was the introduction of Freemasonry among the Native Americans as a part of that process. As early as 1776, Native Americans were being made Freemasons and the trend would continue well into the nineteenth century. Freemasonry may be among one of European culture’s more pervasive influences.
 41. Thomas Jefferson quoted in Joseph Parsons, “Civilizing the Indians of the Old Northwest, 1800–1810,” *Indiana Magazine of History* 56 (Sept. 1960): 202. For the Cherokee response, see William G. McLoughlin, “Thomas Jefferson and the Beginning of Cherokee Nationalism, 1806 To 1809,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 32, no. 4 (1975): 547–580.
 42. Thomas Jefferson, 10th Congress. No. 120. [1st Session. The Cherokees. Communicated To The Senate, March 10, 1808], *American State Papers*, Vol. I, 752.
 43. Michael Roethler, “Negro Slavery among the Cherokee Indians, 1540–1866” (Ph.D. dissertation, Fordham University, 1964), 32.
 44. Mary Young, “The Cherokee Nation: Mirror of the Republic,” *American Quarterly* 33, no. 5 (1981): 504; Hunt, 101.
 45. Sarah Hill, *Weaving New Worlds: Southeastern Cherokee Women and their Basketry* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 96.
 46. *Ibid.*
 47. It can be argued that matrilocality had broken down long before significant

- numbers of Cherokee intermarried with whites. The best work on this subject is Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women: Gender and Social Change 1700–1835*, (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1998). In her work, Perdue states that this breakdown began in the latter half of the eighteenth century.
48. Rudi Halliburton, *Red Over Black: Black Slavery Among the Cherokee Indians* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1977), 25.
 49. Charles Whipple, *Relation of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to Slavery* (Boston: R.F.Wallcut, 1861), 88; Gregory Dowd, in his *Spirited Resistance*, locates these Tory slaveholders within the Chickamauga region, [Dowd, 160].
 50. Ross and Jackson were both Freemasons from the State of Tennessee.
 51. William G.McLoughlin, *Cherokee Renaissance in the New Republic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 249.
 52. Andrew Jackson, 15th Congress. No. 151. [1st Session. Trade, Intercourse, And Schools. Communicated To The House of Representatives, January 22, 1818], *American State Papers*, Vol. II, 151.
 53. Ibid.
 54. 17th Congress. No. 182. [1st Session. Condition Of The Several Indian Tribes. Communicated To The House of Representatives, February 15, 1822], *American State Papers*, Vol. II, 278.
 55. William G.McLoughlin, *Cherokees and Missionaries, 1789–1839* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), 140.
 56. Douglas C.Wilms, “Cherokee Acculturation And Changing Land Use Practices,” *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 56, no. 3 (1978): 331–343.
 57. Lillian Delly, “Episode At Cornwall,” *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 51, no. 4 (1973): 444–450.
 58. Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700–1835* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 81–84.
 59. John Ridge, “John Ridge on Cherokee Civilization in 1826,” William C.Sturtevant, ed., *Journal of Cherokee Studies* 6, no. 2 (1981): 80; Douglas C.Wilms, “Agrarian Progress in the Cherokee Nation Prior To Removal,” *West Georgia College Studies in the Social Sciences* 16 (1977): 1–15.
 60. Ibid. See also Theda Perdue, “The Conflict Within: The Cherokee Power Structure and Removal,” *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 73, no. 3 (1989): 467–491.
 61. Ridge, 81.
 62. Dowd, 160.
 63. Whipple, 98; Robert T.Lewit, *The Conflict of Evangelical and Humanitarian Ideals: A Case Study* (MA Thesis, Harvard University, 1959), 35–53.
 64. Robert Walker, *Torchlight to the Cherokees* (New York: The MacMillan Co, 1931), 86–87.
 65. William G.McLoughlin, Walter H.Conser, and Virginia Duffy McLoughlin, *The Cherokee Ghost Dance: Essays on the Southeastern Indians, 1789–1861* (Atlanta: Mercer University Press, 1984), 257.
 66. Lewit, 97.
 67. Dowd, 160.
 68. United States, Office of Indian Affairs, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*. (Washington, D.C.: William A.Harris, 1859), 172.
 69. William McLoughlin, “Red, White, and Black in the Antebellum South,” *American Quarterly* 26 (1974): 372.
 70. Selah B. Treat, “Report to the Commissioners of the American Board for Foreign and Christian Missions, 1848” in Whipple, 97.
 71. James Mooney, “Myths of the Cherokees” (Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of

- American Ethnology, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1900), 113; McLoughlin, *Cherokee Renascence in the New Republic*, 68–69. It is important at this point to offer a word of caution about generalizations regarding Cherokee society such as categorical imperatives such as “progressives” and “conservatives” or “full-bloods” and “mixed bloods.” The Cherokee Nation was, and is, a very complex and multifaceted political and social entity. Perfect examples were John Ross and Stand Watie—Ross was a “mixed blood” and progressive in nearly every manner yet the leader of the “conservatives;” Watie was a “full blood” and quite conservative but was in the forefront of the “Treaty Party.” In spite of their limitations, these paradigms for understanding Cherokee society have become quite pervasive.
72. William R Denslow, *Freemasonry and the American Indian* (St Louis: Missouri Lodge of Research, 1956, 36.
 73. James Penick, Jr., “...I Will Stamp On the Ground with My Foot and Shake Down Every House...,” *American Heritage* 27, no. 1 (1975): 82–87; Mary Jane McDaniel, “Tecumseh’s Visits to the Creeks,” *Alabama Review* 33, no. 1 (1980): 3–14.
 74. Bill Gilbert, *God Gave Us this Country: Tekamthi and the First American Civil War* (New York, Anchor Books, 1989), 218–221; Dowd, 148–190.
 75. Peter Wood, *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 through the Stono Rebellion* (New York: W.W.Norton Company, 1974), 260.
 76. See Douglas A.Gamble, “Joshua Giddings and the Ohio Abolitionists: A Study in Radical Politics,” *Ohio History* 88, no. 1, (1979): 37–56.
 77. Joshua Giddings, *The Exiles of Florida: or, The Crimes Committed by our Government against the Maroons, who Fled from South Carolina and other Slave States, Seeking Protection under Spanish laws* (Columbus, Ohio: Follett, Foster and Company, 1858), 4.
 78. Michael Roethler, “Negro Slavery among the Cherokee Indians, 1540–1866” (Ph.D. dissertation, Fordham University, 1964), 36–40.
 79. James Henri Howard and Willie Lena, *Oklahoma Seminoles: Medicines, Magic, and Religion* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984), 3.
 80. Kenneth W.Porter, *Relations between Negroes and Indians within the Present United States* (Washington, D.C.: The Association for Negro Life and History, 1931), 40. See also Carter G.Woodson, *The Negro in Our History* (Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, 1922), 189–198; Imari Obadele, *New African State-building in North America: a Study of Reaction under the Stress of Conquest* (Ph.D. dissertation, Temple University, 1985).
 81. Kevin Mulroy, *Freedom on the Border* (Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 1993).
 82. Howard and Lena, 6. It is important to note that many Mvskokes and Seminoles referred to their African brethren as their “slaves” to protect them from white slaveholders who sought their return.
 83. *Ibid.*; Mulroy, 19.
 84. Wiley Thompson to Lewis Cass, April 27, 1835, in National Archives Microfilm Publications, Microcopy M234, Record Group 75, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs, 1824–1881.
 85. *Ibid.*
 86. Chaudhuri, 56ff.
 87. Francis Le Jau, “Slave Conversion on the Carolina Frontier,” in Milton Sernett, ed., *Afro-American Religious History: A Documentary Witness* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1985), 27.
 88. “There is another of my acquaintances returned immediately from the Semi-

- nole towns, and saw the negroes on parade there: he counted about six hundred that bore arms. There is said to be about the same number of Indians belonging to their party; and there are both negroes and Indians daily going to their standard." Perryman to Sands, 15th Congress. No. 153. [1st Session. War With The Seminoles. Communicated To The Senate, On The 25th Of March, 1818] *American State Papers*, Vol. II, 245.
89. Martin, 73.
 90. Joseph Samuel Badgett, Works Progress Administration: Arkansas Writers Project, *Slave Narratives* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1932).
 91. J. Leitch Wright, *Creeks and Seminoles* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986), 190; "We must add to this enumeration, which will make the Indian population amount to more than five thousand of each sex and of every age, fifty or sixty negroes, or mulattoes, who are maroons, or half slaves to the Indians. These negroes appeared to me far more intelligent than those who are in absolute slavery; and they have great influence over the minds of the Indians." [17th Congress. No. 195. [2d Session. Florida Indians. Communicated To The House of Representatives, February 21, 1823], *American State Papers*, Vol. II, 412.]
 92. Kenneth Wiggins Porter, *The Negro on the American Frontier* (New York: N.Y. Times with Grove Press, 1971), 241.
 93. Vincent Harding, *There is a River: The Black Struggle for Freedom in America* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich Publishers, 1981), 100–111.
 94. Report Of The Georgia Commissioners In The Case Of The Indian Agent, Dated July 16, 1825, *American State Papers*, Vol. II, 825.
 95. Giddings, 44–45.
 96. *Eighth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1818), 16; *Ninth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston, Crocker and Brewster, 1819), 19.
 97. Edward Freeman, *The Epoch of Negro Baptists and the Foreign Missions Boards [National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc]* (Kansas City: The National Seminary Press, 1953), 10.
 98. Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, *Classified Digest of the Records of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts 1701–1892* (London: Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, 1893), 12.
 99. *Ibid.*, 16–17.
 100. "Brainerd Journal" April 20, 1817; February 12, 1818, American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, *Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions [microform]*. (Woodbridge, Conn.: Research Publications, 1982).
 101. The positive attitude of the Cherokees toward African-american missionaries could be related to the black Methodist, John Marrant. According to Michael Roethler, "It is only natural that the Cherokees should judge the value of Christianity by the Character of the people who professed it... The Cherokees had no reason to suspect the religion of this Negro preacher." (Roethler, 126)
 102. Melville Herskovitz, "Social History of the Negro," *A Handbook of Social Psychology* (Worcester, J. Clark Press, 1935), 256.
 103. James Mooney, "The Cherokee River Cult," *The Journal of American Folklore* 13 (January-March 1900): 48; Alan Edwin Kilpatrick, "'Going To the Water': A Structural Analysis of Cherokee Purification Rituals," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 15, no. 4 (1991): 49–58.
 104. Daniel Buttrick, December 10, 1817; February 1, 1818; June 7, 1818; March

- 12, 1820; November 17, 1833, *Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions*.
105. Sarah Tuttle, *Letters from the Chickasaw and Osage Missions*, (n.p., 1921), 9–10.
 106. Chickamauga Journal quoted in H.T.Malone, *Cherokees of the Old South: A People in Transition* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1956), 142.
 107. J.Leitch Wright, *The Only Land They Knew: The Tragic Story of the American Indian in the Old South* (New York: Free Press, 1981), 248–290.
 108. Lucinda Davis in Works Progress Administration: Oklahoma Writers Project, *Slave Narratives* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1932).
 109. Preston Kyles in Works Progress Administration: Arkansas Writers Project, *Slave Narratives* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1932).
 110. Wright, *Creeks and Seminoles*, 95.
 111. bell hooks, *Black Looks: Race and Representation* (Boston: South End Press, 1992), 183.
 112. Kiziah Love in Works Progress Administration: Oklahoma Writers Project, *Slave Narratives* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1932).
 113. J.Daniel Pezzoni, “Brush Arbors in the American South” *Pioneer America Society Transactions* 20 (1997): 25–34.
 114. Freeman, 29.
 115. Wright, *Creeks and Seminoles*, 81; Kathryn E.Holland Braund, *Deerskins and Duffels: Creek-Indian Trade with Anglo-America, 1685–1815* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), 46.
 116. Ibid.
 117. Freeman, 30–33.
 118. William Bartam, *The Travels of William Bartram*, edited with commentary and an annotated index by Francis Harper. Naturalist’s ed. (Athens, University of Georgia Press, 1998), 199.
 119. Mooney, 193–194.
 120. C.Eric Lincoln and Lawrence Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), 102.
 121. Albert Raboteau, *Slave Religion: the “Invisible Institution” in the Antebellum South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 139.
 122. Walter F.Pitts, Jr., *This Old Ship of Zion: The Afro-Baptist Ritual in the African Diaspora* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 46.
 123. James Melvin Washington, *Frustrated Fellowship: The Black Baptist Quest for Social Power* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press), 9; Edward A.Holmes, “George Liele: Negro Slavery’s Prophet of Deliverance,” *Baptist Quarterly* [Great Britain] 20, no. 8 (1964): 340–351.
 124. Ibid. Among the Native Americans of Southeastern Virginia from whence David George fled, there was a very strong Aframerindian community. Thomas Jefferson noted that among the Mattaponies, there was “more negro than Indian blood in them.” The Gingaskin, Nottoway, and Pamunkeys were often asserted to be more Black than Indian. (Porter, *Relations*, 314). See also Kathleen Tudor, “David George: Black Loyalist,” *Nova Scotia Historical Review* [Canada] 3, no. 1 (1983): 71–82.
 125. Mechal Sobel, *Trabelin On: The Slave Journey to an Afro-Baptist Faith* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 105; Kathryn E. Holland Braund, “The Creek Indians and Slavery,” *The Journal of Southern History* 57, no. 4 (Nov. 1991), 617.
 126. Walter H.Brooks, “The Priority of the Silver Bluff Church and its Promoters,” *The Journal of Negro History* 7, no. 2 (April, 1922): 172–183.

127. Alien Roberts, *Freemasonry in American History* (Richmond, VA: MacCoy Publishing and Masonic Supply Company, 1985), 29.
128. Whitefield described the event in his Journals, "Friday June 23, 1738—[I] read prayers and preach [ed] with power before the Freemasons, with whom I afterward dined, and was used with the utmost civility." George Whitefield, *George Whitefield's Journals* (Guilford and London: Billing and Sons Ltd., 1960), 159.
129. Melvin Johnson and J. Edward Allen, *Gould's History of Freemasonry throughout the World*, Vol. 5, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), 152; Whitefield, 395.
130. Johnson and Allen, 152.
131. Raboteau, 139; Washington, 9.
132. Braund, *Deerskins and Duffels*, 167.
133. Julius Scott, "The Common Wind: Currents of Afro-American Communication in the Era of the Haitian Revolution" (Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University, 1986), 86; Claude Adrien, "The Forgotten Heroes of Savannah." *Americas* 30, no. 11–12 (1978), 55–57.
134. Anne Yentsch, Subject: Haitian troops in the American Revolution, *slavery@listserv.uh.edu*, "The history of slavery, the slave trade, abolition and emancipation," April 8, 2000.
135. Sobel, 189; Washington, 10; Raboteau, 139.
136. Letter of Andrew Bryan to Reverend Doctor Rippon in Sernett, 49.
137. Irene Blocker in Works Progress Administration: Oklahoma Writers Project, *Slave Narratives* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1932).
138. Raleigh Wilson, *Negro and Indian Relations 1865–1907* (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Iowa, 1949), 22.
139. *House Reports*, No. 30, 39th Congress, 1st Session, Washington, 1867, Pt. IV, Vol. II, 162.
140. Daniel Buttrick, September 1824, *Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions*.
141. Nellie Johnson in Works Progress Administration: Oklahoma Writers Project, *Slave Narratives* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1932).
142. New Thompson, *Indian Pioneer History Collection* [microform], Grant Foreman, ed. (Oklahoma City Oklahoma: Indian Archives Division, Oklahoma Historical Society Microfilm Publications, 1978–1981).
143. Cherokee Chief Yonaguska, upon having chapters of Matthew read to him commented, "Well, it seems to be a good book- strange that the white people are not better, after having had it so long." Yonaguska quoted in Douglas Right, *The American Indian in North Carolina* (Winston-Salem: John F. Blair, 1987), 204.
144. Cudjo quoted in Theda Perdue, *Slavery and the Evolution of Cherokee Society 1540–1866* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1979), 106.
- 145.. Malone, 108–11
146. William G. McLoughlin, *Champions of the Cherokees: Evan and John B. Jones* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 18. Though Evan Jones is long dead and gone, even the mention of his name stirs up passions among the Cherokee. I still occasionally receive letters from people chiding me for my affection for him.
147. Evan Jones, Journals, April 1–July 15, 1828, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans, [microform], 1825–1865," American Baptist Historical Society, Rochester, N.Y.
148. McLoughlin, *Cherokees and Missionaries*, 160–161.
149. Evan Jones first mentions African Americans being baptized in his missions in a letter from late 1830, "Since I wrote last, six more have been baptized, on a

- profession of their faith in Jesus. One, a black man, and five full Cherokees who spoke no English." Evan Jones to the American Baptist Missionary Union, December 25, 1830, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans, [microform], 1825-1865," American Baptist Historical Society, Rochester, N.Y.
150. Federal agent George Butler quoted in Henry R. Schoolcraft, "Moral, Political, and Industrial Condition of the Creeks, Chickasaws, Choctaws, and Cherokees" *Information Respecting the History, Condition, and Prospects of the Indian Tribes of the United States* (Archives of Aboriginal Knowledge), Collected and prepared under the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Published by Authority of Congress, (Philadelphia: J.B.Lippincott & Co., 1857), Vol. 6, 531.
 151. Evan Jones, Journals, April 1-July 15, 1828, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans."
 152. Carter G. Woodson, "Freedom and Slavery in Appalachian America" in *The Journal of Negro History* 1, no. 1 (January, 1916): 142.
 153. Vivien Sandlund, "'A Devilish and Unnatural Usurpation': Baptist Evangelical Ministers and Antislavery in the Early Nineteenth Century: A Study of the Ideas and Activism of David Barrow," *American Baptist Quarterly* 13, no. 3 (1994): 262-277.
 154. Woodson, "Freedom and Slavery in Appalachian America," 143.
 155. Merton L. Dillon, "Benjamin Lundy: Quaker Radical," *Timeline* 3, no. 3, (1986): 28-41; Woodson, "Freedom and Slavery in Appalachian America," 144.
 156. Woodson, "Freedom and Slavery in Appalachian America," 145.
 157. Jules Archer, "William Lloyd Garrison: Angry Abolitionist," *Mankind* 2, no. 5 (1970): 10-25, 32-33. Interestingly enough, William Lloyd Garrison and Joshua Giddings helped a young Black Indian by the name of Frederick Douglass found his own abolitionist newspaper, *The North Star*. [Chris Padgett, "Finding His Voice: The Liberation of Frederick Douglass, 1818-1848," *Proteus* 12, no. 1 (1995): 10-14].
 158. Woodson, "Freedom and Slavery in Appalachian America," 145.
 159. Quakers in North Carolina were able to convince many slave owners and planters in North Carolina not only to turn over their slaves to the American Colonization Society but also to pay for their transit to Haiti or Liberia. In his work *The American Colonization Society: 1817-1840*, Early Fox states, "So efficient were the North Carolina Quakers in their cooperation with the Society, that they alone seemed able to supply all of the emigrants that could be accommodated with the limited means of the Colonizationists." [Early Lee Fox, *The American Colonization Society: 1817-1840*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1919), 43.]
 160. Patrick Sowle, "The North Carolina Manumission Society 1816-1834," *North Carolina Historical Review* 42, no. 1 (1965): 47-69.
 161. Woodson, "Freedom and Slavery in Appalachian America," 143; Peter Kent Opper, "North Carolina Quakers: Reluctant Slaveholders," *North Carolina Historical Review* 52, no. 1 (1975): 7-58; Gordon E. Finnie, "The Antislavery Movement in the Upper South before 1840," *Journal of Southern History* 35, no. 3 (1969): 319-342.
 162. "An Address to the People of North Carolina on the Evils of Slavery" quoted in Carl Degler, *The Other South: Southern Dissenters in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1974), 21. The presence of large numbers of Quakers in North Carolina and Tennessee played a profound role in the development of anti-slavery sentiments. Benjamin Lundy estimated in 1827 that there were 106 anti-slavery societies in the South as compared with 24 in the Northern states. (Degler, 21)
 163. William Chamberlain to Jeremiah Everts, January 8, 1929, *Papers of the Ameri-*

- can Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. Chamberlain wrote, "I have assisted the black people in Wills Valley in forming themselves into a society called the Wills Valley African Benevolent Society... They have raised ten dollars for the American Colonization Society."
164. David Brown, *American State Papers*, Vol. II, 651.
 165. "Plan of Colonization West of the Mississippi," *Information Respecting the History, Condition, and Prospects of the Indian Tribes of the United States* (Archives of Aboriginal Knowledge), Collected and prepared under the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Published by Authority of Congress, (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1857), Vol. 6, 406.
 166. Mooney, 101–102; Charles C. Royce, *The Cherokee Nation of Indians* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1975), 74–75. "After Jefferson was elected President by the United States, he had agents to come to the different Tribes to induce them to come west. Their inducement was much more land than they had there. They had lived there in Georgia for years and years. They had good land, that was left, for already the white people had encroached and taken much of their land. Naturally, most of them did not want to leave and go out into the wilderness and start life anew. To do so, was like spending a nickel these days for a grab bag, or like the saying, "Buying a cat in a sack." They did not willingly want to do this." [Elizabeth Watts, *Indian Pioneer History Collection*.]
 167. Mary Hershberger, "Mobilizing Women, Anticipating Abolition: The Struggle Against Indian Removal In The 1830s," *Journal of American History* 86, no. 1 (1999): 15–40.
 168. Malone, 118.
 169. Mary Young, "The Cherokee Nation: Mirror of the Republic," *American Quarterly* 33, no. 5 (1981): 502–524.
 170. Paula Gunn Allen, *The Sacred Hoop: Recovering the Feminine in American Indian Traditions* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986), 36–37.
 171. Cherokee Nation, *Laws of the Cherokee Nation adopted by the Council at Various Periods [1808–1835]: Printed for the Benefit of the Nation* (Tahlequah, Cherokee Nation: Cherokee Advocate Office, 1852), 119.
 172. Mary E. Young, "Women, Civilization, and the Indian Question," in *Clio Was a Woman: Studies in the History of American Women* (Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1980), 98–110.
 173. The initial resistance movement to the europeanization of Cherokee culture and government found expression in what became known as "White Path's Rebellion." Its importance lies in its expression of organized resistance of traditionalists to the "apostacy and swift national decay" [Mooney, 113] evident in Cherokee society. It laid the foundations of latter cultural resistance movements such as the Keetoowah Society. See also William G. McLoughlin, "Cherokee Anti-Mission Sentiment, 1824–1828," *Ethnohistory* 21, no. 4 (1974): 361–370; Theda Perdue, "Traditionalism in the Cherokee Nation: Resistance to the Constitution Of 1827," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 66, no. 2 (1982): 159–170.
 174. Raymond Fogelson, "On the 'Petticoat Government' of the Eighteenth-Century Cherokees," in David K. Jordan and Mark J. Schwartz, eds., *Personality and the Cultural Construction of Society: Papers in Honor of Melford E. Spiro* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1990), 174.
 175. Allen, 36.
 176. Carolyn Thomas Foreman, *Indian Women Chiefs* (Washington, D.C.: Zenger Publishing Company, 1976), 79.
 177. "President Andrew Jackson's Case for the Removal Act; First Annual Message to Congress, 8 December 1830," in Patrick Jennings, *North American Indian*

- Removal Policy: Andrew Jackson Addresses Congress*, Online, Available HTTP <<http://www.synaptic.bc.ca/ejournal/jackson.html>>, (accessed June 10, 2000).
178. Roethler, 136.
 179. Alice Taylor Colbert, "Cherokee Adaptation to the Ideals of the American Republic 1791–1838: Success or Failure?" *Proceedings and Papers of the Georgia Association of Historians* 13, (1992): 41–56.
 180. Andrew Jackson quoted in Grant Foreman, *Indian Removal* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1932), 235. See also Mark R. Scherer, "Now Let Him Enforce It': Exploring the Myth of Andrew Jackson's Response to Worcester V. Georgia (1832)," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 74, no. 1 (1996): 16–29.
 181. "The agitation for the return of the Negro slaves, moreover, was kept up through this period, as a reason for removal, inasmuch as the Indians were disinclined to return fugitive Negroes who had become connected with them by blood." [Carter G. Woodson, *The Negro in Our History* (Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, 1922), 193].
 182. Wright, *Creeks and Seminoles*, 232.
 183. Wright, *Creeks and Seminoles*, 226.
 184. Elizur Butler to David Green, March 14, 1832, *Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions*.
 185. For more on Sophia Sawyer's career as missionary and educator, see Kimberly C. Macenczak, "Sophia Sawyer, Native American Advocate: A Case Study in Nineteenth Century Cherokee Education," *Journal of Cherokee Studies* 16, (1991): 23–37.
 186. The politics of Indian removal placed great stress upon the churches, which tried to refrain from politics. There were splits in the religious bodies over the issue; many of the missionaries were opposed to removal but their governing boards and congregations were reluctant to take what they considered a "political" position. See Christopher H. Owen, "To Refrain From... Political Affairs': Southern Evangelicals, Cherokee Missions, And The Spirituality Of The Church," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 53, no. 1 (1994): 20–29; Francis Paul Prucha, "Protest By Petition: Jeremiah Evarts And The Cherokee Indians," *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 97 (1985): 42–58.
 187. Beriah Green quoted in Hershberger, 39.
 188. Robert Walker, *Torchlights to the Cherokees* (New York: MacMillan Company, 1931), 298–299.
 189. "The Cherokees began to think of joining the West Cherokees. They simply could endure no longer. Like everything, it took a leader, and Major Ridge, his son, John Ridge, and two nephews Elias Boudinot and Stan Watie became leaders. Of course, John Ross was the Chief and they all got to squabbling. Ross did not want to move his people, but by some hook or crook, Boudinot and Ridge signed a treaty to move, and claimed it was the will of the majority, but it was not, and the Government waited a little while and sent Gen. Scott and two or three thousand soldiers." Elizabeth Watts, *Indian Pioneer History Collection*.
 190. Elizur Butler to David Green, March 5, 1845, *Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions*.
 191. Russell Thornton, *The Cherokees: A Population History* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), 52.
 192. Lewis Johnson in Works Progress Administration: Arkansas Writers Project, *Slave Narratives*, (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1932).
 193. Eliza Whitmire in George P. Rawick, ed. *The American Slave: A Composite Autobiography* (Westport CT.: Greenwood Press, 1972), 380–381.
 194. Elizabeth Watts, *Indian Pioneer History Collection*.

195. "Daniel Buttrick's Journal," February, 1838, *Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions*.
196. Mooney, 124.
197. Evan Jones to the American Baptist Missionary Union, July 10, 1838, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans."
198. Foreman, 290; E.Raymond Evans, "Fort Marr Blockhouse: The Last Evidence of America's First Concentration Camps," *Journal of Cherokee Studies* 2, no. 2 (1977): 256–262.
199. "Daniel Buttrick's Journal," July 1838, *Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions*.
200. Ibid.
201. "Daniel Buttrick's Journal," August 1838, *Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions*.
202. Roethler, 150; Theda Perdue, "Cherokee Women and the Trail Of Tears," *Journal of Women's History* 1, no. 1, (1989): 14–30.
203. "Daniel Buttrick's Journal," March 1838, *Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions*.
204. Russell Thornton, "Cherokee Population Losses during the Trail Of Tears: A New Perspective and A New Estimate," *Ethnohistory* 31, no. 3 (1984): 289–300.
205. John G.Burnett, "The Cherokee Removal through the Eyes of a Private Soldier," in *Journal of Cherokee Studies* (Summer, 1978): 180–185.
206. Jill Watts, "'We Do Not Live For Ourselves Only': Seminole Black Perceptions and the Second Seminole War," *UCLA Historical Journal* 7 (1986): 5–28; Carolyn T.Gassaway, "Black Indians in the Seminole Wars," *South Florida History* 27, no. 1 (1998–99): 10–17; Russell Garvin, "The Free Negro in Florida before the Civil War," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 46, no. 1, (1967): 1–17.
207. Porter, *Relations*, 50–51.
208. *Executive Documents*, 25th Congress, 2nd Session, 1837–1838, (Vol. III, No. 78): 52
209. Giddings, 119.
210. Mary Hill, *Indian Pioneer History Collection*.
211. Wright, *Creeks and Seminoles*, 283.
212. Nathaniel Willis, *Indian Pioneer History Collection*.
213. J.M.Gaskins, *History of Black Baptists in Oklahoma*, (Oklahoma City: Messenger Press, 1992), 84; Kenneth W.Porter, "Negroes on the Southern Frontier," *Journal of Negro History* 33 (1948): 53–78; Jimmie Lewis Franklin, *The Blacks of Oklahoma* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980), 2.
214. Russell Thornton, *The Cherokees: A Population History* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), 89.
215. Evan Jones reports that one hundred and seventy people were converted during the revivals in the concentration camps and one hundred and thirty were baptized into the church upon their arrival in Indian Territory. "Report of Evan Jones" in American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, *Annual Report of the American Baptist Missionary Union*, (Boston: n.p. 1841), 1841, 51.
216. Letter from Rev. Evan Jones, in American Baptist Missionary Union, *The Baptist Missionary Magazine* 18 [microform] (Boston: Board of Managers, Baptist General Convention).
217. William G.McLoughlin, "The Reverend Evan Jones And The Cherokee Trail Of Tears, 1838–1839," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 73, no. 3 (1989): 559–583.
218. Jesse Bushyhead, quoted in Foreman, *Indian Removal*, 103.
219. Jesse Bushyhead quoted in Carl Coke Rister, *Baptist Missions among the Ameri-*

can Indians (Atlanta: Southern Baptist Church Home Mission Board, 1944), 77.

CHAPTER THREE: THE BIRTH AND GROWTH OF THE KEETOOWAH SOCIETY

1. William Gerald McLoughlin and Gerald Conser, *The Cherokees and Christianity: Essays on Cultural Persistence*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1994), 218–219.
2. Major Ridge quoted in Morris Waddell, *A Political History of the Cherokee Nation, 1838–1907* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1938), 18.
3. Worcester to Green, June 26, 1839, American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, *Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions [microform]*. (Woodbridge, Connecticut: Research Publications, 1982); Grant Foreman, “The Murder of Elias Boudinot,” *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* 12, no. 1 (March 1939): 19–24. Major Ridge would certainly have known what would be his fate for the relinquishing of Cherokee land for it was he who had drawn up the articles of treason while a member of the National Council in 1829. In 1806, Ridge had assassinated then Chief Doublehead for his participation in the ceding of Cherokee lands to the United States. The son of Doublehead was reputed to have been a member of the Ross party and to have participated in execution of Ridge.
4. Grant Foreman, *The Five Civilized Tribes* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1934), 333–334. See also Gerard Alexander Reed, *The Ross-Watie Conflict Factionalism in the Cherokee Nation, 1839–1865* (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1967).
5. Chaney Richardson, Works Progress Administration, Oklahoma Writers Project, *Slave Narratives*, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1932).
6. John Candy to Stand Watie, in Edward E. Dale and Gaston Litton, ed., *Cherokee Cavaliers: Forty Years of Cherokee History as told in the Correspondence of the Ridge-Watie-Boudinot Family* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1940), 32.
7. Sarah Watie to Stand Watie, in Dale and Litton, 45–46.
8. Federal agent George Butler quoted in Henry R. Schoolcraft, “Moral, Political, and Industrial Condition of the Creeks, Chickasaws, Choctaws, and Cherokees” *Information Respecting the History, Condition, and Prospects of the Indian Tribes of the United States* (Archives of Aboriginal Knowledge), Collected and prepared under the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Published by Authority of Congress, (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1857), Vol. VI., , 531.
9. Russell Thornton, *The Cherokees: A Population History* (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1990), 87–88; Michael Roethler, “Negro Slavery among the Cherokee Indians, 1540–1866” (Ph.D. dissertation, Fordham University, 1964), 167–171.
10. Morris Wardell, *A Political History of the Cherokee Nation, 1838–1907* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1938), 60–66; T. Lindsey Baker and Julie Baker, *The WPA Oklahoma Slave Narratives* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), 408–409.
11. Wilma Mankiller and Michael Wallis, *Mankiller: A Chief and Her People* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1993), 121.
12. Betty Robertson in Baker and Baker, 356; Alvin Rucker, “The Story of a Slave Uprising in Oklahoma,” *Daily Oklahoman*, Oct. 30, 1932; Carolyn Thomas

- Foreman, "Early History of Webber's Falls," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 29 (Winter 1951–52): 459–460; Daniel Littlefield and Lonnie Underhill, "Slave 'Revolt' in the Cherokee Nation 1842," *American Indian Quarterly* 3 (1977): 121–133.
13. Rucker, "Slave Uprising."
 14. Roethler, 185.
 15. Theda Perdue, *Slavery and the Evolution of Cherokee Society 1540–1866* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1979), 87.
 16. Laurence Foster, *Negro-Indian Relations in the Southeast* (Philadelphia, n.p. 1935), 45.
 17. Daniel F. Littlefield, *The Cherokee Freedmen: from Emancipation to American Citizenship* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1978), 5–7; Roethler, 165–170.
 18. J. Fred Latham, *The Story of Oklahoma Masonry* (Oklahoma City: Grand Lodge of Oklahoma, 1957), 8.
 19. Allen Roberts, *Freemasonry in American History* (Richmond: MacCoy Publishing and Masonic Supply Company, 1985), 6–8.
 20. Steven C. Bullock, *The Ancient and Honorable Society: Freemasonry in America, 1730–1830* (Ph.D. dissertation, Brown University, 1986), 8–9; Lynn Dumenil, *Freemasonry in American Culture 1880–1930* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 4; Mark Carnes, *Secret Ritual and Manhood in Victorian America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 22–25.
 21. Alexander Platigorsky, *Who's Afraid of Freemasons: The Phenomenon of Freemasonry* (London: The Harvill Press, 1997), 165.
 22. Roberts, 24.
 23. Edward L. King, "Famous Freemasons," *Anti-Masonry: Points of View*, Online, Available HTTP: <http://www.masonicinfo.com/images/Masonicinfo_FamousFreemasons.pdf>, (accessed: December 19, 2002). See also Bernard Vincent, "Masons as Builders of the Republic: The Role of Freemasonry in the American Revolution," *European Contributions to American Studies* [Netherlands] 14 (1988): 132–150.
 24. William H. Grimshaw, *Official History of Freemasonry Among the Colored People in North America* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1921), 52–54. The following countries established Masonic Lodges which accepted "colored Masons": "Martinique (1738), Antigua (1739), Virgin Islands (1760), Bermuda (1761), Nicaragua (1763), Honduras (1763), Granada (1764), Dominica (1773), Bahamas (1785), St. Thomas (1792), Trinidad (1798), Cuba (1804), Mexico (1810).
 25. Platigorsky, 167.
 26. Catholic Encyclopedia, "Freemasonry," Online, Available HTTP: <<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/09771a.htm>>, (accessed: December, 1998)
 27. William Muraskin, *Middle Class Blacks in a White Society: Prince Hall Freemasonry in America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 23.
 28. Muraskin, 162; Dumenil, 7–8.
 29. Board of General Purposes of the United Grand Lodge of England, "What is Freemasonry?" on *A Page about Freemasonry*, Online, Available HTTP: <<http://thelonious.mit.edu/Masonry/Essays/ugl-what.html>>, (accessed: October 12, 1998).
 30. The fact that modern "masculine" Freemasonic lodges prefer to keep a gender specific nature does not mean that Freemasonry is or has been specifically for men. There have been women Freemasons in the "blue lodge" as far back as the seventeenth century and mixed gender lodges exist throughout the world. The American Federation of the International Order of Co-Freemasonry, *Le Droit Humain*, is the oldest Masonic organization admitting women and men

- equally, having been founded in Paris in 1893 and introduced to America in 1904. For excellent discussions of this issue, see: Catherine Yronwode, "Freemasonry for Women," Online, Available HTTP: <<http://www.masonicinfo.com/women.htm>>, (accessed: December 12, 2002) and Edward L. King, "What about Women" Online, Available HTTP: <<http://www.masonicinfo.com/women.htm>>, (accessed: December 12, 2002).
31. Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina, "All Sons of One Father" (Raleigh, N.C.: Grand Lodge of North Carolina, 1986), 3.
 32. Board of General Purposes of the United Grand Lodge of England, "What is Freemasonry?" *A Page about Freemasonry*, Online, Available HTTP: <http://thelonious.mit.edu/Masonry/Essays/ugl-whatis.html>, (accessed: October 12, 1998).
 33. Bullock, 64.
 34. The Mormon Temple was founded in the belief that God had given King Solomon the secrets of a holy priesthood, but gradually the rituals—as kept by Freemasonry—had been corrupted. The rites of the Mormon Temple were considered the actual perfected rituals as Solomon had received them. (Carnes, *Secret Ritual and Manhood in Victorian America*, 7). See also Michael W. Homer, "Similarity of Priesthood in Masonry": The Relationship between Freemasonry and Mormonism," *Dialogue* 27, no. 3 (1994): 1–113.
 35. Ronald P. Formisano, "Antimasonry and Masonry: The Genesis of Protest, 1826–1827," *American Quarterly* 29, no. 2 (1977): 139–165.
 36. Dumenil, 4–6.
 37. Albert Mackey, *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry* (Philadelphia: L.H. Everts & Co., 1889), 526–527.
 38. See Harry E. Davis, *A History of Freemasonry Among Negroes in America* (N.Y.: United Supreme Council, Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite Freemasonry, Northern Jurisdiction, U.S.A., 1946), 177–179. Interestingly enough, in spite of Pike's public statements such as the one above, he was supportive of a segregated Freemasonry, participated in, and made significant contributions to the growth of Negro Scottish Rites Freemasonry. He personally donated his own works on Freemasonry to the Southern Jurisdiction of the Scottish Rites and they have served as the basis for work and practice of the Prince Hall Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rites. The contributions are greatly valued and still in the possession of the Southern Jurisdiction.
 39. Thirty-six (out of fifty-one) U.S. Grand Lodges have adopted resolutions that say Prince Hall Masonry is "regular." Some have adopted "full recognition," in the same sense they recognize any other Grand Lodge, some have granted "recognition" to the extent of permitting intervisitation but not dual memberships, and some have adopted resolutions supporting Prince Hall Masonry but making recognition subject to something such as adoption of similar action by Prince Hall Masonry. [Paul M. Bessel, "Prince Hall Masonry Recognition Details," Online, Available HTTP: <<http://www.bessel.org/pha.htm>>, (accessed: December 19, 2002).
 40. Roberts, 33–39.
 41. Grimshaw, 53–54.
 42. Roberts, 33ff.
 43. Gregory Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance: The North American Indian Struggle for Unity 1745–1815*, (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 90.
 44. William R Denslow, *Freemasonry and the American Indian* (St Louis: Missouri Lodge of Research, 1956).

45. Denslow, 127–129.
46. Wright, *Creeks and Seminoles*, 58 ff; Lyle N. McAlister, “William Augustus Bowles and the State of Muskogee,” *Florida Historical Quarterly* 40, no. 4 (1962): 317–328.
47. Latham, 2.
48. Winfield Scott quoted in Grace Steele Woodward, *The Cherokees* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), 204.
49. Woodward, 214.
50. John P. Brown, *Old Frontiers: The Story of the Cherokee From Earliest Times to the Late of Their Removal to the West* (Kingsport: Tenn: Southern Publishers, Inc., 1938), 511.
51. Latham, 5.
52. Albert Mackey describes a “blue lodge” as, “A symbolic Lodge, in which the first three degrees are conferred, is so called from the color of its decorations.” A “blue lodge” is the common determination for this lodge as opposed to lodges that grant higher degrees such as the Scottish Rites or York Rites. (Mackey, 120)
53. George Moser, quoted in Latham, 6.
54. T.L. Ballenger, *History of Cherokee Lodge #10*, T.L. Ballenger Papers, Ayer Collection, Newberry Library, Chicago, IL., 5; Latham, 5–8.
55. The Sons of Temperance modeled its constitution on those of the Freemasons and Odd Fellows and based their organization around simple initiation rituals. As time progressed, the Sons of Temperance and organizations such as it developed increasingly complicated rituals even further aligned with those of the Freemasons. (Carnes, 8)
56. Ballenger, 6. It is important to note that the Cherokee Indian Baptist Association, consisting of six “colored churches” held its first organizational meeting in the Cherokee Masonic Lodge in 1870. [J.M. Gaskins, *History of Black Baptists in Oklahoma* (Oklahoma City: Messenger Press, 1992), 118]
57. Ballenger, 5.
58. Russell Thornton, *The Cherokees: A Population History* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), 87; Michael Doran, “Population Statistics of Nineteenth Century Indian Territory,” in *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* 53 (Winter, 1975–1976): 492–515.
59. Grimshaw, 191.
60. A.G. Clark, *Clark’s History of Prince Hall Freemasonry* (Des Moines, Iowa: Bystander Publications, 1947), 48.
61. Muraskin, 38–39.
62. Albert Raboteau, *Slave Religion: The “Invisible Institution” in the Antebellum South* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 205.
63. Grimshaw, 233.
64. Rudi Halliburton, *Red Over Black: Black Slavery Among the Cherokee Indians* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1977), 40; Baker, 343–372.
65. “...these men [Bowles and five Cherokee and Creek followers] were intended to take part, as chiefs, in the projected operations against Santo Domingo and that they would soon leave... During the month of June following I wrote from London to M. de Montmorin that the six Cheerokees had left and that the conspiracy against Santo Domingo no doubt would not be delayed in execution.” Unsigned document quoted by William Sturtevant, “The Cherokee Frontiers, the French Revolution, and William Augustus Bowles” in Duane King, ed. *The Cherokee Indian Nation: A Troubled History* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1979), 61. Further readings of this article as well as subsequent readings of related materials have failed to elucidate this connection.

66. The fact that a Freemason helped abolish the institution of slavery in the French colonies explains the high incidence of masonry in the West Indies. [Claude Wauthier, "Africa's Freemasons, A Strange Inheritance," in *Africa News Articles*, Online, Available http://chss2.montclair.edu/sorac/_AfricaNews/00000009.htm, (accessed: June 22, 2000).
67. Charles Barthelemy Rousseve, *The Negro in Louisiana: Aspects of His History and His Literature* (New Orleans: Xavier University Press, 1937), 41.
68. Caryn Cosse Bell, *Revolution, Romanticism, and the Afro-Creole Protest Tradition in Louisiana: 1718–1868* (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1997).
69. Laennec Hurbon, *Voodoo: Search for the Spirit* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1995), 31–41; Verena Dobnik, "Voodoo Exhibit Taps Spirit Of Haitians' Struggle For Freedom," *Bergen Record*, October 9, 1998.
70. "The white Cubans charge the Negroes with still maintaining in their midst the dark Vudu or Hudu mysteries of West Africa. There seems to be no doubt that the black people of Cuba (not the mulattoes) do belong, to a number of secret or Masonic societies, the most widely-heard-of being the Nyannege; and it is possible that these confraternities or clubs are associated with immoral purposes. They originated in a league of defence against the tyranny of the masters in the old slavery days." [Harry H. Johnston, *The Negro in the New World*, New York: Johnson Reprint Corp., 1969, 193]
71. Douchan Gersi, *Faces in the Smoke*, (New York: St. Martins Press, 1991), 127–128.
72. William Brawley, *A Social History of the American Negro* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1921), 241; Walter B. Weare, "Black Fraternal Orders" in Charles Reagon Wilson and William Ferris, eds., *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 159; Carter G. Woodson, *The African Background Outlined: or Handbook for the Study of the Negro* (Washington, D.C.: Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, Inc., 1936), 169–170.
73. "Although it was unlawful for Negroes to assemble without the presence of a white man, and so unlawful to allow a congregation of slaves on a plantation without the consent of the master, these organizations existed and held these meetings on the "lots" of some of the law-makers themselves.... The president of such a society was usually a privileged slave who had the confidence of his or her master and could go and come at will. Thus a form of communication could be kept up with all members." [*Hampton Conference Report*, Number 8, quoted in Brawley, 73].
74. Muraskin, 53. Muraskin also notes as prominent Prince Hall Freemasons who were active in the abolitionist movement as being Peter Ray, Lewis Hayden, Absolom Jones, Patrick Reason, James T. Hilton, James Forten, and Major Martin Delaney.
75. Moses Dickson, "Manual of the International Order of Twelve of Knights and Daughters of Tabor, containing General Laws, Regulations, Ceremonies, Drill and Landmarks," in Herbert Aptheker, ed., *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States from Colonial Times through the Civil War* (Secaucus: The Citadel Press, 1973), 378.
76. Vincent Harding, *There is a River: The Black Struggle for Freedom in America* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, Publishers, 1981), 198.
77. Booker T. Washington, *The Story of the Negro: The Rise of the Race from Slavery, Vol. II* (New York: Doubleday, Page, and Company, 1909), 155; E. Franklin Frazier, *The Negro in the United States* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1949), 371–372.

78. Dickson in Aptheker, 379.
79. George Butler, "Report," September 10, 1859, United States, Office of Indian Affairs, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs* (Washington, D.C., 1859), 173.
80. Evan Jones quoted in William G. McLoughlin, *The Cherokee Ghost Dance: Essays on the Southeastern Indians* (Atlanta: Mercer University Press, 1984), 459
81. Ibid.
82. Vincent Wimbush, "Forward," in Walter F. Pitts, Jr., *Old Ship of Zion: The Afro-Baptist Ritual in the African Diaspora* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), xv.
83. McLoughlin and Conser, 64.
84. Alan Kilpatrick, "A Note on Cherokee Theological Concepts," *The American Indian Quarterly* 19 (June 1995): 397.
85. Daniel Buttrick to David Green, April 15, 1852, American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, *Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions [microform]*. (Woodbridge, Conn.: Research Publications, 1982).
86. Jesse M. Gaskins, *Black Baptists in Oklahoma* (Oklahoma City: Messenger Press, 1992), 91. See also Jesse Marvin Gaskin, *Trail Blazers of Sooner Baptists* (Shawnee: Oklahoma Baptist University Press, 1953); C. W. West, *Missions and Missionaries of Indian Territory* (Muscookee: Muscookee Publishing Company, 1990); E. C. Routh, *The Story of Oklahoma Baptists* (Shawnee, Oklahoma Baptist University Press, 1932).
87. Isaac McCoy, *History of Baptist Indian Missions* (New York: H. and S. Raynor, 1840), 426; Walter Wyeth, *Isaac McCoy: Early Indian Missions* (Philadelphia: W. N. Wyeth Publishers, 1895), 192–193; West, 21.
88. L. W. Marks, "The Story of Oklahoma Baptists," (Unpublished Manuscript, 1912).
89. Wyeth, 193.
90. West, 4. John Davis was not new to the ministry having been educated at Union Mission and been in the employ of the Baptist Church since 1830. He had previously attempted to found a church under the auspices of the American Board with some thirty African American and Mvskokeans. [Angie Debo, *The Road to Disappearance* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1941), 116].
91. American Baptist Missionary Union, *The Missionary Jubilee: An Account of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the American Baptist Missionary Union at Philadelphia, May 24, 25, and 26, 1864 with Commemorative Papers and Discourses* (New York: Sheldon and Company, 1865), 477.
92. American Baptist Missionary Union, *Annual Report [1840]* (Boston: American Baptist Missionary Union, 1850), 9.
93. Evan Jones to American Baptist Missionary Union, May 28, 1844, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans, [microform], 1825–1865," American Baptist Historical Society, Rochester, N. Y.
94. Gaskin, 90.
95. Evan Jones to American Baptist Missionary Union, July 10, 1844, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans."
96. Brother Jesse quoted in Carl Rister, *Baptist Missions among the American Indians* (Atlanta: Southern Baptist Convention, 1944), 85.
97. Rister, 84.
98. Daniel Rogers, quoted in Gaskin, 104.
99. Robert Hamilton, *The Gospel among the Red Men* (Nashville: Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1930), 98.

100. American Baptist Missionary Union, *Annual Report [1843]* (Boston: American Baptist Missionary Union, 1850), 141.
101. Gaskin, 92.
102. Though Bushyhead was considered a slaveholder, the slaves (in accordance with Cherokee tradition) actually belonged to his wife who had inherited them from her father. In addition, the woman had been released from bondage for several years by 1844, provided with a home, clothing by the Bushyheads, and allowed to live on their land. Her daughter married a freedman, the Bushyheads provided them with stock in order to begin a business, and they settled some 100 miles away. (McLoughlin, *Champions of the Cherokees*, 235)
103. Evan Jones to Solomon Peck, August 26, 1844, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans."
104. Evan Jones to American Baptist Missionary Union, November 3, 1843, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans."
105. Quoted in McLoughlin, *The Cherokee Ghost Dance: Essays on the Southeastern Indians*, 332.
106. *Ibid.*, 340.
107. See C.C.Goen, *Broken Churches, Broken Nation: Denominational Schisms and the Coming of the Civil War* (Macon, Ga: Mercer University Press, 1985). For an analysis of the split within the Baptist denomination see Robert Baker, *Relations between Northern and Southern Baptists*, (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1947); William G. McLoughlin, "The Cherokee Baptist Preacher and the Great Schism of 1844–45: a Footnote to Baptist History," *Foundations: a Baptist Journal of History and Theology* 24 (April-June 1981): 137–147.
108. John B.Jones to J.G.Warren, May 5, 1858, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans."
109. *Ibid.*
110. *Ibid.*
111. *Ibid.*
112. *Ibid.*
113. John B.Jones letter to J.G.Warren, November 17, 1859, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans."
114. Wardell, 118–120; Charles C.Royce, *The Cherokee Nation of Indians* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1975), 201–203.
115. There are various estimates of the Cherokee population ranging from between 17,000 to 22,000 in the years immediately preceding the Civil War. The total slave population ranges from 2500, 4000, to 9000 depending upon the source. The Eighth Census records 384 Cherokee slave owners of 2504 slaves. The slave population consisted of 1,122 males and 1,282 females. The largest slave owners averaged 35 slaves. Throughout Indian Territory, Black slaves comprised less than fifteen percent of the population, and only about one Native American in fifty owned slaves. (Haliburton, 117; Thornton, 87).
116. William Gerald McLoughlin, *After the Trail of Tears: the Cherokees' Struggle for Sovereignty, 1839–1880* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 145.
117. John Ross to Evan Jones, May 5, 1855, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans."
118. *Ibid.*
119. John Ross to Evan Jones, May 5, 1855, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans."
120. The term "blue lodge" refers to those lodges that make Masons. They confer only three degrees and serve as the core constituency of Freemasonry. From the

- “blue lodges,” one can become a member of other Freemasonic organizations such as the York Rite or the Scottish Rite. Every “33rd degree” Mason begins in the “blue lodge.”
121. This opinion is supported by evidence that the Grand Lodge of Arkansas refused to recognize the charters of many of the lodges in Indian Territory following the cessation of the Civil War. In addition, the Grand Lodge of Arkansas considered many of the charters “forfeited” and would only grant the lodges new charters if the were reorganized under a different name. Cherokee Lodge #21 became Cherokee Lodge #10 when it was reorganized after repeated attempts for recognition in 1877. Fort Gibson Lodge # 35 became Alpha Lodge #12 in 1878. Flint Lodge #74 became Flint Lodge # 11 in 1876. (Starr, 185). Muskogee Lodge #93 and Choctaw Lodge #52 also forfeited their charter following the Civil War. J.S.Murrow, the “Father of Oklahoma Masonry,” a Baptist minister who was a Confederate States Indian Agent during the Civil War, led the Grand Lodge that refused the recognition. (Latham, 10; West, 103)
 122. T.L.Ballenger, *History of Cherokee Lodge #10*, T.L.Ballenger Papers, Ayer Collection, Newberry Library, Chicago, IL., 12; “Pin Indians,” in Robert Wright, *Indian Masonry*, (n.p., 1905) Ayer Collection, Newberry Library, Chicago, IL., 105.
 123. For more information on the Knights of the Golden Circle, see A Member of the Knights of the Golden Circle, “An Authentic Exposition of the ‘Knights of the Golden Circle’” (Indianapolis: n.p., 1861); Edmund Wright, *Narrative of Edmund Wright: his Adventures with and Escape from the Knights of the Golden Circle* (New York: R.W.Hitchcock, 1864).
 124. James W.Parins, *John Rollin Ridge: His Life and Works* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991), 180. See also Frank Klement, *The Copperheads in the Middle West* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960) and Frank Klement, *Dark Lanterns* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1984). Mark Carnes, in his work *Secret Ritual and Manhood in Victorian America*, notes that many of the early nativist organizations such as The United American Mechanics, the Know-Nothings and the Copperheads were closely affiliated with the Freemasonic Order.
 125. Kenny Franks, *Stand Watie* (Memphis: Memphis State University Press, 1979), 114–115. Of these, William Penn Adair was a member of Flint Lodge, Boudinot and Washbourne were Masons from Fayetteville, Arkansas, and John Rollin Ridge is described as “most likely a Mason” (Parins, 191).
 126. Knights of the Golden Circle, *Constitution and By-Laws*, Cherokee Collection: Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, OK.
 127. “Militancy” in this context meant assaults upon members of the abolitionist movement, breaking up of Baptist religious meetings, and threats to the life and well-being of the Northern Baptist missionaries and clergy.
 128. Though the Keetoowah had its formal organization in 1858, most sources refer to the Society as having existed “from time immemorial.” [T.L.Ballenger, “The Keetoowahs,” in Ballenger Papers, Ayer Collection, Newberry Library, Chicago, IL.] Benny Smith states it this way, “Some modern historians agree that the present day Keetoowahs were organized to activate an abolitionist society by Evan Jones, in 1859 in order to aid the Union in the slavery question. Whether this is true or not, this marks the beginnings of the term ‘secret society’ in association with the Keetoowahs. Consequently, this is the conception that the majority of the Oklahomans have of the Keetoowah Society.” [Benny Smith, “The Keetoowah Society of the Cherokee Indians,” MA Thesis, North-western State College, Alva, Okla., 1967].

129. "The Christian missions appeared to be little islands of stability amongst the shock and confusion of their violently disrupted lives, so the missions became the religious and social centers of the tribe by simple default. Even those who had disdained the churches in the old country went to them after the Removal because that was about the only place that people gathered together." Janey B. Hendrix, "Redbird Smith and the Nighthawk Keetoowahs" *Journal of Cherokee Studies* 8, no. 1 (Spring, 1983): 22.
130. Fred S. Barde, "The Keetoowah or Nighthawk Society of the Cherokee Nation," Fred S. Barde Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.
131. H. T. Malone, *Cherokees of the Old South: A People in Transition* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1956), 23; Betty Anderson Smith, "Distribution of Eighteenth Century Cherokee Settlements," in King, 53.
132. Benny Smith, 5.
133. Howard Tyner, *The Keetoowah Society in Cherokee History* (MA Thesis, University of Tulsa, 1949), 27.
134. Leeds, 3.
135. Raymond Fogelson, "Who were the Ani Kuntani? An Excursion into Cherokee Historical Thought," *Ethnohistory* 31, no. 4:256–259.
136. Fogelson, 256.
137. Tyner, 28.
138. Medicine men.
139. Levi B. Gritts, "Night Hawks Religion," Foreman Papers, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, OK.
140. Ibid.
141. David Whitekiller quoted in Georgia Rae Leeds, *The United Keetoowah Band of Indians in Oklahoma: 1950 to the Present* (University of Oklahoma: Ph.D. dissertation, 1992), 4–5.
142. Tyner, 30.
143. Mooney, 183; Wright, *Indian Masonry*, 105.
144. Tom Hatley, *The Dividing Path: Cherokees and South Carolinians through the Revolutionary Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 92.
145. Verner F. Crane "The Lost Utopia on the American Frontier," *Sewanee Review* 27 (1919): 48; See also Rennard Strickland, "Christian Gotlieb Priber: Utopian Precursor of the Cherokee Government," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 48, no. 3 (1970): 264–279; M. Foster Farley, "Christian Priber—Prime Minister to the Cherokee Indians," *Journal of Cherokee Studies* 8, no. 2, (1983): 97–101.
146. Hatley, 225.
147. Barde, 1.
148. Tyner, 30; Wright, *Indian Masonry*, 105.
149. Benny Smith, 1.
150. Benny Smith, 1.
151. Benny Smith, 5. Interestingly, the first open expression of the Keetoowah rebellion against assimilation occurred in 1828 when the Cherokee sought to establish a Cherokee Constitution and end the old political system. "White Path's rebellion" was named after its leader White Path, but his nativistic movement is seen as a predecessor of the Keetoowah movement. [Hendrix, 25]
152. Benny Smith, 6.
153. Ballenger, 106.
154. "The Cherokee's Pow-wow," Newspaper clipping dated October 21, 1902, Fred Barde Collection of the Research Library of the Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, OK.

155. Frances Thetford, "The Perpetual Fire in the Cookson Hills," *Daily Oklahoman*, January 31, 1960.
156. Ballenger, 105.
157. Benny Smith, 4.
158. "Keetoowah Laws—April 29, 1859" in Tyner.
159. Wright, *Indian Masonry*, 105; Ballenger, *History of Cherokee Lodge #10*, 12.
160. "Keetoowah Laws, Chapter I, Section 1" in Tyner.
161. "Keetoowah Laws," Chapter II, Section 6—Chapter III, Section 7" in Tyner.
162. Katja May, *African Americans and Native Americans in the Creek and Cherokee Nations 1830s to 1920s: Collision and Collusion* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1996), 83. William G. McLoughlin in his manuscript "The Cherokee Keetoowah Society and the Coming of the Civil War" states that the idea of "full-blood Cherokee" was a later addition and not part of the original Keetoowah loyalty oath. [William G. McLoughlin, "The Cherokee Keetoowah Society and the Coming of the Civil War," McFarlin Library manuscript collection, University of Tulsa, Tulsa, OK.]
163. The Cherokee Nation in the early nineteenth century possessed its own "alphabet" devised specifically for the Cherokee syllabury by Sequoyah. Sequoyah's genius was such that it was the only alphabet known to humanity developed by a single individual. Sequoyah's syllabury was critically important to the development of Cherokee religion, society, and politics. With Sequoyah's syllabury, Cherokee traditionalists could write and record in their own language and communicate among themselves without the reliance upon and interference by those whose primary language was English. One could be perfectly literate in Cherokee and yet still considered to be "illiterate" by those within the dominant culture. The missionaries were the first to recognize the importance of the language and began to translate the Bible, hymns, and prayers into the Cherokee language. Part of the tremendous success of the Baptist missionaries among the traditional Cherokees was that they, themselves, were literate in Cherokee and possessed a corpus of religious tracts in the Cherokee language. See Grant Foreman, *Sequoyah*, (Norman, Okla: University of Oklahoma Press, 1938).
164. Gritts, "Nighthawk Religion," 1.
165. Mooney, 225.
166. Benny Smith, 25. "The fact that the organization has always had a religious significance to the Cherokee full-bloods has been ignored by many." [Smith, 3].
167. Benny Smith, 6.
168. There is some disagreement over this issue. John Smith, son of one of the founders of the Society, states, "In the removal of the Cherokees from Georgia, the Keetoowah fire went out." (Perdue, *Nations Remembered*, 99). Others claim that the fire has never gone out. Much of this has to do with an understanding of the nature of the sacred fire, "To say that the fire is kept going constantly is romantic, but it isn't actually the truth. The flame is rekindled at each new meeting. It is a "perpetual" fire only in the sense that we always have one and that our strong objectives have never changed and still live on; the blaze around which our forefathers met was the same as to the religious significance, and to that extent it is the same fire—but it is not a part of the same embers. But the Keetoowah Society will continue, and its fire will always be kept burning." O.J. Smith, Keetoowah Society member and former fire man, quoted in Thetford, "Perpetual Fire."
169. Perdue, *Nations Remembered*, 98.
170. George McCoy, "History of the Stomp Dance of the Sacred Fire of the Cherokee Indian Nation" as told to H.F. Fulling, ed. by Marshall Walker, (Sallisaw,

- Oklahoma: Sequoyah County Time Print, 1961), 5. Benny Smith states that the arbors “serve as pews in a church for they are places for the members of the seven clans to sit during ceremonials.” [Smith, 13]; Levi Gritts, “Proceedings of the Meetings of the Keetoowah Society,” Grant Foreman Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, OK., 8.
171. McCoy, 4.
 172. Chief William Smith, quoted in “Spirit of the Fire” [video] ed. by Sam Jones, (Tulsa, Okla.: KJRH-TV2, Scripps-Howard Broadcasting Co., 1984; Eva Horner, “Keetoowah Society, Guardian of Cherokee Tradition,” *Tulsa Daily World*, July 26, 1936.
 173. Benny Smith, 13.
 174. Sam Jones, “Spirit of the Fire.”
 175. Levi Gritts, 9–10; George McCoy, 6, 7; Jones, “Spirit of the Fire;” Smith, “Keetoowah Society,” 13–15; Horner, *Tulsa Daily World*.
 176. Levi Gritts, 9. See T.L.Ballenger, “The Keetoowahs and Their Dances,” *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 61, no. 2 (1983): 194–199.
 177. Benny Smith, 15.
 178. Benny Smith, 15.
 179. Benny Smith, 16.
 180. Levi Gritts, 10.
 181. William Smith, “Spirit of the Fire.”
 182. Benny Smith, 16.
 183. Horner, *Tulsa Daily World*.
 184. Benny Smith, 16.
 185. T.L.Ballenger, 114; Benny Smith, 17; Jones, “Spirit of the Fire;” Horner, *Tulsa Daily World*.
 186. Smith, 17
 187. Levi Gritts, “Night Hawks Religion,” 2.
 188. Levi Gritts, “Proceedings of the Meetings of Keetoowah Societies,” 10.
 189. McLoughlin, *Champions of the Cherokee*, 346; Littlefield, *The Cherokee Freedmen*, 8.
 190. Eva Horner, in her “Keetoowah Society, Guardian of Cherokee Tradition” notes that the Keetoowah Society incorporated “features peculiar to lodges and fraternal orders.” [Eva Horner, *Tulsa Daily World*.]
 191. “Keetoowah Laws, Chapter 11, Section 23,” in Tyner.
 192. This, by no means, precludes the probability that many of these same organizational methods and structures did not have their corollary in Cherokee traditional society or Baptist polity. A critical element in the “old ways” was an acceptance of new ideas and a willingness to integrate new ideas into traditional practices to the extent that they did not conflict with traditional values. The notion of “balance” in Cherokee society promotes syncretism. The Keetoowah Society was syncretic, indeed, but that the principles and practices of Freemasonry may be an often-ignored component of that syncretistic belief system.
 193. Ballenger, “The Keetoowahs,” 106; Wright, *Indian Masonry*, 105.
 194. William G.McLoughlin, *Cherokees and Christianity, 1794–1870: Essays on Acculturation and Cultural Persistence* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1994), 219.
 195. David Cornsilk, “Footsteps-Historical Perspective: History Of The Keetoowah Cherokees,” *Cherokee Observer* [online], HTTP: [http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Prairie/5918/keetoowah/octissue97.html], Accessed: October 12, 2000
 196. “Keetoowah Laws. Chapter IV, Section 12,” in Tyner.
 197. Ballenger, “The Keetoowahs,” 107.

198. McLoughlin attributes the power of this political movement to the “high level of acculturation for the full-bloods” at the hands of the Baptists and the “congregational nature of evangelical churches.” No one can doubt this truth, but I would also argue that in structure, if not in function, the Keetoowah Society also bore a close resemblance to the lodges of Freemasonry with their internal organization, measures of security, episcopal structure, political idealism, and influence within the common people.
199. McLoughlin, *Cherokees and Christianity*, 223.
200. Halliburton, 144.
201. “Albert Pike to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs,” (February 17, 1866) in Annie Abel, *The American Indian as Slaveholder and Secessionist* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 135
202. D.J.MacGowan, “Indian Secret Societies,” in *Historical Magazine* 10 (1866).
203. Cherokee Nation, *Memorial of the Delegates of the Cherokee Nation to the President of the United States and the Senate and House of Representatives in Congress* (Washington, D.C.: Washington Chronicle Print, 1866), 7.
204. Wright, *Indian Masonry*, 105.
205. George Butler to Evan Jones, June 25, 1858, “Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans.”
206. Perdue, *Slavery and the Evolution of Cherokee Society 1540–1866*, 12–18; Hatley, 233; William McLoughlin, *The Cherokee Ghost Dance*, 244; Kenneth W.Porter, *Relations Between Negroes and Indians Within the Present United States* (Washington, D.C.: The Association for Negro Life and History, 1931), 16.
207. James Duncan, “The Keetoowah Society,” *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 4 (1926): 251–55; Cornsilk, *Cherokee Observer online*; Richard M.Wolfe, quoted in E.W.Crumbaugh, “Interesting Side Lights on the Cherokee Keetoowah Society from One who Knows,” Fred S.Barde Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Judge Wolfe was the president of the Society when this article was written in 1905; he was also “a Mason with high degree.”
208. McLoughlin, *After the Trail of Tears*, 158.
209. Janey Hendrix, *Redbird Smith and the Nighthawk Keetoowahs* (Park Hill, Oklahoma: Cross-Cultural Education Center, Inc., 1983), 8. For further information on the role of the Natchez in Southeastern Native American culture, see John R.Swanton, *Early History of the Creek Indians and their Neighbors* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1922); Horatio Bardwell Cushman, *History of the Choctaw, Chickasaw and Natchez Indians*, Edited and with a foreword by Angie Debo, (New York: Russell & Russell, 1972); Edward L. Berthoud, *A Sketch of the Natchez Indians*, (Golden Colorado: Transcript Book and Job Print, 1886).
210. Angie Debo, *The Road to Disappearance* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1941), 118.
211. American Baptist Missionary Union, *Annual Report 1842*, American Baptist Historical Society, Rochester, N.Y.
212. Gaskins, 91. See also Jesse Marvin Gaskin, *Trail Blazers of Sooner Baptists* (Shawnee: Oklahoma Baptist University Press, 1953); West, *Missions and Missionaries of Indian Territory*; E.C.Routh, *The Story of Oklahoma Baptists*
213. Gaskins, 547; Wyeth, 192–193; West, 21.
214. American Baptist Missionary Union, *Annual Report 1843*, American Baptist Historical Society, Rochester, N.Y., 141.
215. Debo, 117.
216. McLoughlin, *Champions of the Cherokees*, 307.
217. Chilly was the son of William Mc Intosh, a member of the Treaty Party among the

- Mvskoke Nation. William McIntosh was executed by traditionalist (Red Stick) Mvskokes in a manner similar to members of the Cherokee Treaty Party. Following the death of McIntosh, Opothle Yahola led the Mvskoke delegation to Washington to resist removal, but were ultimately undone by intrigue.
218. Letter of Evan Jones, American Baptist Missionary Union, Annual Report 1849, American Baptist Historical Society, Rochester, N.Y., 145.
 219. American Baptist Missionary Union, Annual Report 1848, American Baptist Historical Society, Rochester, N.Y., 271.
 220. American Baptist Missionary Union, Annual Report 1850, American Baptist Historical Society, Rochester, N.Y., 97.
 221. Evan Jones to American Baptist Missionary Union, Annual Report 1851, American Baptist Historical Society, Rochester, N.Y., 336.
 222. Letter of Evan Jones, American Baptist Missionary Union, Annual Report 1848, American Baptist Historical Society, Rochester, N.Y., 62.
 223. Ibid.
 224. American Baptist Missionary Union Annual Report 1860, American Baptist Historical Society, Rochester, N.Y.
 225. Ibid.
 226. James Mooney, *Myths of the Cherokees* (Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethology, Washington, D.C., 1900), 225.
 227. Debo, 203.
 228. West, 36, 37.
 229. Denslow, 75.
 230. Gaskins, 92. Murrow was from Jefferson County, Georgia but his family was originally from Charleston, S.C. For further information on Murrow, see Raymond L. Holcomb, *Father Murrow: the Life and Times of Joseph Samuel Murrow, Baptist Missionary, Confederate Indian Agent, Indian Educator, and the Father of Freemasonry in Indian Territory* (Atoka, OK: Atoka County Historical Society, 1994).
 231. Gaskins, 93.
 232. Ibid.
 233. Gaskins, 107–108.
 234. J. Leitch Wright, *Creeks and Seminoles* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986), 76. That the Factors were an old and important family among the Seminole Nation is evidenced by their “ownership of large numbers of cattle and slaves.” (99) However, understanding them as slave owners is complicated by the fact that many of them were married to the “slaves” that they owned. James Factor, himself, was married to a black woman. Another member of the Factor family emancipated his wife and children in 1843. (Wright, 99)
 235. Denslow, 67.
 236. West, 108.
 237. Denslow, 75.
 238. G. W. Grayson, *A Creek Warrior for the Confederacy: The Autobiography of Chief G. W. Grayson*, W. David Biard, ed. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988), 127.
 239. Asi Yahola (Osceola) was a prominent leader of the African American/ Seminole resistance movement in Florida. He was married to an African American runaway slave. Some reporters state the cause of the Second Seminole War was

- the seizure of Asi Yahola's African wife by merchants who sought to sell her back into slavery. Asi Yahola was finally murdered following treachery by federal authorities.
240. Denslow, 70–75. For information on Opothle Yahola, see John Bartlett Meserve, "Chief Opothleyahola," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 10 (Winter, 1931): 439–452; Clee Woods, "Oklahoma's Great Opothle Yahola," *North South Trader* 4, (January-February): 22–36; Mrs. Clement Clay, "Recollections of Opothleyahola," *Arrow Points* 4 (February 1922): 35–36.
 241. John Marrant, *A Sermon Preached on the 24th Day of June 1789, Being the Festival of St. John the Baptist, At the Request of the Right Worshipful the Grand Master Prince Hall, and the Rest of the Brethren of the African Lodge of the Honourable Society of Free & Accepted Masons in Boston* (Boston: The Bible & Heart, 1789), [microfilm] Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York, N.Y., 5.
 242. Ibid.
 243. "Keetoowah Laws -April 29, 1859" in Tyner.

CHAPTER FOUR: "BETWEEN TWO FIRES"

1. Jay Monaghan, *Civil War on the Western Border 1854–1865*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1955), 226–227.
2. Evan Jones to George Butler, September 8, 1858, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans, [microform], 1825–1865," American Baptist Historical Society, Rochester, N.Y.
3. Morris Wardell, *A Political History of the Cherokee Nation, 1838–1907* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1938), 120.
4. *Fort Smith Times*, quoted in Annie Abel, *The Indian as Slaveholder and Secessionist*, (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 47.
5. John Jones to J.G.Warren, November 17, 1859, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans." In spite of these threats or perhaps because of them, Jones noted in the same letter that the "antislavery principles, both religious and political, are taking hold upon the Cherokee mind."
6. William Penn Adair quoted in William Gerald McLoughlin, *Champions of the Cherokees: Evan and John B. Jones* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990), 366.
7. John B. Jones to J.G.Warren, November 17, 1859, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans." Evan Jones was also ordered to leave the Cherokee Nation but as he was not as great a threat as his son, there was little effort to physically remove him.
8. Robert Cowart to John Jones, September 7, 1860, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans."
9. Janey B.Hendrix, "Redbird Smith and the Nighthawk Keetoowahs," *Journal of Cherokee Studies* 8, no. 2 (Fall, 1983): 75.
10. James Mooney, *Myths of the Cherokees* (Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Washington, D.C., 1900), 226.
11. Benny Smith, "The Keetoowah Society of the Cherokee Indians" (MA Thesis, Northwestern State College, Alva, Okla., 1967), 26. There is some speculation as to the particular meaning of the crossed pins that the Keetoowah "Pins" wore; one writer described the pins being set upright like a Christian cross. While this may be possible, it is likely that the crossed pins could represent the four directions as do the four logs in the sacred fire. The crossed pins could represent the sacred fire itself.

12. "Pin Indians," in Robert Wright, *Indian Masonry* (n.p., 1905) Ayer Collection, Newberry Library, Chicago, IL., 105.
13. Mooney, *Myths of the Cherokees*, 226.
14. "Trouble Brewing in the Cherokee Nation—What Does It Mean?" *Fort Smith Times*, May 4, 1860 in "More Concerning the Keetoowah Society," Fred S. Barde Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.
15. A.B.Greenwood to Elias Rector, in Abel, *The American Indian as Slaveholder and Secessionist*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 292.
16. *Ibid.*
17. "Miscellaneous Documents," Western History Collection, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma.
18. Robert Cowart to Elias Rector, in Abel, *The Indian as Slaveholder and Secessionist*, 294.
19. William Penn Adair to Stand Watie, quoted in William G.McLoughlin, *Cherokees and Christianity, 1794–1870: Essays on Acculturation and Cultural Persistence* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1994), 260.
20. Robert Cowart to John Jones, September 7, 1860, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans."
21. John B.Jones to J.G.Warren, October 25, 1860, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans."
22. Abel, *The American Indian as Slaveholder and Secessionist*, 68–69.
23. Choctaw and Chickasaw Convention, "Resolutions passed by the Convention of the Choctaws and Chickasaws, held at Boggy Depot, March 11th, 1861," Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art, Tulsa, Oklahoma.
24. John Ross, *The Papers of Chief John Ross*, Edited and with an introduction by Gary E. Moulton, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), Vol. 2:459–460. See also Gary E.Moulton, *John Ross, Cherokee Chief* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1978).
25. The Committee that Ross appointed was composed of Freemasons William P. Ross and John Spears with Keetoowah Lewis Downing and Thomas Pegg. [Moulton, *John Ross*, 247].
26. J.S.Dunham, "Editorial," *The Arkansas Gazette*, January 25, 1861.
27. Henry Rector to John Ross, *Papers of Chief John Ross*, 2:505; Craig Gaines, *The Confederate Cherokees: John Drew's Regiment of Mounted Rifles* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989), 39.
28. Ross, *Papers of Chief John Ross*, 2:458.
29. *Ibid.*
30. Ross, *Papers of Chief John Ross*, 2:464.
31. Ross to Cherokee Council quoted in Abel, *The American Indian as Slaveholder and Secessionist*, 72.
32. Report of E.H.Carruth, General Files, United States Bureau of Indian Affairs: Southern Superintendency, *Records of the Southern Superintendency of Indian Affairs, 1832–70* [microform] (Washington: National Archives and Records Service, General Services Administration, 1966).
33. According to William Mc Loughlin, the Bushyheadville Church of the Baptist Mission was the most integrated church in the Cherokee Nation. The records of the church clerk report thirty-five Cherokee, fifteen white, and twenty-six black members. [William G.McLoughlin, *Champions of the Cherokees*, 302].
34. Willard Upham to J.G.Warren, February 20, 1861, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans."
35. John B.Jones to B.Stow, July 12, 1858, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans."

36. Ibid.
37. John B. Jones to J.G. Warren, December 4, 1860, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans."
38. Ibid.
39. John B. Jones to J.G. Warren, March 6, 1861, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans."
40. Ibid.
41. Evan Jones to J.G. Warren, July 10, 1861, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans."
42. Sam Houston left home at the age of sixteen lived among the Cherokee for three years where he was adopted into the family of Chief Jolly and lived as a Cherokee in dress and language. Houston was made a Mason at *Cumberland Lodge* #8, Nashville Tennessee, in 1817. In 1818, he resigned his commission and removed with the "Old Settlers" to Indian Territory establishing a trading post near Webber's Falls and married into the Cherokee Nation. He moved in Texas in the early thirties and became a member of *Holland Lodge* #36, then under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Louisiana. In February of 1861, he refused to take the oath of allegiance to the Confederate States of America and was thus deposed.
43. "Report of a Committee of the Convention, being an Address to the People of Texas, March 30, 1861," in Abel, *The Indian as Slaveholder and Secessionist*, 93.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid.
46. Kenny Franks, *Stand Watie* (Memphis: Memphis State University Press, 1979), 116. Robert Toombs was also a Freemason.
47. Sammy Buice, "The Civil War and the Five Civilized Tribes" Ph.D. dissertation, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma, 1970, 10.
48. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*. 130 Volumes. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1900), Vol. III, 575; Wardell, 142.
49. The Scottish Rite is a higher degree of Freemasonry. It was established in the new world in Haiti in 1763 under the auspices of Stephen Morin. In the latter half of the eighteenth century, it entered the United States through chapters in Boston and Charleston.
50. Robert Denslow, *Freemasonry and the American Indian* (St. Louis: Missouri Lodge of Research, 1958), 61.
51. Constitutional Convention of Arkansas, *An Ordinance To Dissolve The Union Now Existing Between The State Of Arkansas And The Other States, United With, Her, Under The Compact Entitled "The Constitution Of The United States Of America"* [microform.] (Memphis: Lithographed from the original manuscript by O.Lederle, 1861).
52. Albert Pike to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, February 17, 1866, in Abel, *The American Indian as Slaveholder and Secessionist*, 135.
53. Benjamin McCulloch to the United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. III, 587.
54. Kenny Franks, *Stand Watie* (Memphis: Memphis State University Press, 1979), 115-116; Wardell, 127.
55. Albert Pike to Robert Toombs, May 29, 1861, in Abel, 189.
56. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. XIII, 493.

57. Albert Pike, *Message of the President and Report of Albert Pike, Commissioner of the Confederate States to the Indian nations west of Arkansas, of the results of his mission* [microform.] (Richmond: Enquirer Book and Job Press, 1861).
58. Elizabeth Watts, *Indian Pioneer History Collection* [microform], Grant Foreman, ed. (Oklahoma City Oklahoma: Indian Archives Division, Oklahoma Historical Society Microfilm Publications, 1978–1981); See also John C. Neilson, “Indian Masters, Black Slaves: An Oral History Of The Civil War In Indian Territory,” *Panhandle-Plains Historical Review* 65 (1992): 42–54.
59. Albert Pike to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, February 17, 1866, in Abel, 136; Christine Schultz White & Benton R. White, *Now the Wolf has Come: the Creek Nation in the Civil War* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1996), 24–25.
60. Ross, *Papers of Chief John Ross*, 2:469.
61. Craig Gaines, *The Confederate Cherokees: John Drew’s Regiment of Mounted Rifles* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989), 8.
62. Denslow, 75.
63. J. Leitch Wright, Jr., *Creeks & Seminoles: the Destruction and Regeneration of the Muscogulge People* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986), 87.
64. Moulton, 169–170.
65. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*. Vol. III, 625; Angie Debo, *The Road to Disappearance* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1941), 144; Abel, *The Indian as Slaveholder and Secessionist*, 194.
66. Franks, 116; Gaines, 8.
67. Debo, *The Road to Disappearance*, 145.
68. Henry F. Buckner to E.L. Compere, June 26, 1861, E.L. Compere Papers, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tenn.
69. Report of E.H. Carruth, General Files, Report of E.H. Carruth, General Files, United States Bureau of Indian Affairs: Southern Superintendency, *Records of the Southern Superintendency of Indian Affairs, 1832–70* [microform] (Washington: National Archives and Records Service, General Services Administration, 1966).
70. Cherokee Nation, *Memorial of the Delegates of the Cherokee Nation to the President of the United States and the Senate and House of Representatives in Congress*, (Washington: Washington Chronicle Print, 1866), 4.
71. Marguerite McFadden “Colonel John Thompson Drew: Cherokee Cavalier,” *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 59, no. 1 (1981): 30–53.
72. Ross, *Papers of Chief John Ross*, 2:478.
73. Ross, *Papers of Chief John Ross*, 2:479.
74. Cherokee Nation, Creek Nation, and Choctaw Nation, *Memorial Of The Delegates Of The Cherokee, Creek, And Choctaw Nations Of Indians, Remonstrating Against The Passage Of The Bill (S. 679) To organize The Territory Of Oklahoma, Consolidate The Indian Tribes Under A Territorial Government, And Carry Out The Provisions Of The Treaties Of 1866 With Certain Indian Tribes* [microform] (Washington: Govt. Print. Off., 1870).
75. Debo, *The Road to Disappearance*, 147.
76. Opothle Yahola to Abraham Lincoln, quoted in Debo, *The Road to Disappearance*, 147–148.
77. For more information on this first Civil War battle in the American West, see Return Ira Holcombe, *An Account Of The Battle Of Wilson’s Creek, Or Oak Hills, Fought Between The Union Troops, Commanded By Gen. N. Lyon And The Southern, Or Confederate Troops, Under Command Of Gens. McCulloch*

- And Price, On Saturday, August 10, 1861, In Greene County, Missouri* (Springfield, Missouri: Dow & Adams, 1883); Edwin C. Bearss, *The Battle of Wilson's Creek*, with battle maps by David Whitman, (Wilson's Creek, Missouri: George Washington Carver Birthplace District Association, 1975).
78. Carruth, *Records of the Southern Superintendency of Indian Affairs*, 1832–70.
 79. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. III, 674; Moulton, 172. See also Ari Kelman, "Deadly Currents: John Ross's Decision Of 1861," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 73, no. 1 (1995): 80–103; Gary E. Moulton, "Chief John Ross during the Civil War," *Civil War History* 19, no. 4 (1973): 314–333.
 80. Evan Jones to F.A. Smith, September 3, 1861, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans."
 81. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. III, 673–675.
 82. Moulton, 170. John Ross was, at this point, "overborne" by the struggle over slavery. Though Ross owned of over one hundred slaves, a visitor to the Ross plantation stated, "the niggers are the masters and do about as they please." [Albert D. Richardson, quoted in Laurence Foster, *Negro-Indian Relations in the Southeast* (Philadelphia, n.p. 1935); 60.] Ross's wife, Mary, was a Quaker and vehemently opposed to an alliance with the South. "It is said that his wife was more staunch than her husband and held out until the last. When an attempt was made to raise a Confederate flag over the Indian council house, her opposition was so spirited that it prevented the completion of the design." [Howard quoted in Abel, *The American Indian as Slaveholder and Secessionist*, 220].
 83. Ross, *Papers of Chief John Ross*, 2:481.
 84. Ibid. "At that convention, under duress the most complete and unmitigated, our people were compelled to empower the authorities of the Nation to treat with the rebels. We repeat it with emphasis, *This convention was held, and this action was taken only as a means of escaping extermination.* [emphasis mine] A band of Stand Watie's Rebels had already concealed arms in a hotel, in front of the public square, where the convention was held. In case the convention had determined on a contrary course, this band was prepared then and there to open a war of extermination on the loyal Cherokees." Cherokee Nation, *Memorial of the Delegates of the Cherokee Nation to the President of the United States and the Senate and House of Representatives in Congress*, 4.
 85. Edward Everett Dale and Gaston Litton, *Cherokee Cavaliers: Forty Years Of Cherokee History As Told In The Correspondence Of The Ridge-Watie-Boudinot Family* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1969), 108–109; Grace Steele Woodward, *The Cherokees* [1st ed.] (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), 268; Franks, 117.
 86. Ross, *Papers of Chief John Ross*, 2:483.
 87. Ophthle Yahola and Sands Harjo to John Ross, *Papers of Chief John Ross*, 2:482.
 88. John Ross to Opothle Yahola, *Papers of Chief John Ross*, 2:488.
 89. Cherokee Executive Department to Benjamin McCulloch, *Papers of Chief John Ross*, 2:483. Three of the five men signing this petition were members of Cherokee Lodge #21.
 90. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. III, 692; The loyal Cherokee described Watie's troops differently: "There were a few full blooded Cherokees in this regiment, and a somewhat larger number of mixed blood Cherokees, but the majority of the regiment were white men, and the majority of those white men were not citizens of the Cherokee Nation," Cherokee Nation,

- Memorial of the Delegates of the Cherokee Nation to the President of the United States and the Senate and House of Representatives in Congress*, 3–4.
91. Francis Samuel Drake, *Dictionary Of American Biography, Including Men Of The Time; Containing Nearly Ten Thousand Notices Of Persons Of Both Sexes, Of Native And Foreign Birth, Who Have Been Remarkable, Or Prominently Connected With The Arts, Sciences, Literature, Politics, Or History Of The American Continent. Giving Also The Pronunciation Of Many Of The Foreign And Peculiar American Names, A Key To The Assumed Names Of Writers, And A Supplement* (Boston, J.R.Osgood and Company, 1872), Vol. XIX, 538.
 92. Ibid.
 93. J.Fred Latham, *The Story of Oklahoma Masonry* (Oklahoma City: Grand Lodge of Oklahoma, 1958), 6–11.
 94. John W.Stapler to John Ross, *Papers of Chief John Ross*, 2:488–489. Anderson Downing was a relative of Keetoowah leader and Baptist minister, Lewis Downing.
 95. Motey Kennard to John Ross, *Papers of Chief John Ross*, 2:489; Moulton, 173.
 96. Monaghan, 217–218. See also Edward E.Dale, “The Cherokees in the Confederacy,” *Journal of Southern History* 13 (1947): 159–85; Fairfax Downey, “The Blue, the Grey, and the Red,” *Civil War Times* 1 (July 1962): 6–9, 26–30; Leroy H.Fischer, “The Civil War in Indian Territory,” *Journal of the West* 12 (1973): 345–55.
 97. John Ross to Opothle Yahola, *Papers of Chief John Ross*, 2:492.
 98. Monaghan, 218.
 99. John B.Jones to J.G.Warren, November 17, 1859, “Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans.”
 100. Evan Jones to J.G.Warren, October 16, 1861, “Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans.”
 101. Kenneth Wiggins Porter, *Relations between Negroes and Indians within the present limits of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, 1935), 63.
 102. Abel, 23.
 103. John B.Jones to J.G.Warren, November 17, 1859, “Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans.”; Mooney, *Myths of the Cherokees*, 225–226; Angie Debo, *The Road to Disappearance*, 203.
 104. However, as mentioned earlier, “slavery” among the traditionalists such as Opothle Yahola was quite a different institution. Ex-slave Lucinda Davis was “owned” by Opothle Yahola and recalls her situation, “My mammy and pappy belong to two different masters, but dey live together on that place. Dat de way de Creek slaves do lots of times. Dey work patches and give dey masters most all dey make, but dey have some for demselves. Dey didn’t have to stay on the master’s place and work like I hear de slaves of de white people and de Cherokee and Choctaw people say dey had to do.” [Lucinda Davis in T.Lindsay Baker and Julie Baker, ed., *The W.P.A. Oklahoma Slave Narratives*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), 109].
 105. Latham, 11; Grant Foreman, *A History of Oklahoma* (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1945), 105. See also John B.Meserve, “Chief Opothleyahola,” *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* 9 (December 1931): 441–450; Blue Clark Carter, “Opothleyahola and the Creeks during the Civil War,” in H.Glenn Jordan and Thomas M.Holm, *Indian leaders: Oklahoma’s First Statesmen* (Oklahoma City, OK: Oklahoma Historical Society 1979).

106. Andre Paul DuChuteau, "The Creek Nation on the Eve of the Civil War," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 52 (Fall, 1974): 299–300.
107. Edwin C. Bearss, "The Civil War Comes to Indian Territory, 1861, The Flight of Opothleyoholo," *Journal of the West* 11 (1972): 9–42; Monaghan, 219; Daniel Littlefield, *Africans and Seminoles: from Removal to Emancipation* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1977), 182.
108. Gaines, 25.
109. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. VIII, 25; White, 26.
110. Debo, *The Road to Disappearance*, 148; Angie Debo, *A History of the Indians in the United States* (Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1970), 174.
111. David McIntosh to John Drew, September 11, 1861, in John Drew Papers, Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art, Tulsa, Oklahoma.
112. Bearss, "The Civil War Comes to Indian Territory," 12.
113. Debo, *The Road to Disappearance*, 148.
114. Monaghan, 220.
115. Motey Kennard and Echo Harjo to John Ross, *Papers of Chief John Ross*, 2:496–497.
116. John Ross to Motey Kennard and Echo Harjo, *Papers of Chief John Ross*, 2:497.
117. See Cherokee Nation, *Message Of The Principal Chief Of Cherokee Nation: Together With The Declaration Of The Cherokee People Of The Causes Which Have Led Them To Withdraw From Their Connection With The United States* (Washington: L.Hargrett, 1943).
118. Evan Jones to F.A.Smith, October 28, 1861, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans."
119. John Ross quoted in William G. McLoughlin, *Champions of the Cherokees*, 399.
120. In the listings of the founding members of Cherokee Lodge #21, there is a listing for James Daniel. Whether this is James McDaniel or not is open for speculation.
121. Evan Jones to F.A.Smith, Nov. 7, 1861, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans."
122. Debo, *A History of the Indians in the United States*, 175.
123. *Ibid.*
124. Franks, 120; Gaines 24.
125. Monaghan, 219.
126. Monaghan, 221.
127. Wiley Britton, *The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War* (Kansas City: Franklin Hudson Publishing Company, 1922), 38. Wiley Britton was a private who fought with the Sixth Kansas Cavalry of the United States Army. He later wrote of these experiences in this book and two others.
128. James J. Diamond quoted in Gaines, 32.
129. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. VIII, 6.
130. *Ibid.*
131. For a description of the events leading up to the Battle of Round Mountain, see Robert W. DeMoss, *Exodus to Glory* (Tulsa, OK : Handi-Printing, 1991); Muriel Wright, "Colonel Cooper's Civil War Report on the Battle of Round Mountain," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 39 (Winter, 1961): 352–97; Orpha Russel, "Ehvn-hv lwue: Site of Oklahoma's First Civil War Battle," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 29 (Winter, 1951–52): 401–407.
132. Motey Kennard and Echo Harjo to John Ross, *Papers of Chief John Ross*, 2:505.

133. James Porum, Cabin Smith, and Porum Davis to John Ross, *Papers of Chief John Ross*, 2:506.
134. Wright, *Creeks and Seminoles*, 307; Edwin C. McReynolds, *The Seminoles, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1957)*, 293–299.
135. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. VIII, 6.
136. *Ibid.* This number is surely inflated.
137. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. VIII, 7; Britton, 39–40.
138. For an excellent description of the flight of Opthle Yahola and the struggle to reach Kansas, see White.
139. Cherokee Nation, *Memorial of the Delegates of the Cherokee Nation to the President of the United States and the Senate and the House of Representatives in Congress*, 5.
140. William Potter Ross to John Drew, November 29, 1861, in Foreman Papers, Gilcrease Institute of Art and History, Tulsa Oklahoma.
141. This is how the Southern newspapers portrayed Opothle Yahola and his “four thousand” warriors as they fled across the Cherokee Nation for Kansas. (Monaghan, 225)
142. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. VIII, 7.
143. *Ibid.*
144. *Ibid.*
145. Pickens Bengé quoted in Gaines, 45.
146. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. VIII, 7–8.
147. Delegates of the Cherokee Nation, *Memorial of the Delegates of the Cherokee Nation to the President of the United States and the Senate and the House of Representatives in Congress* (Washington, D.C., 1866), 5–6.
148. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. VIII, 7–8.
149. Bearss, “The Civil War Comes to Indian Territory, 1861, The Flight of Opothleyoholo,” 21.
150. Mooney, 226.
151. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. VIII, 7.
152. Michael Roethler, “Negro Slavery among the Cherokee Indians, 1540–1866” (Ph.D. dissertation, Fordham University, 1964), 212.
153. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. VIII, 7–8.
154. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. VIII, 18.
155. Mary Grayson, United States Works Progress Administration, Oklahoma Writers Project, *Slave Narratives* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1932).
156. Phoebe Banks, United States Works Progress Administration, Oklahoma Writers Project, *Slave Narratives* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1932).
157. Janey Hendrix, Redbird Smith and the Nighthawk Keetoowahs,” *Journal of Cherokee Studies* 8, no. 1 (Spring, 1983): 25.
158. Victor M. Rose, *Ross’ Texas Brigade* (Kennesaw, GA.: Continental Books, 1960), 42.

159. James Larney quoted in Debo, *The Road to Disappearance*, 150.
160. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. VIII, 10–11.
161. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. VIII, 22–33;
162. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. VIII, 32.
163. Cherokee Nation, *Memorial of the Delegates of the Cherokee Nation to the President of the United States and the Senate and House of Representatives in Congress*, 6.
164. Latham, 14.
165. Grant Foreman, quoted in Latham, 13.
166. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. VIII, 13.
167. Abel, *The American Indian as Slaveholder and Secessionist*, 261; Gaines, 59; Monaghan, 227.
168. Dr. A.B.Campbell to Dr. James Barnes, February 8, 1862, in United States Office of Indian Affairs, *Annual Reports of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, [1824–1848]* (New York, N.Y.: AMS Press, 1976), 294–295.
169. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. VIII, 25.
170. Collamore quoted in Abel, *The American Indian as Slaveholder and Secessionist*, 262.
171. Evan Jones to F.A.Smith, May 12, 1862, “Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans.”
172. Evan Jones to William Dole, January 21, 1861, *Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs*, Record Group 75, Tape M–234, Roll 99, Archives of the United States of America, Washington, D.C.
173. Evan Jones quoted in American Baptist Missionary Union, *Forty Ninth Annual Report*, July 1863, American Baptist Historical Society, Rochester, N.Y.

CHAPTER FIVE: “SO LAUDABLE AN ENTERPRISE”

1. Annie Abel, *The American Indian in the Civil War* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 256–257.
2. Edmund Danzinger, Jr. “The Office of Indian Affairs and the Problems of Civil War Refugees in Kansas,” *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 35 (Autumn, 1969): 261–263.
3. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 130 Volumes, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880–1900), Vol. CXVII, 5.
4. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. CXVII, 6.
5. Ibid.
6. Seminole Agent G.C.Snow, quoted in Abel, *The American Indian in the Civil War*, 83.
7. Annie Abel, *The American Indian in the Civil War*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 84; Michelle Starr, “The Other Civil War: Muskogee Autumn,” *Civil War Times Illustrated* 22, no. 1 (1983): 26–31.
8. In the late eighteen fifties, there had been a concerted effort on the part of the Cherokee to create a town called “Keetoowah” and make it the national

- capital. When Fort Gibson was abandoned by the Federal troops, the property was turned over to the Cherokee Nation. The Cherokee National Council created the town of “Keetoowah” on November 6, 1857. However, because of the remote location of the town and because people were so used to it being called Fort Gibson, it never became that which it was supposed to be. “When Fort Gibson Was Called Kee-too-wah,” Clipping from *Tulsa World*, June 13, 1920, Grant Foreman Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, OK.
9. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. CXVII, 5.
 10. Abel, *The American Indian in the Civil War*, 85.
 11. Evan Jones letter to F.A. Smith, May 12, 1862, “Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans, [microform], 1825–1865,” American Baptist Historical Society, Rochester, N.Y.
 12. “The slave owners which were practically all Indians or descendants of the Indians owned many slaves and naturally they were not interested in the War at its beginning. They did not care to take sides with either the North or the South until the question of slavery arose. Most all of the slave owners made a treaty with Albert Pike, Confederate Commissioner, to fight with the South. This is also true of many of the full-blood Creeks. There was a faction, however, that did not care to be bound to the treaty and sought to take refuge in Kansas and arranged to go there taking with them all of their possessions. Enroute to Kansas they were overtaken and attacked by the Confederates. They suffered a great loss at the hands of the Confederates, and they finished their trip into Kansas in a terrible storm in the dead of winter, sick, dying, and destitute. They were very angry at the Confederates and all of them enlisted in the Northern Army. There were some, however, who enlisted in the Northern Army that stayed at home and if I remember right they organized three regiments of the Creeks and they were stationed at Ft. Gibson under the command of General Blunt. Those who joined the Confederacy were also organized into regiments and they were stationed in the Choctaw, and Chickasaw Nation at Ft. Washita and at other forts in that locality under the command of Colonel D.H. Cooper and J.M. McIntosh.” Works Progress Administration: Oklahoma Writers Project, *Interview with John Harrison*, [microfilm] (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1932).
 13. For a background on the situation in Kansas, see James A. Rawley, *Race & Politics; “Bleeding Kansas” and the Coming of the Civil War* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1969); James P. Barry, *Bloody Kansas, 1854–65; Guerrilla Warfare Delays Peaceful American Settlement* (New York: Watts, 1972); Albert E. Castel, *A Frontier State at War: Kansas, 1861–1865* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1979).
 14. Augustus Wattles to Major Farnsworth, August 25, 1861, in Annie Abel, *The Indian as Slaveholder and Secessionist* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 229.
 15. Morris Wardell, *A Political History of the Cherokee Nation, 1838–1907* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1938), 151.
 16. James H. Lane to Indian Agents Sac and Foxes-Shawnees-Delawares-Kickapoos-Potawatomies—and Kaws, August 22, 1861 in Abel, *The American Indian as Slaveholder and Secessionist*, 229.
 17. Albert Castel, “Civil War Kansas and the Negro” in *Journal of Negro History* 51 (January 1966, No. 1): 127. Castel refers to Lane as “a master demagogue, hypnotic orator, and utterly unscrupulous.” Many historians share Castel’s assessment.

18. George Cutler quoted in David A. Nichols, *Lincoln and the Indians: Civil War Policy and Politics* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1978), 34.
19. Dole to Captain Price, September 13, 1861, in Abel, *The American Indian as Slaveholder and Secessionist*, 233.
20. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. III, 514.
21. Larry Rampp, "Negro Troop Activity in Indian Territory, 1863–1865," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 47 (1969): 534. For background on the use of African American troops in the Civil War, see Dudley Taylor Cornish, *The Sable Arm: Negro Troops In the Union Army, 1861–1865* (New York: Longmans & Green, 1956); Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the Civil War*. [1st ed.] (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1953); George Washington Williams, *A History of the Negro Troops in the War of the Rebellion, 1861–1865: Preceded by a Review of the Military Services of Negroes in Ancient and Modern times* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969); Charles Harris Wesley and Patricia Romero, *Negro Americans in the Civil War: from Slavery to Citizenship* (New York, Publishers Company, 1969).
22. Castel, 127.
23. For information on early Black settlements, see Kansas State Historical Society: Historic Sites Survey, *Black Historic Sites, a Beginning Point* (Topeka, Kansas: Kansas State Historical Society, 1977). There are many books on the "exoduster" period of Black migration of the latter half of the nineteenth century, but few focus on this early period of black history in Kansas.
24. Daniel Littlefield, *Africans and Seminoles: from Removal to Emancipation* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1977), 184.
25. Castel, 128.
26. *Emporia News*, December 21, 1861. Albert Castel believes this reference concerns the widespread belief that the Confederacy was using slaves as soldiers. It could have just as easily been referring to the Confederate Cherokee.
27. John Ross, *The Papers of Chief John Ross*, Edited and with an introduction by Gary E. Moulton, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), Vol. II: 560–568.
28. Craig Gaines, *The Confederate Cherokees: John Drew's Regiment of Mounted Rifle* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989), 57.
29. Ross, quoted in Wardell, 132.
30. "That portion of the Cherokee warriors who had taken part in this fight, but whose families were at home, returned home from the battle...The men returned to the service, and that portion of the regiment that had not gone to Kansas, was once more brought together. These loyal men accepted such terms, simply because there was nothing else that they could do, to escape being hunted down like wild beasts, and keep their families from being exposed to any abuse the rebels might see fit to heap upon them. With alternate hope and despair, they waited for their day of deliverance; under the eye and the power of an ever watchful and suspicious foe." Cherokee Nation, *Memorial of the Delegates of the Cherokee Nation to the President of the United States and the Senate and House of Representatives in Congress* (Washington: Washington Chronicle Print, 1866), 6.
31. Stand Watie to Douglas Cooper in Edward E. Dale and Gaston Litton, ed., *Cherokee Cavaliers: Forty Years of Cherokee History as Told in the Correspondence of the Ridge-Watie-Boudinot family* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1940), 112.
32. Stand Watie to Douglas Cooper in Dale and Litton, ed., 113.

33. Ross, *Papers of Chief John Ross*, 2:508.
34. Stand Watie to Douglas Cooper in Dale and Litton, ed., 113. In this sarcastic statement, Watie was referring to the murder of his relatives by conservatives following the Treaty of New Echota in the early days of Indian Territory.
35. Ibid.
36. Stand Watie to Douglas Cooper in Dale and Litton, ed., 113..
37. Stephen Foreman, "Diary," January 11, 1862 in Western History Collection, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma.
38. Kenny Franks, *Stand Watie* (Memphis: Memphis State University Press, 1979), 182–183. Though Chief Ross has actually never been determined to be a Keetoowah, his son Robert Ross was a member of the Keetoowah Society. Robert Ross also held the sacred wampums; when he died, his father came into possession of them. [Janey Hendrix, "Redbird Smith and the Nighthawk Keetoowahs" *Journal of Cherokee Studies* 8, no. 2 (Fall, 1983): 76.]
39. Several of the Foreman family members were also brethren at Cherokee Lodge #21.
40. Stephen Foreman, "Diary," January 11, 1862.
41. Ross, *Papers of Chief John Ross*, 2:508.
42. Morris Sheppard in T.Lindsey Baker and Julie P.Baker, *The WPA Oklahoma Slave Narratives* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), 378–379.
43. Hannah Hicks, *Diary of Hannah Hicks*, (Tulsa, OK: Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art, 1977), 10.
44. Malucy Bear, quoted in Angie Debo, *The Road to Disappearance* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1941), 153.
45. Pea Ridge National Military Park, *The Battle of Pea Ridge, 1862* (Rogers, Ark.: The Park, 1963), 3–5; See also William L.Shea, *War in the West: Pea Ridge and Prairie Grove* (Fort Worth, Tex.: Ryan Place Publishers, 1996); Roy A. Clifford, "The Indian Regiments in the Battle of Pea Ridge," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 25, (Winter, 1947–48): 314–322.
46. R.S.Bevier, *History of the First and Second Missouri Brigades, 1861–1862* (St. Louis, n.p., 1879), 92–93. In all probability, these were Drew's Keetoowahs for General Albert Pike had only given specific orders to fight "in their own fashion" to Drew's full-blood brigade. [*Official Records*, Vol. VIII, 289.]
47. Elizabeth Watts, *Indian Pioneer History Collection* [microform], Grant Foreman, ed. (Oklahoma City Oklahoma: Indian Archives Division, Oklahoma Historical Society Microfilm Publications, 1978–1981).
48. Gaines, 89.
49. Gaines, 90. For more information, see Walter L.Brown "Albert Pike and the Pea Ridge Atrocities," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 38, no. 4 (1979): 345–359; Roy A. Clifford, "The Indian Regiments in the Battle of Pea Ridge," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 25 (Winter 1947–48): 314–322; Ohland Morton, "Confederate Government Relations with the Five Civilized Tribes," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 31 (1953–54): 189–204.
50. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. XVII, 977.
51. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. XVIII, 41.
52. Albert Pike, *To the Chiefs and People of the Cherokees, Creeks, Seminoles, Chickasaws, and Choctaws*, [microform] (Fort McCulloch, OK: n.p., 1862).
53. Coffin to Dole, March 3, 1862, in Abel, *The American Indian as Slaveholder and Secessionist*, 278.

54. Evan Jones to F.A.Smith, September 1, 1862, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans."
55. Evan Jones to Commissioner William Dole, United States Office of Indian Affairs, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1862* (New York: AMS Press, 1976), 156.
56. Abel, *The American Indian in the Civil War*, 92.
57. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. VIII, 206.
58. *Ibid.*, 532.
59. *Ibid.*, 625.
60. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. XVIII, 665.
61. Angie Debo, *A History of the Indians in the United States* (Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1970), 176.
62. Britton, *The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War*, 62; Wiley Britton, *The Civil War on the Border* (New York and London: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1890), 299.
63. Britton, *The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War*, 63.
64. Gaines, 96. Hunter was furious that Lane and his supporters had taken the lead in this Indian expedition. Lane, at every chance, thumbed his nose at Hunter and this further drove Hunter close to the edge. In his furor, Hunter wrote several letters to President Lincoln that Lane had bested him and slighted him before Lincoln. Lincoln, finding it hard to answer "so ugly a letter in good temper," suggested to Hunter, "If I dare to make a suggestion I would say you are adopting the best possible way to ruin yourself." The most serious consequences of the Lane/Hunter struggle were, of course, the Native Americans who were undersupplied and overextended. (Nichols, 40).
65. Abel, *The American Indian in the Civil War: 1862-1865*, 108; Kenneth Wiggins Porter, "Billy Bowlegs (Holata Micco) in the Civil War" *Florida Historical Quarterly* 45 (April, 1967): 390-401.
66. Chitto Harjo quoted in Debo, *A History of the Indians of the United States*, 176.
67. Emmett Starr, *History of the Cherokee Indians* (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma: 1921), 160-161.
68. McLoughlin, *Champions of the Cherokees*, 403.
69. Marybelle W.Chase, *Indian Home Guards: Civil War Service Records* (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Marybelle W. Chase, 1993), 82. It is interesting that Evan Jones was a Chaplain for the Mvskoke unit and John for the Cherokee unit. Perhaps it was that Evan had engaged in more frequent missions to the Mvskoke Nation and was thus better acquainted with its peoples.
70. Evan Jones to William Dole, January 21, 1862, Ross Papers, Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art, Tulsa, Oklahoma. See also Gary E. Moulton "John Ross and W.P.Dole: A Case Study of Lincoln's Indian Policy," *Journal of the West* 12, no. 3 (1973): 414-423.
71. Britton, *The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War*, 64.
72. Coffin to Dole, April 7, 1862, in Abel, *American Indian in the Civil War: 1862-1865*, 103.
73. Britton, *The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War*, 62.
74. *Ibid.*
75. Jack Kilpatrick and Anna G.Kilpatrick, *Friends of Thunder: Folktales of the Oklahoma Cherokee* (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1964), 168. The Uktena is a magical giant snake with the horns of a deer that plays a prominent

- role in the religion of the Southeastern Native Americans. It is believed that an earthquake in the early nineteenth century was attributed to be the rumblings of Uktena that foretold the removal of the people to the Indian Territory west of the Mississippi. The uwod are brown spots taken from the inside of a giant magical lizard in the olden days and serve to protect their holders from harm.
76. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. XIII, 431.
 77. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. XIII, 486.
 78. *Ibid.*, 430–431.
 79. Coffin to Dole, June 25, 1862, in Abel, *American Indian in the Civil War*, 123.
 80. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. XIII, 450.
 81. Wardell, 152.
 82. Debo, *A History of the Indians of the United States*, 176.
 83. William E. Coffin to John Ross, June 16, 1862, John Ross Collection, Western History Collection, University of Oklahoma.
 84. William G. McLoughlin, *Champions of the Cherokees: Evan and John B. Jones* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990), 402–403.
 85. Britton, *The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War*, 65.
 86. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. XIII, 137.
 87. Britton, *The Civil War on the Border*, 301; Steve Cottrell, *The Civil War in Indian Territory* (Gretna, Louisiana: Pelican Books, 1998), 46–47; Franks, 129.
 88. Britton, *The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War*, 65; Franks, 129.
 89. *Ibid.*; Franks, 129.
 90. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. XIII, 137.
 91. *Ibid.*, 138; Britton, *The Civil War on the Border*, 301.
 92. Emmet Starr, *History of the Cherokee Indians* (Oklahoma City, OK: 1921), 161–163.
 93. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. XIII, 138.
 94. Chase, *Indian Home Guards: Civil War Service Records*.
 95. Cherokee Nation, *Communication of the Delegation of the Cherokee Nation to the President of the United States*, (Washington, D.C.: Gibson Brothers, 1866).
 96. Larry Rampp, “Negro Troop Activity in Indian Territory, 1863–1865” *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 47 (1969): 534; James G. Blunt, “General Blunt’s Account of His Civil War Experiences, *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 1 (May, 1932): 243–245.
 97. Hondon B Hargrove, *Black Union Soldiers in the Civil War* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1988), 54. See also Thomas J. Boyd, *The Use of Negro Troops by Kansas During the Civil War* (Masters Thesis, Kansas State Teachers College, Pittsburg, Kansas, 1950).
 98. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. XIII, 486.
 99. Wardell, 154.
 100. *Ibid.*
 101. William P. Ross to John Drew, July 12, 1862, in John Drew Papers, Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

102. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. XIII, 138; Britton, *The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War*, 66.
103. Britton, *The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War*, 67; Britton, *The Civil War on the Border*, 302; Franks, 129.
104. Abel, *The Indian as Participant in the Civil War*, 137.
105. John Ross to Thomas Hindman, John Ross, *The Papers of Chief John Ross*, Edited and with an introduction by Gary E. Moulton, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), Vol. II: 512.
106. William Gerald McLoughlin, *After the Trail of Tears: the Cherokees' Struggle for Sovereignty, 1839–1880* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 205.
107. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. XIII, 162. It may seem confusing that several of those “captured” were already federal troops. However, if we think about the fact that some of Drew’s troops moved fluidly from one side to the other, this “capture” may have provided them and their families with some measure of protection.
108. Britton, *The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War*, 69; Wardell, 155.
109. Cherokee Nation, *Communication of the Delegation of the Cherokee Nation to the President of the United States*, (Washington, D.C.: Gibson Brothers, 1866).
110. Albert Pike, quoted in Gaines, 111.
111. Abel, *The Indian as Participant in the Civil War*, 137–138.
112. Britton, *The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War*, 72.
113. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. XIII, 485.
114. Britton, *The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War*, 72; Britton, *The Civil War on the Border*, 308; Cottrell, 50.
115. Abel, *The Indian as Participant in the Civil War*, 138.
116. As Craig Gaines put it in his *The Confederate Cherokees*, “Obviously Salomon had little interest in the fate of the Union Indians.” [Gaines, 117]
117. McLoughlin, *Champions of the Cherokees*, 404.
118. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. XIII, 512.
119. Ibid.
120. Ibid.
121. Britton, *The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War*, 74.
122. Gaines, 114.
123. Britton, *The Civil War on the Border*, 308.
124. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. XIII, 181–184.
125. Wardell, 155. Ross also carried something else with him. According to some Keetoowah legends, Ross supposedly carried the sacred wampum of the Keetoowah Society out with him to Kansas. By doing so, he kept them from being destroyed by Stand Watie and his followers when they burned Ross’s home.
126. Gaines, 115.
127. Britton, *The Civil War on the Border*, 311.
128. Stephen Foreman, Journals, July 28, 1862, Western History Collection, University of Oklahoma, Norman Oklahoma.

129. Stephen Foreman, *Journals*, July 30, 1862.
130. Ross, *Papers of Chief John Ross*, 2:517.
131. Hannah Hicks, *Diary of Hannah Hicks*, (Tulsa, OK: Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art, 1977), 7.
132. Hicks, 10.
133. Hicks, 7.
134. Hicks, 8.
135. Grace Steele Woodward, *The Cherokees* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), 281.
136. Evan Jones letter to F.A.Smith, September 1, 1862, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans."
137. Evan Jones letter to American Baptist Missionary Union, *Forty Ninth Annual Report*, American Baptist Missionary Union, July 1863, 288.
138. Statement of John Ross and Evan Jones, February 15, 1866, in Ross, *Papers of Chief John Ross*, 2:561.
139. Huckleberry Downing et. al. to John Ross, January 8, 1863, in Ross, *Papers of Chief John Ross*, 2:528.
140. Evan Jones letter to F.A.Smith, December 1, 1862, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans."
141. Many African-Americans were among the Native American refugees who had fled Indian Territory and were now living in camps in the Southern part of Kansas and Missouri. Daniel Littlefield, in his *Africans and Seminoles*, notes that "refugee blacks and Indians" spent the winter "in their camps at Neosho Falls and elsewhere." [Daniel F.Littlefield, *Africans and Seminoles: from Removal to Emancipation* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1977), 67.]
142. Huckleberry Downing et. al. to John Ross, January 8, 1863, in Ross, *Papers of Chief John Ross* 2:528.
143. Ibid.
144. Evan Jones to American Baptist Missionary Union, *Forty Ninth Annual Report*, American Baptist Missionary Union, July 1863, 290.
145. Statement of John Ross and Evan Jones, February 15, 1866, in Ross, *Papers of Chief John Ross* 2:561.
146. Report of J.M.Williams, Colonel 1st Kansas Colored Volunteer Infantry, in Joseph T.Wilson, *The Black Phalanx: African American Soldiers in the War of Independence, the War of 1812, and the Civil War* (New York: De Capo Press Inc., 1994), 227.
147. Williams in Wilson, 228.
148. Rampp, 536.
149. Williams in Wilson, 228.
150. Williams in Wilson, 231; See also Booker T.Washington, *The Story of the Negro: The Rise of the Race from Slavery* [Volume I] (New York: Doubleday, Page, and Company, 1909), 323; Albert Castell, "Civil War Kansas and the Negro," *Journal of Negro History* 51, no. 1 (January, 1966): 135.
151. William Truman, quoted in Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the Civil War* [Second Edition], (New York: De Capo Press, Inc., 1989), 115.
152. Ibid.
153. Ibid.
154. Hondon B Hargrove, *Black Union Soldiers in the Civil War* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1988), 52; Daniel Littlefield, *Africans and Seminoles*, 184.
155. Daniel Littlefield, *Africans and Creeks: from the Colonial Period to the Civil War* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1979), 239.
156. Ibid.

157. Patricia L.Faust, ed., *Historical Times Illustrated Encyclopedia of the Civil War* (New York: Harper and Row, Co., 1986), 668.
158. Huckleberry Downing et. al. to John Ross, January 8, 1863, in Ross, *Papers of Chief John Ross*, 2, 528. It must be remembered that Evan Jones and his native ministers through the Cherokee Baptist Missionary Society's outreach to the Mvskoke Nation prior to the Civil War had converted Chilly McIntosh. Both Chilly and D.N.McIntosh were affiliated with the Ebenezer Baptist Church and were to become Baptist ministers after the war. There must have been more than a few African Americans among the Creek soldiers.
159. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. XXII, 62.
160. Franks, 135.
161. McLoughlin, *Champions of the Cherokee*, 408–409.
162. Cherokee Nation, *Memorial of the Delegates of the Cherokee Nation to the President of the United States and the Senate and House of Representatives in Congress*, 7.
163. Ibid.
164. Ibid.; David R.Wrone, "The Cherokee Act Of Emancipation," *Journal of Ethnic Studies* 1, no. 3 (1973): 87–90.
165. Cherokee Nation, *Memorial of the Delegates of the Cherokee Nation to the President of the United States and the Senate and House of Representatives in Congress*, 12.
166. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. XXII, 101.
167. Debo, *The Road to Disappearance*, 154.
168. Debo, *The Road to Disappearance*, 160; Littlefield, *Africans and Creeks*, 239.
169. Debo, *The Road to Disappearance*, 160
170. Littlefield, *Africans and Creeks*, 239.
171. McLoughlin, *After the Trail of Tears*, 209.
172. Alvin Josephy, *Civil War on the American Frontier* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993), 370–371; Britton, 169–171; Grant Foreman, *A History of Oklahoma* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1945), 115–117.
173. Rampp, 536; Britton, *Union Indian Brigade*, 176.
174. Rampp, 536.
175. Stand Watie, quoted in Franks, 136–137.
176. Franks, 137.
177. McLoughlin, *After the Trail of Tears*, 211.
178. Ibid.
179. Ibid.
180. Justin Harlin to W.D.Coffin, September 2, 1863 in United States, Office of Indian Affairs, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs* (Washington, D.C., 1863), 179.
181. Rampp, 537–538.
182. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. XXII, 379–381.
183. Britton, *Union Indian Brigade*, 268.
184. Britton, *Union Indian Brigade*, 277–278.
185. James Williams quoted in Britton, *The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War*, 276–277.
186. Elizabeth Watts, *Indian Pioneer History Collection*.
187. Rampp, 547.

188. Britton, *The Union Brigade in the Civil War*, 282.
189. *Ibid.*
190. "Reminiscences of Aunt Chaney McNair, One-time slave of William Penn Adair" in George Rawick, ed., *The American Slave: A Composite Autobiography*, (Westport CT.: Greenwood Press, 1972), 213.

CHAPTER SIX: "THE MOST SACRED OBLIGATIONS"

1. Cherokee Nation, *Memorial of the Delegates of the Cherokee Nation to the President of the United States and the Senate and House of Representatives in Congress*, (Washington, D.C.: Washington Chronicle Print, 1866), 7.
2. Phoebe Banks in T.Lindsey Baker and Julie P.Baker, *The WPA Oklahoma Slave Narratives* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), 30.
3. Charles Royce, "Cherokee Nation," *Fifth Annual Report* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of Ethnology, n.d.), 376.
4. Justin Harlan to William Coffin, September 2, 1863, in United States, Office of Indian Affairs, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs* (Washington, D.C., 1863), 179.
5. James Mooney, *Myths of the Cherokees* (Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1900), 150; Russell Thornton, *The Cherokees: A Population History* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), 94.
6. Craig Gaines, *The Confederate Cherokees: John Drew's Regiment of Mounted Rifles* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989), 124.
7. For background on Quantrill, see Carl W.Breihnan, *The Killer Legions of Quantrill* (Seattle: Hangman Press, 1971); Albert E.Castel, *William Clarke Quantrill: his Life and Times* (New York: F.Fell, 1962); Edward E.Leslie, *The Devil Knows How to Ride: the True Story of William Clark Quantrill and his Confederate Raiders* (New York: Random House, 1996).
8. Evan Jones to F.A.Smith, September 22, 1863, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans, [microform], 1825-1865," American Baptist Historical Society, Rochester, N.Y.
9. Evan Jones to F.A.Smith, October 29, 1863, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans."
10. Evan Jones to Herman Lincoln, March 2, 1864, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans." John Ross also lost his eldest son to a Confederate prison camp.
11. Evan Jones to F.A.Smith, January 2, 1865, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans."
12. Evan Jones to F.A.Smith, July 31, 1865, "Correspondence of Missionaries to Native Americans."
13. Grant Foreman, *A History of Oklahoma*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1945), 116.
14. Stand Watie, quoted in Grace Steele Woodward, *The Cherokees* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), 287. It is worth noting that that although Watie burned much in Tahlequah including the Cherokee Council House, Cherokee Lodge #21 was not burned nor threatened and its charter and jewels were protected throughout the war. (Ballenger, *History of Cherokee Lodge #10*, Ballenger Papers, Newberry Library, Chicago, IL., 11)
15. Grant Foreman, in his *History of Oklahoma*, notes that Phillips and the Third Indian Home Guard, "killed a good many Indians without more warrant in

- military necessity than Stand Watie had to justify his ruthless slaughter.” (Foreman, 126)
16. Morris Sheppard in Baker, 379.
 17. Patsy Perryman in Baker, 315.
 18. Stephen Foreman, “Diary,” July 8, 1862, Western History Collection, University of Oklahoma, Norman Oklahoma.
 19. Ibid.
 20. Mary Grayson, in Baker, 177.
 21. Located at Fort Gibson was Fort Gibson Lodge #53 that had been formed with the assistance of members from Cherokee Lodge #21. In 1857, Fort Gibson would become the city of Keetoowah.
 22. William Gerald McLoughlin, *Champions of the Cherokees: Evan and John B. Jones* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990), 412. The mission at Fort Gibson was located within a few miles of the old Ebenezer Church, which was the first Baptist Church in Indian Territory. It was also the point at which the Keetoowah mission to the Mvskoke Nation was located.
 23. Daniel Littlefield, *The Cherokee Freedmen: from Emancipation to American Citizenship* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1978), 16.
 24. Jay Monaghan, *Civil War on the Western Border* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1955), 308.
 25. Wiley Britton, *The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War* (Kansas City: Franklin Hudson Publishing Company, 1922), 373. See also Jess C. Epple, *Battle of Cabin Creek, September 18, 19, 1864* (Muskogee, Okla.: Hoffman Printing, 1964).
 26. Ohland Morton, “Confederate Government Relations with the Five Civilized Tribes,” in *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 31, no. 2–3 (Autumn, 1933): 318.
 27. Stand Watie, quoted in Edward E. Dale and Gaston Lytton, *Cherokee Cavaliers: Forty Years of Cherokee History as told in the Correspondence of the Ridge-Watie-Boudinot Family* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1940), 128.
 28. Sarah Watie, in Dale and Lytton, 188.
 29. Stand Watie to Sarah Watie in Dale and Lytton, 228; Kenny Franks, *Stand Watie* (Memphis: Memphis State University Press, 1979), 179; Charles Royce, *The Cherokee Nation of Indians* (Chicago: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1975), 219.
 30. Dale and Lytton, 229; Morris Wardell, *A Political History of the Cherokee Nation, 1838–1907* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1938), 179.
 31. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. XLVIII/2, 1104.
 32. Ibid.
 33. Ibid.
 34. Ibid.
 35. Watie quoted in Wardell, 180.
 36. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. XLVIII/2, 1105.
 37. Kenny Franks, *Stand Watie* (Memphis: Memphis State University Press, 1979), 182. Francis Herron (Mosaic Lodge #125) was the delegated representative of Brigadier General James Veatch (Rockport Lodge #112) to meet with fellow Freemasons Bell and Adair.
 38. Peter Pitchlynn, prominent Freemason and President of the Choctaw Nation, had signed the same treaty less than a week before Watie. (Annie Abel, *The*

- American Indian and the End of the Confederacy, 1863–1866*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), 148). For information on Peter Pitchlynn, see Charles Lanman, “Peter Pitchlynn, Chief of the Choctaws,” *The Atlantic Monthly* 25, no. 150, 486–497; W.David Baird, *Peter Pitchlynn, Chief of the Choctaws* (Norman : University of Oklahoma Press, 1986).
39. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Vol. XLVIII/2, 1284.
 40. Laurence Hauptman, *Between Two Fires: American Indians in the Civil War* (New York: Free Press, 1995), 42–43; Gayle Ann Brown, “Confederate Surrenders in Indian Territory,” in LeRoy Henry Fischer, *The Civil War Era in Indian Territory* (Los Angeles: L.L.Morrison, 1974), 127–129.
 41. Annie Heloise Abel, *The American Indian and the End of the Confederacy, 1863–1866* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), 156.
 42. Bussey to Reynolds, July 10, 1865, in Abel, *The American Indian and the End of the Confederacy, 1863–1866*, 158.
 43. *Ibid.*, 156–157.
 44. Wardell, 181.
 45. Abel, *The American Indian and the End of the Confederacy*, 161.
 46. *Ibid.*
 47. *Ibid.*, 159.
 48. *Ibid.*, 160.
 49. Wardell, 181; Charles C.Royce, *The Cherokee Nation of Indians* (Chicago: Aldine Pub. Co., 1975), 221.
 50. Royce, 219–220.
 51. Robert Denslow, *Freemasonry and the American Indian* (St. Louis: Missouri Lodge of Research, 1958), 142–147; Hauptman, 182–183. For more information on Ely S.Parker, see William H.Armstrong, *Warrior in two Camps: Ely S. Parker, Union General and Seneca Chief* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1978); Harold W.Felton, *Ely S.Parker, Spokesman for the Senecas* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1973); Arthur C.Parker, *The Life of General Ely S.Parker* (New York: AMS Press, 1983).
 52. Angie Debo, *The Road to Disappearance* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1941), 167.
 53. Jane F.Lancaster, *Removal Aftershock: the Seminoles’ Struggles to Survive in the West, 1836–1866* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1994), 157.
 54. Grace Steele Woodward, *The Cherokees* [1st ed.] (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), 291. John Ross arrived from Washington prior to the conference, but was too tired to attend the opening ceremonies.
 55. Debo, *Road to Disappearance*, 167.
 56. *Ibid.*
 57. Abel, *The American Indian and the End of the Confederacy*, 171.
 58. *Ibid.*, 188.
 59. Marion Turtle Rock, *Illustrated History of Oklahoma, its Occupation by Spain and France—Its Sale to the United States—its Opening to Settlement in 1889—and the Meeting of the First Territorial Legislature*, (Topeka: C.B.Hamilton &c Son, 1890), 107–110.
 60. Annie Abel, *The American Indian and the End of the Confederacy 1863–1866*, 227.
 61. Howard Tyner, *The Keetoowah Society in Cherokee History*. (MA Thesis, University of Tulsa, 1949), 51.
 62. Woodward, 292.

63. United States Office of Indian Affairs, *Annual Reports of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, [1824–1848]* (New York, N.Y.: AMS Press, 1976), 315.
64. Wardell, 187.
65. Royce, 221–222.
66. Harlan, from Iowa, and James Lane from Kansas, had introduced a bill in Congress terminating federal treaties with the Indian Nations and opening up the Indian Territory for railroad and land speculation. A prominent portion of the bill was to consolidate all of the various nations into a single body; in addition, a large block of Cherokee Land, the Cherokee Outlet, would be turned over to Kansas. Chief Ross bitterly opposed Harlan's bill in Congress.
67. Woodward, 296.
68. Abel, *The American Indian and the End of the Confederacy*, 203.
69. *Ibid.*, 205.
70. *Ibid.*
71. United States Office of Indian Affairs, *Annual Reports of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, [1824–1848]* (New York, N.Y.: AMS Press, 1976), 336–343.
72. Royce, 222.
73. Wardell, 193.
74. Wardell, 193. Boudinot's statement can be viewed within the context of his role as an apologist for white control of the Five Nations. Even as a delegate to the Confederate States of America, he was quick to place the interests of the Cherokee Nation behind personal opportunity and political advancement.
75. Ross, *Papers*, 2:652.
76. Senate Debate on the Harlan Bill, in United States, *Congressional Globe*, 38th Congress, 2nd Session, 1021–1022.
77. Wardell, 194.
78. Cherokee Nation, *Communication of the Delegation of the Cherokee Nation to the President of the United States, Submitting the Memorial of their National Council, with the Correspondence between John Ross, Principal Chief, and Certain Officers of the Rebellious States* (Washington, Gibson Brothers Printers, 1866).
79. Abel, *The American Indian and the End of the Confederacy*, 346.
80. Cherokee Nation, *Council Records*, November 7, 1865, Oklahoma Historical Society Archives, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.
81. This was universally problematic within the Five Nations. The loyal Mvskoke and Seminole were willing to incorporate Africans into the Nation and grant them citizenship, but the Southern Delegations opposed the granting of equality. The Southern Indians found it quite distressing that the United States was asking the Indians to do what the U.S. itself had yet to do. They found the hypocrisy quite interesting and suspected, rightfully so, ulterior motives in such actions. [Abel, 211]
82. Annie Abel referred to the Harlan Bill as “pernicious to the extreme, designedly deceptive. Its real purpose was nothing more than the capitalistic exploitation of southern Indian preserves. Under the pretext of bringing the red man more nearly within the range of his white brother's wholly materialistic civilization, its framers intended to nullify the important treaty pledges of the United States and the Cherokees.” [Abel, *The American Indian and the End of the Confederacy*, 227.]
83. Michael Roethler, “Negro Slavery among the Cherokee Indians, 1540–1866” (Ph.D. dissertation, Fordham University, 1964), 219–220
84. *Ibid.*
85. McLoughlin, *Champions of the Cherokee*, 423. For a full description of the

- Cherokee delegations experiences in Washington, see Gary Moulton, *John Ross, Cherokee Chief* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1978), 186–195.
86. Cherokee Nation, *Memorial of the Delegates of the Cherokee Nation to the President of the United States and the Senate and House of Representatives in Congress*, 3.
 87. *Ibid.*, 9–10.
 88. *Ibid.*
 89. *Ibid.*, 4.
 90. Cherokee Nation, *Communication of the Delegation of the Cherokee Nation to the President of the United States, submitting the Memorial of their National Council, with the Correspondence between John Ross, Principal Chief, and Certain Officers of the Rebellious States* (Washington: Gibson Brothers, 1866).
 91. *Ibid.*
 92. Cherokee Nation, *Reply of the Southern Cherokees to the Memorial of Certain Delegates from the Cherokee Nation [microform]: Together with the Message of John Ross, Ex-chief of the Cherokees, and Proceedings of the Council of the “loyal Cherokees,” Relative to the Alliance with the So-called Confederate States: to the President, Senate, and House of Representatives* (Washington, D.C.: McGill & Whiterow, 1866), 3–10.
 93. Woodward, 301.
 94. Foreman, *History of Oklahoma*, 141; Abel, *The American Indian and the End of the Confederacy, 1863–1866*, 356.
 95. Foreman, *History of Oklahoma*, 141.
 96. James W. Parins, *John Rollin Ridge: His Life & Works* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991), 218.
 97. Abel, *The American Indian and Reconstruction*, 360; Littlefield, *The Cherokee Freedmen*, 25.
 98. Edward E. Dale and Gaston Litton, ed., *Cherokee Cavaliers: Forty Years of Cherokee History as told in the Correspondence of the Ridge-Watie-Boudinot Family* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1940), 243–244.
 99. *Ibid.*
 100. Abel, *The American Indian and The End of the Civil War, 1863–1866*, 328.
 101. Debo, *The Road to Disappearance*, 173–174.
 102. Franks, 191.
 103. Joseph Thoburn, ed. “The Cherokee Question” *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 2, No. 2 (June, 1924): 172–180.
 104. “Treaty Concluded July 19, 1866” in Royce, 212–218; Wardell, 204; Abel, *The American Indian and the End of the Civil War 1863–1866*, 361–362; Paul F. Lambert, “The Cherokee Reconstruction Treaty Of 1866,” *Journal of the West* 12, no. 3 (1973): 471–489.
 105. Wilma Mankiller and Michael Wallis, *Mankiller: A Chief and Her People* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1993), 129; Wardell, 205.
 106. G. W. Nichols, “The Indian: What Should we Do with Him” in *Harper’s Monthly* 40 (April, 1870): 733.
 107. William Penn Adair, quoted in Wardell, 205.
 108. “Treaty of 1866” in Emmet Starr, *History of the Cherokee Indians*, (Oklahoma City: Ok, 1921), 175.
 109. Starr, 172.
 110. Starr, 176.
 111. Starr, 170.
 112. Starr, 177.

113. McLoughlin, *Champions of the Cherokees*, 427.
114. Ross, quoted in Mankiller, 129.
115. McLoughlin, *Champions of the Cherokees*, 427.
116. Wardell, 206.
117. John Bartlett Meserve, "Chief Lewis Downing and Chief Charles Thompson," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 16, (September 1938): 318.
118. Dale and Litton, *Cherokee Cavaliers*, 247.
119. Daniel Littlefield, *The Cherokee Freedmen: from Emancipation to American Citizenship* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1978), 25–29.
120. McLoughlin, *After the Trail of Tears*, 229.
121. Pierce Butler to A.B.C.F.M., American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, *Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions [microform]* (Woodbridge, Conn.: Research Publications, 1982), 454.
122. McLoughlin, *Champions of the Cherokees*, 427.
123. "History of Federal Lodge #1," quoted in Denslow, 183. William Potter Ross was raised to the Third Degree on April 25, 1848 in Federal Lodge #1 in Washington, D.C. [Denslow, 183].
124. William R. Denslow, in his work *Freemasonry and the American Indian*, describes Ross's influence, "In later years, passions broke all bounds and some of the darkest pages of Cherokee history were written. In retrospect, the influence and principles of Freemasonry can be seen as the greatest healer of these old wounds within the Cherokee family. This fact is emphasized by the thought of Chief William P. Ross, presiding in the East over a Cherokee lodge, while the men around the altar would have thought it a patriotic duty to slay him only a short time before. The roster of the Cherokee lodge is a revelation to the student of the times, and, if it were not for its undisputed authority, it would hardly be believed in this generation." (Denslow, 69).
125. Hanna R. Warren, "Reconstruction In The Cherokee Nation," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 45, no. 2 (1967): 180–189.
126. Dale and Litton, 144.
127. Wardell, 206.
128. Mrs. William Potter Ross, ed. *The Life and Times of Honorable William Potter Ross of the Cherokee Nation*, (Fort Smith, n.p., 1893), 2ff.
129. Ibid.
130. Because of this amendment, the Southern Cherokee referred to this treaty as "the Dark Treaty." (Wardell, 206)
131. Wardell, 206–207.
132. Mrs. William P. Ross, 55–57.
133. Wardell, 207.
134. Littlefield, *Cherokee Freedmen*, 28; Thornton, 102.
135. The number following the war is to be compared with four thousand African American members of the Cherokee Nation at the beginning of the Civil War. (National Archives, Indian Division, Report Book, Dale to Smith, March 17, 1862, No. 12, 335).
136. Cherokee Nation quoted in Roethler, 227. In mentioning "whites legally members of the Nation by adoption," the provision specifically granted citizenship in the Cherokee Nation to Evan And John Jones, their families and their descendants. As whites that married into the Nation were granted membership according to the dictates of traditional culture, this law was not particularly referenced towards them. The Joneses were granted citizenship and voting privileges as members of the Cherokee Nation.
137. Joe Bean, United States Works Progress Administration, Arkansas Writers

- Project, *Aframerindian Ex-Slave Narratives*, Online. Available HTTP: <<http://www.columbia.edu/~pm47/aftram/Harrison.htm>> (accessed: November 5, 2000).
138. Roethler, 229.
 139. John Hanson Beadle, *The Undeveloped West, or Five Years in the Territory* (Philadelphia, National Publishing Company, 1873), 37.
 140. United States of America, *Report of the Commissioner for Indian Affairs* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1866), 383–384; Sue Hammond, “Socioeconomic Reconstruction In The Cherokee Nation, 1865–1870,” *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 56. no. 2 (1978): 158–170; Patricia Cleland Tracey, “Cherokee Reconstruction In Indian Territory,” *Journal of the West* 35, no. 3 (1996): 81–85.
 141. Littlefield, 29–30.
 142. Cherokee Nation, *Records*, October 31, 1866, Oklahoma Historical Society Archives, Oklahoma City, OK.
 143. These are the locations of the first two Freemasonic lodges within the Cherokee Nation.
 144. Littlefield, *Cherokee Freedmen*, 28.
 145. American Baptist Home Mission Board, *The Macedonian* 34 (October 1866): 39.
 146. C.W. West, *Missions and Missionaries in the Indian Territory* (Muskogee, OK.: Muskogee Publishing Company, 1990), 64.
 147. Debo, *The Road to Disappearance*, 280–283; Janey Hendrix, *Redbird Smith and the Nighthawk Keetoowahs* (Park Hill, OK: Cross-Cultural Education Center, 1983), 25–28. Interestingly enough, in the Creek Nation, the Loyal League was actually closed associated and affiliated with the Keetoowah and the Pins were the mixed blood party. The Loyal League arose within the Illinois District near Fort Gibson and was deeply committed to the enfranchisement of African American Creeks. As in the Cherokee Nation, the Loyal League were full blood traditionalists. The Loyal League had a profound effect upon Redbird Smith, future leader of the Keetoowah Society. (Hendrix, 25).
 148. In the long run, it would be the fact that the Keetoowah Society was able to come out of secret and become a public phenomenon that would lead to a split between the Baptists and the Keetoowah. The competition between the public services of the Baptists and the public services of the Keetoowah would create somewhat of a conflict between the traditionalists and the Christians. Emmet Starr described the split thus: “In all this period the Keetoowahs were either Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, and a few Quakers, and a part of them worshipped according to the rituals of the ancient Keetoowah, but all got along harmoniously. Dissension came only after the White Missionaries objected to and condemned what they termed “the Pagan Form of worship” of the ancient Keetoowahs, and designated it as “The work of the Devil.” A split occurred between the Christian Keetoowahs and the Ancient Keetoowahs. However, this scenario would not completely play out until the latter half of the nineteenth century following the death of Evan and John Jones. (Starr, 480).
 149. “Keetoowah Laws—April 29, 1859,” in Tyner.
 150. John Smith quoted in Janey Hendrix, *Redbird Smith and the Nighthawk Keetoowahs*, 11.
 151. Comes Flying quoted in Hendrix, 11.
 152. In all probability, he was right. Elias Boudinot was a lobbyist for the railroad company and James Bell and James Lynch were eager to promote denationalization and the establishment of a territorial government.

153. Wardell, 208–209.
154. McLoughlin, *After the Trail of Tears*, 246.
155. Marilou Awiatka, *Selu: Seeking the Corn-Mother's Wisdom* (Golden, CO.: Fulcrum Publishing, 1993), 181.
156. Wardell, 209; Foreman, *A History of Oklahoma*, 150.
157. Comes Flying, quoted in Hendrix, 11.
158. John Humphreys to William Byers, January 18, 1867, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, Reel M-234, National Archives, Washington, D.C.
159. Wardell, 210.]
160. John Bartlett Meserve, "Chief Lewis Downing and Chief Charles Thompson," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 16 (September 1938): 320.
161. Starr, 257.
162. Tyner, 58.
163. Ibid.
164. Wardell, 210. The next three elected Chiefs would be Keetoowah representatives of the Downing Party, followed by Joel Mayes (Cherokee Lodge #10). From the late 1880s until 1907, almost all of the Principal Chiefs of the Cherokee Nation came from the Downing Party. (Mankiller, 1993).
165. Thomas Burnell Colbert, "Visionary Or Rogue? The Life And Legacy Of Elias Cornelius Boudinot," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 65, no. 3 (1987): 268–281.
166. Boudinot to Watie, in Dale and Litton, 249.
167. Boudinot to Watie, in Wardell, 211.
168. Boudinot to Watie, in Dale and Litton, 250.
169. John B. Jones, *The Macedonian* 35 ('September, 1867): 38. In all probability, this person was Pig Smith, leader of ultraconservative Ancient Keetoowah who by this time were beginning to splinter from the Christian Keetoowah over a variety of issues, the greatest being the influence of Christianity within the Keetoowah. William McLoughlin, in his last work *The Cherokees and Christianity*, describes this movement within the Keetoowah as a "Ghost Dance Movement" and relates to similar movements that swept the Cherokee Nation whenever it encountered great duress. McLoughlin cites as evidence of this movement a letter from W.L. Gordon Miller, Downing's executive secretary detailing "wild and visionary" speeches and insurrectionary activities by James Vann, Little Pig, and Lewis McNair. (McLoughlin, *The Cherokees and Christianity*, 285–305). This "Ghost Dance Movement" could have been the product of the prophetic Keetoowah conventions in the Saline District in 1866, which ultimately led to the reorganization of the Keetoowah Society in 1876 along more traditionalist lines. (Hendrix, 11; Starr 480; Tyner, 80, 90–91).
170. Meserve, 320.
171. McLoughlin, *Champions of the Cherokees*, 443.
172. Wardell, 211.
173. Chuweska Fodder, quoted in Woodward, 309.
174. McLoughlin, *The Cherokees and Christianity*, 279.
175. Sarah Watie quoted in Theda Perdue, *Slavery and the Evolution of Cherokee Society 1540–1866* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1979), 75.
176. Saladin Watie to Stand Watie, in Dale and Litton, 254.
177. "Keetoowah Laws—April 29, 1859," in Howard Tyner.
178. Lewis Downing, quoted in Meserve, 320.
179. McLoughlin, *The Cherokees and Christianity*, 279.
180. Rochelle Ward, in Baker and Baker, 445.
181. Janey Hendrix, *Redbird Smith and the Nighthawk Keetoowahs* (Park Hill, OK.: Cross Cultural Education Center, Inc., 1983), 11.

CONCLUSION: IDENTITY AND IDEOLOGY

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2. Ann Maloney, personal correspondence, August 6, 1998.
3. *American State Papers: Indian Affairs, Vols. I and II, Documents, Legislative and Executive of the Congress of the United States*, ed. Walter Lowrie, Walter S. Franklin, and Matthew St. Clair Clarke (Washington, D.C.: Gales and Seaton, 1832, 1834), Vol I, 53.
4. Theda Perdue, *Slavery and the Evolution of Cherokee Society 1540–1866* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1979), 144.
5. Ibid.
6. John Humphreys to William Byers, January 18, 1867, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, Reel M–234, National Archives, Washington, D.C.
7. Paula Gunn Allen, *The Sacred Hoop: Recovering the Feminine in American Indian Traditions* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986), xiv.
8. Vine Deloria, “Christianity and Indigenous Religion” in *For This Land: Writings on Religion in America* (New York: Routledge Press, 1999), 161.
9. Onitositah (Corn Tassel), quoted in Lee Miller, ed. *From the Heart: Voices of the American Indian* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995) 131.

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2. Emmet Starr, *History of the Cherokee Indians* (Oklahoma City: Ok, 1921), 170.
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