

Chapter 9

Trouble on the Plains



In this chapter:

- ❖ *The end of the fighting between the Union and the Confederacy will not end the troubles in Indian Territory. After new treaties are concluded, the Civilized Tribes will start their slow recovery from the devastation of the War.*
- ❖ *The United States will wage a decades-long campaign against the Plains Tribes, ending with the complete surrender of their way of life and their relocation to Indian Territory.*

Section 1: Reconstruction



NATIONAL UNION TICKET

The Union forever, Hurrah boys, Hurrah!
Down with the Traitors, up with the Stars



And we'll rally round the Flag boys,
truly once again,
Showing the hostility of freedom.

FOR PRESIDENT,

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

FOR VICE PRESIDENT,

ANDREW JOHNSON

BE CAREFUL AND EXAMINE YOUR TICKETS.

ELECTORS

MORTON McMICHAEL,
THOMAS CUNNINGHAM,
ROBERT P. KING,
G. MORRISON COATES,
HENRY JUMM,
WILLIAM H. KERN,
BARTON H. JENKS,
CHARLES M. BUNK,
ROBERT PARKE,

WILLIAM TAYLOR,
JOHN A. HIESTAND,
RICHARD H. CORYELL,
EDWARD HALIDAY,
CHARLES F. READ,
ELIAS W. HALE,
CHARLES H. SHRINER,
JOHN WISTER,

DAVID McONAGHY,
DAVID W. WOODS,
ISAAC BENSON,
JOHN PATTON,
SAMUEL B. DICK,
EVERARD BIERER,
JOHN P. PENNEY,
EBENEZER M'JUNKIN,
JOHN W. BLANCHARD

Printed by W. B. Smith, 1864

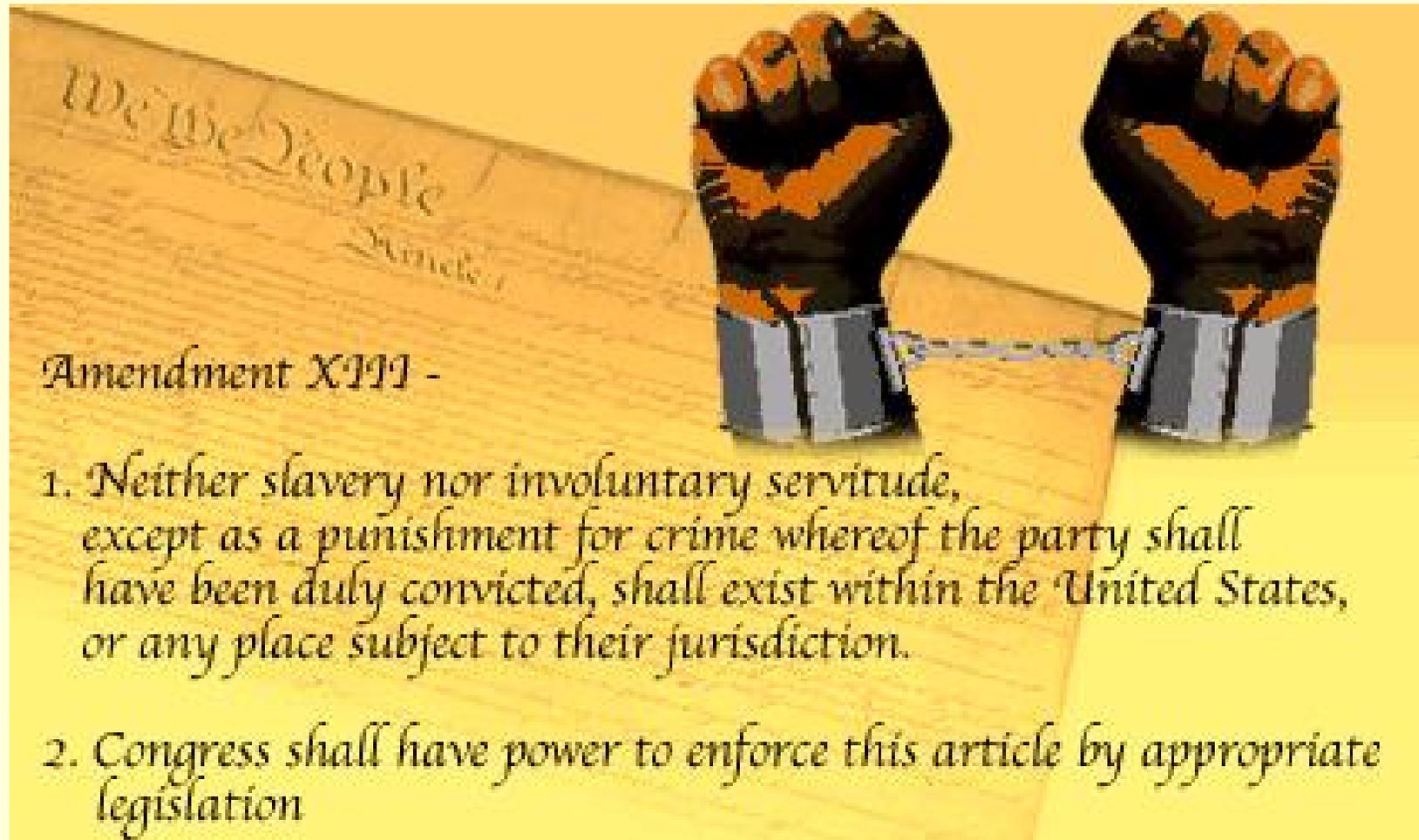
WAR POSTER ISSUED BY BOARD OF PUBLICATION 1864

Before the War ended, Lincoln was re-elected on the National Union Party ticket with Andrew Johnson, a Tennessee Democrat.

The selection of Johnson was meant to show the Confederates that they would be welcomed back into the Union.

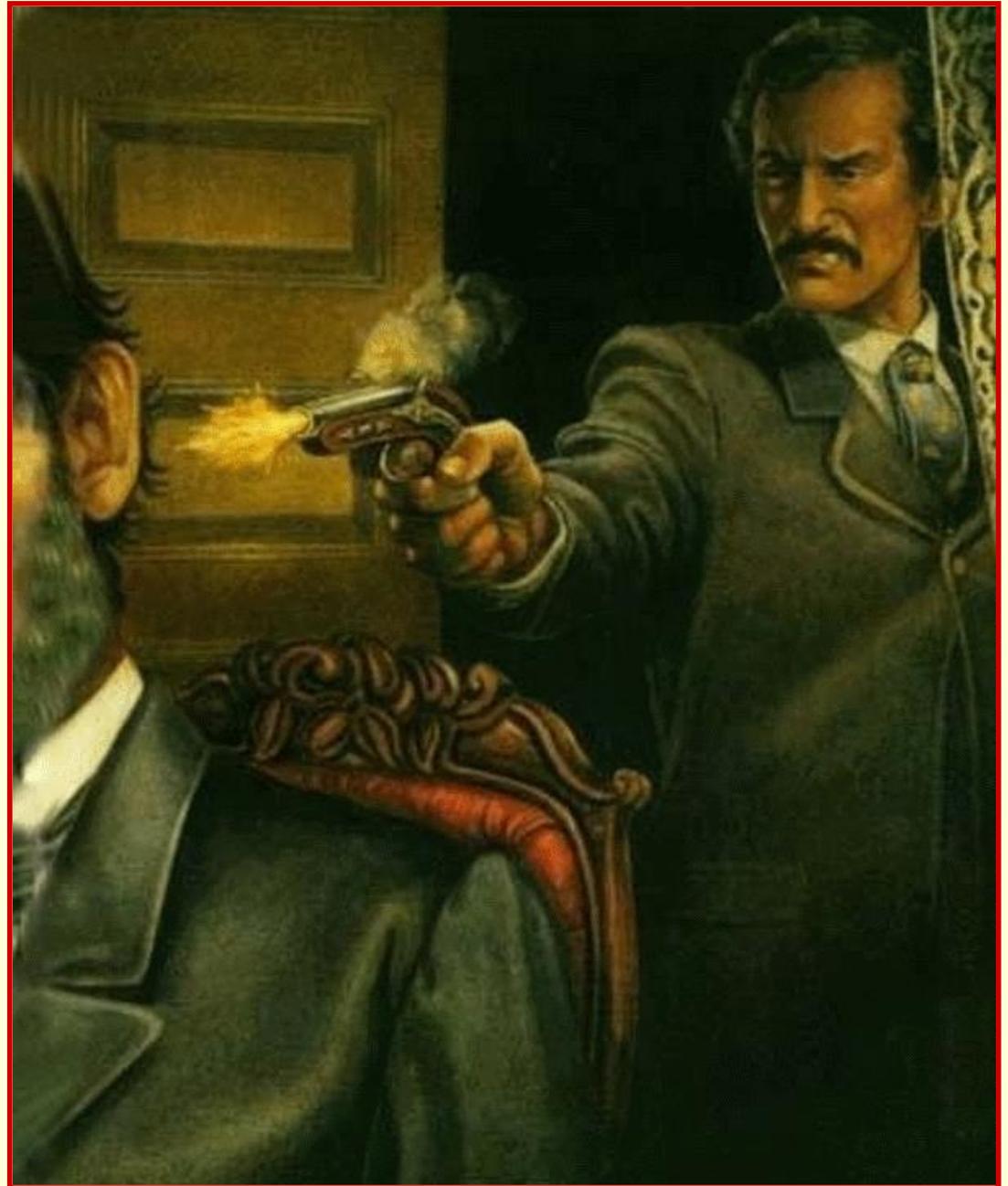
Lincoln also pushed Congress to pass the 13th Amendment, abolishing slavery in the U.S.

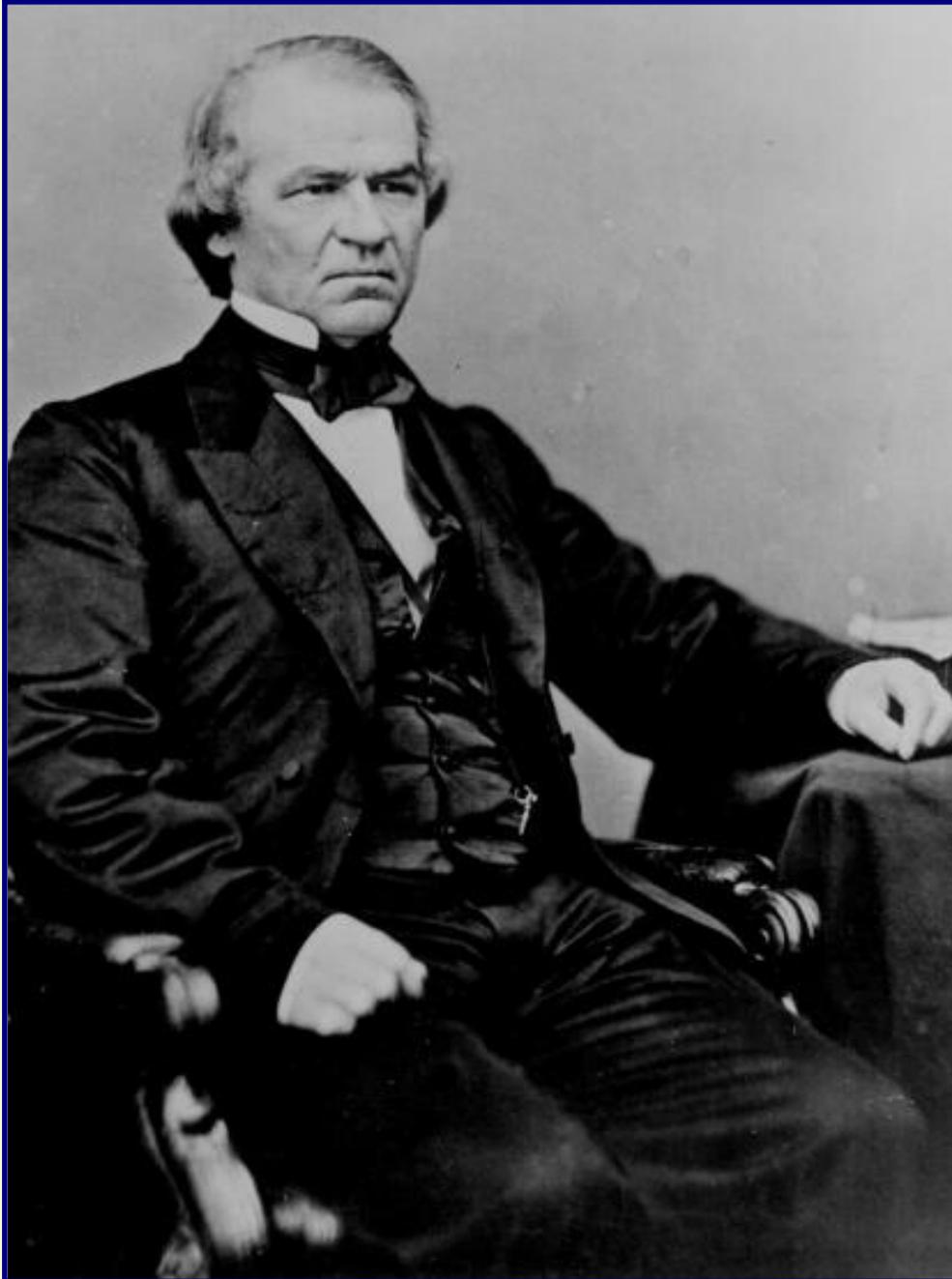
The amendment was passed in January of 1865 and ratified before the end of the year.



**Less than a week
after the war ended,
Lincoln was
assassinated by a
Confederate
sympathizer named
John Wilkes Booth.**

*The shocking murder
caused a wave of anger
toward Southerners,
including the new president.*





**Andrew Johnson
tried to carry out
Lincoln's plans,
but the Republican
Congress resisted
his efforts.**

*The House of Representatives
even filed articles of impeachment
to remove him from office.*

*The Senate put Johnson
on trial, but failed to
convict him by one vote.*

The plan to rebuild the nation after the war became known as The Reconstruction.

The restoration of Indian Territory would be different than in other parts of the country.



Two congressional acts passed in 1862 had a huge impact on Indian Territory.



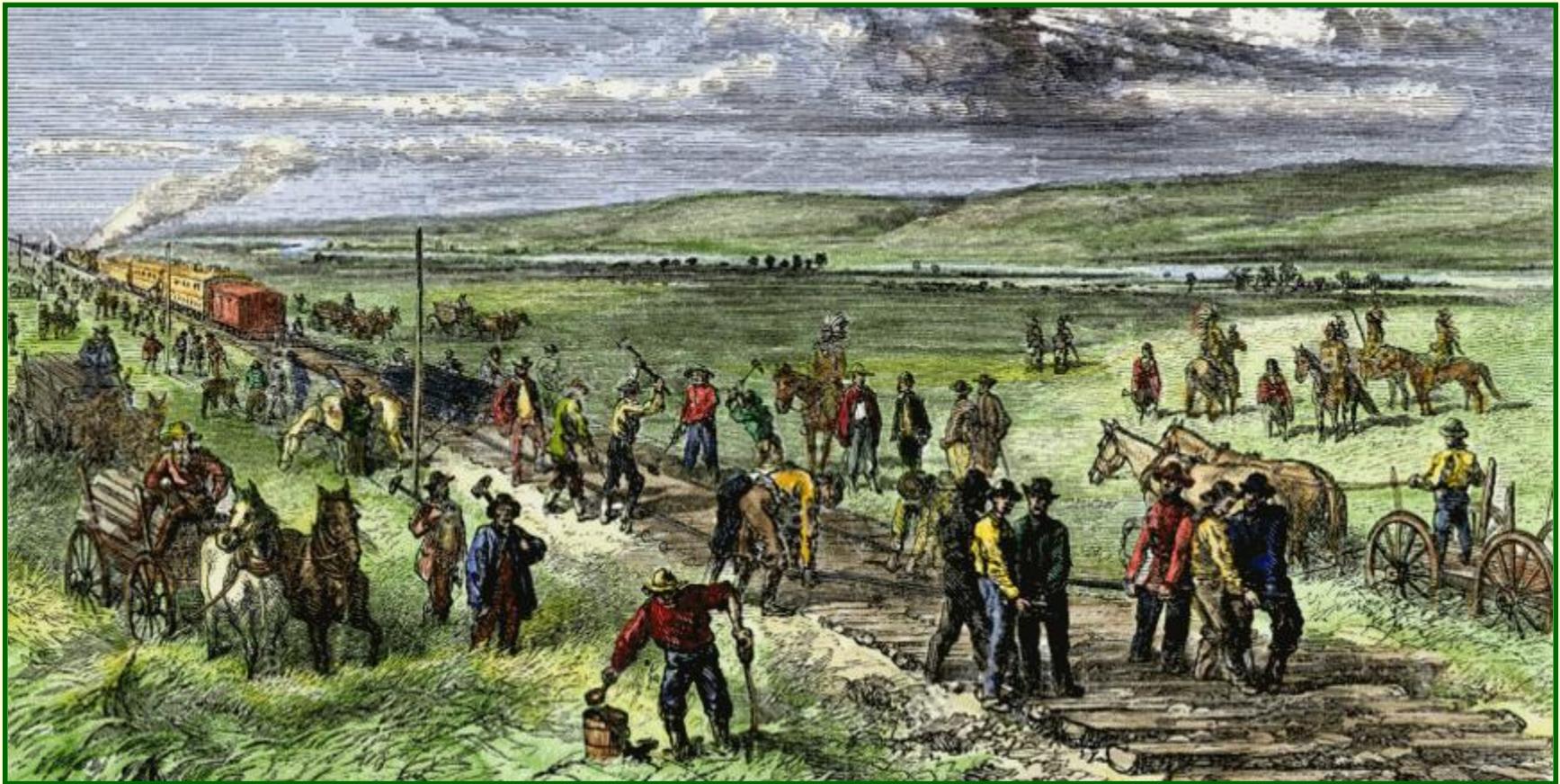
The Pacific Railway Act began the process of building the Transcontinental Railroad.

The route went through the center of the Northern Plains Indians' lands.



The railroad had an indirect impact on Indian Territory.

When the tracks crossed the northern tribes' lands, the Natives had to sell and stay - or be relocated. As a result, even more tribes moved to Oklahoma.



The Transcontinental Railroad was completed at Promontory Point, Utah, in 1869.



The Homestead Act
opened more than
270 million acres
of public land
on the Great Plains
to new settlers.

*Land was given away or
sold cheaply to the settlers
if they were 21 years old,
the head of the household,
and would live on and farm
the land for at least five years.*

PRODUCTS WILL PAY FOR LAND AND IMPROVEMENTS!

MILLIONS OF ACRES

View on the Big Blue, between Camden and Crete, representing Valley and Rolling Prairie Land in Nebraska.



IOWA AND NEBRASKA

LANDS

FOR SALE ON **10** YEARS CREDIT
BY THE
Burlington & Missouri River R.R. Co.

AT 6 PER CT. INTEREST AND LOW PRICES.
Only One-Seventh of Principal Due Annually, beginning Four Years after purchase.
20 PER CENT. DEDUCTED FROM 10 YEARS PRICE, FOR CASH.

LAND EXPLORING TICKETS SOLD
and Cost allowed in First Interest paid, on Land bought in 30 days from date of ticket.
*Thus our Land Buyers GET A FREE PASS in the State where the Land bought is located.
These TERMS are BETTER at \$5, than to pre-empt United States Land at \$2.50 per Acre.*
EXTRAORDINARY INDUCEMENTS on FREIGHT and PASSAGE are AFFORDED TO PURCHASERS and THEIR FAMILIES.

Address **GEO. S. HARRIS, LAND COMMISSIONER,**
or **T. H. LEAVITT, Ass't Land Comm'r, Burlington, Iowa.**

Or apply to

FREE ROOMS for buyers to board themselves are provided at Burlington and Lincoln.

CIRCULARS are supplied GRATIS for distribution in ORGANIZING COLONIES and to induce individuals to emigrate WEST.

A SECTIONAL MAP, showing exact location of our IOWA LANDS is sold for 30 Cents, and of NEBRASKA LANDS for 30 Cents.

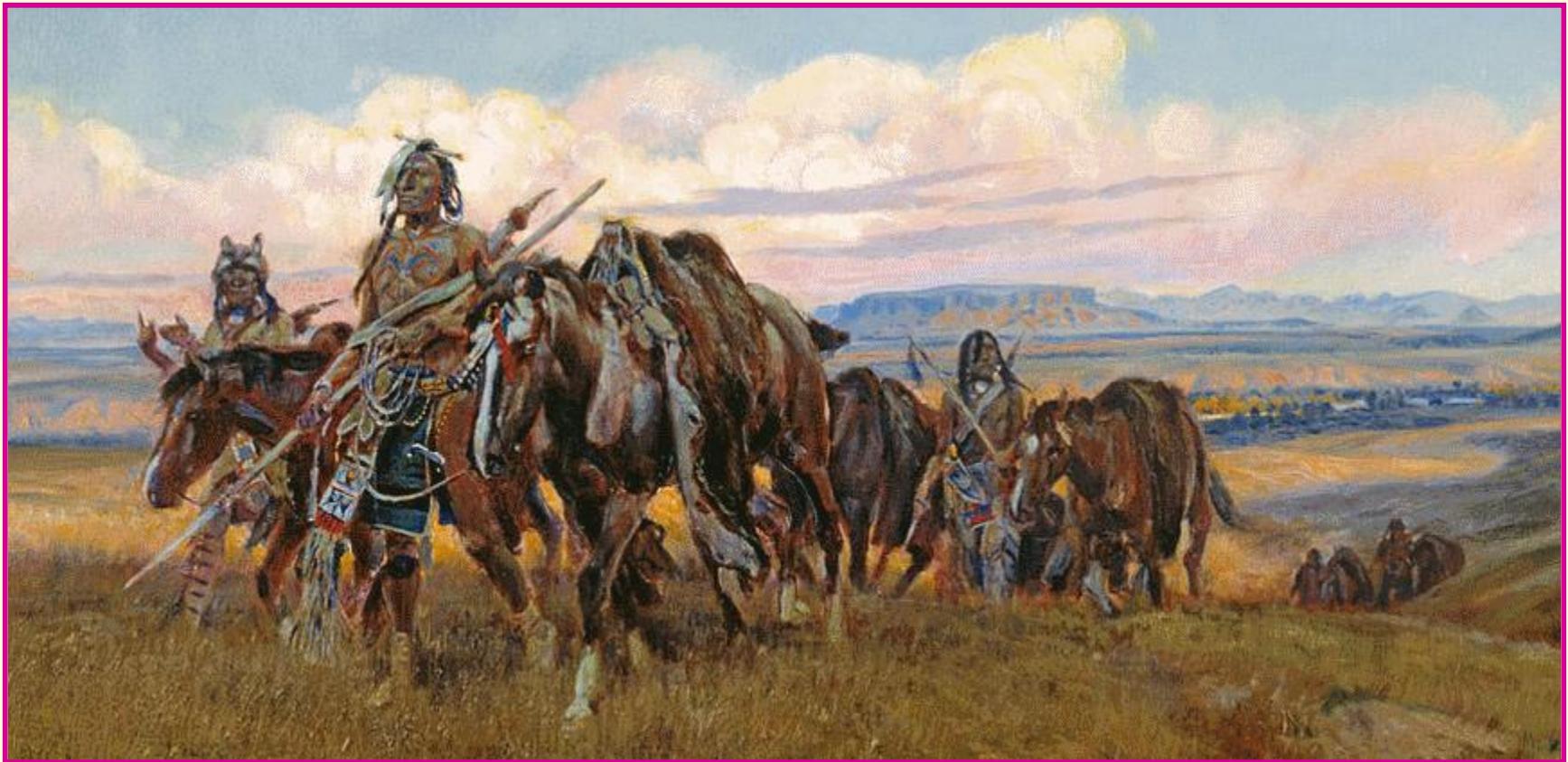
COMMERCIAL ADVERTISER PRINTING HOUSE, BUFFALO, N. Y.

*Many people left the devastated East and South,
and moved to the Midwestern territories,
again displacing the Plains Indians.*

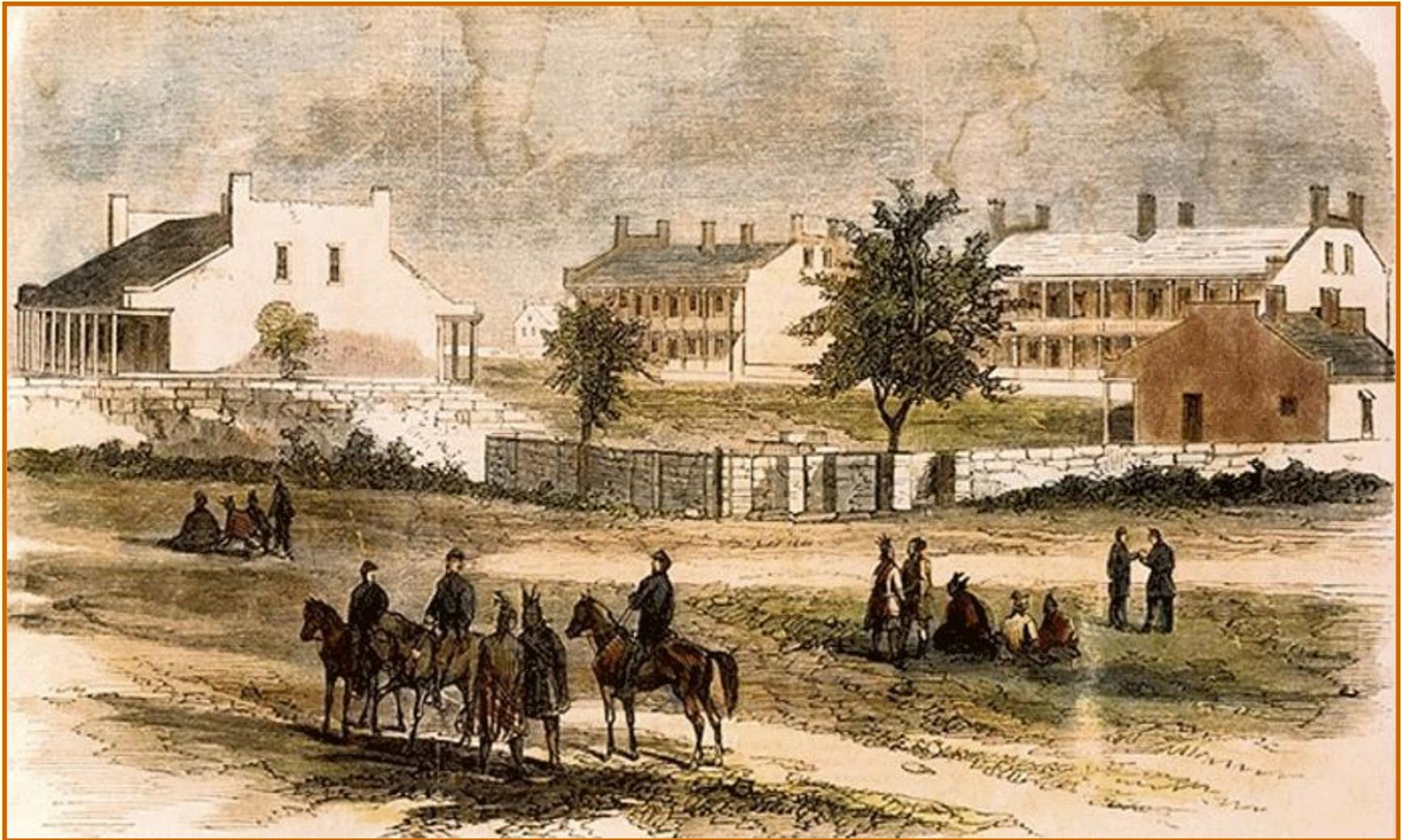


Kansas Senators James Lane and Samuel Pomeroy introduced a controversial Reconstruction plan to relocate Natives in their state to Indian Territory.

The senators then bought the vacated lands and sold them to American settlers.



The Federal government asked tribal leaders to meet at Fort Smith in September of 1865.



D.N. Cooley, the new Commissioner of Indian Affairs, told the tribes that by joining the Confederacy, all their treaties were now invalid.

He ignored the fact that many tribes had split and that others had remained loyal to the Union.

Negotiations broke down, and a new meeting was set up to take place the next year in Washington, DC.



The Natives were also told that they had to add the freedmen, or former slaves, to their tribal rolls.

The freedmen were given the right to own land and to receive payments. That meant that each member of the tribes would receive fewer benefits.



In 1866, leaders of the Five Civilized Tribes met in Washington to negotiate new treaties.



The Treaties included:

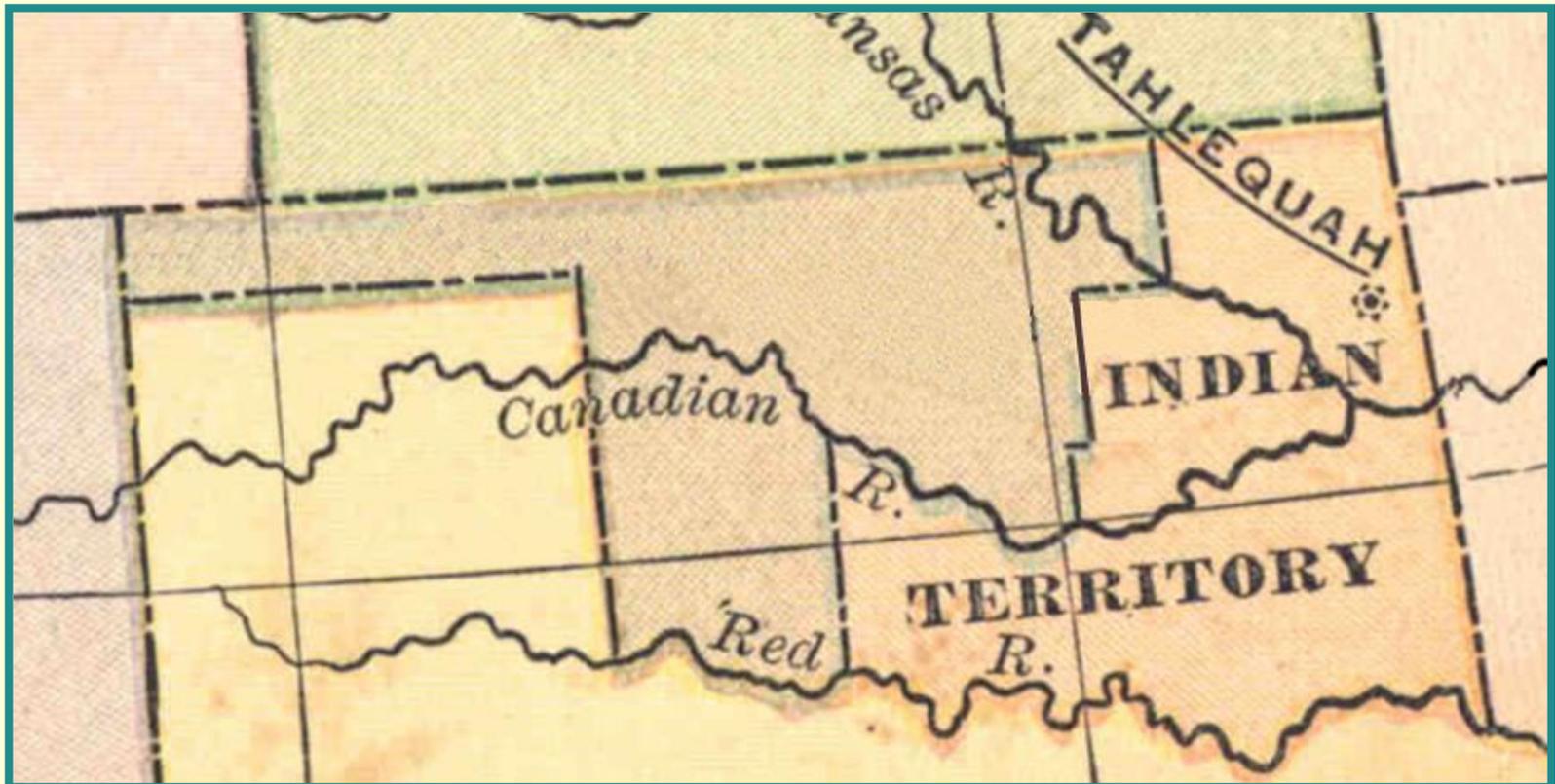
- ♣ *Peace with the U.S.*
- ♣ *Granting railroad right-of-ways.*
- ♣ *Selling lands back to the United States for new tribes.*
- ♣ **A process to establish a unified Territorial government.**

**Representatives of the Five Tribes, however,
voted to remain as independent nations.**



Choctaw chief Allen Wright suggested a name
for the proposed territorial government.
It meant “Red People” in the Choctaw Language:

O K L A H O M A





*After the War,
Choctaw plantation
owners hired
tenant farmers,
or people who
were allowed
to use a part of
the plantation
instead of
being paid.*

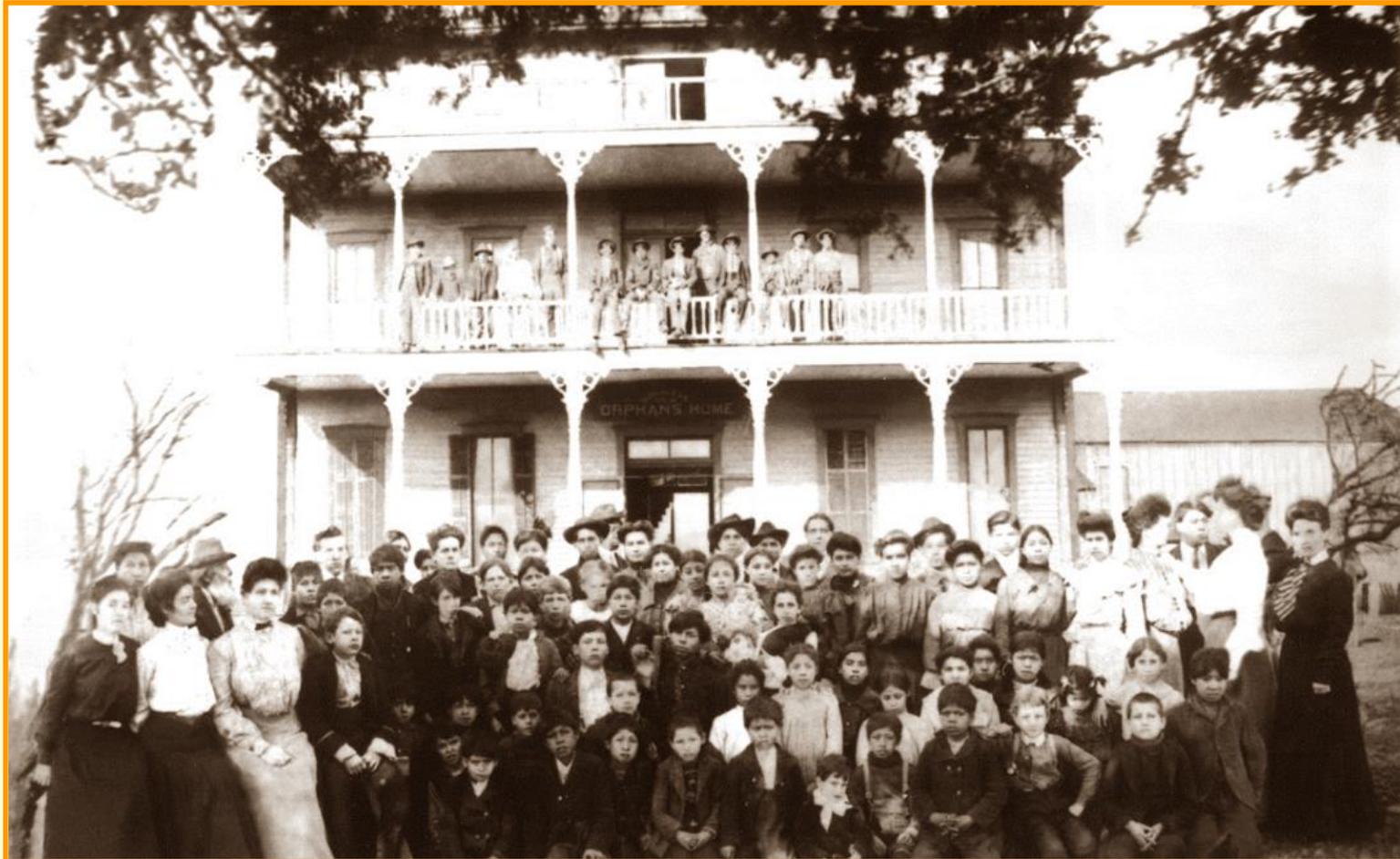
*Tenant farmers were also
called sharecroppers.*

Differences over accepting government payments further divided the Upper and Lower Muscogee Creek.

In a skirmish known as The Green Peach War, the Upper Creek rebelled but failed to establish an independent government.



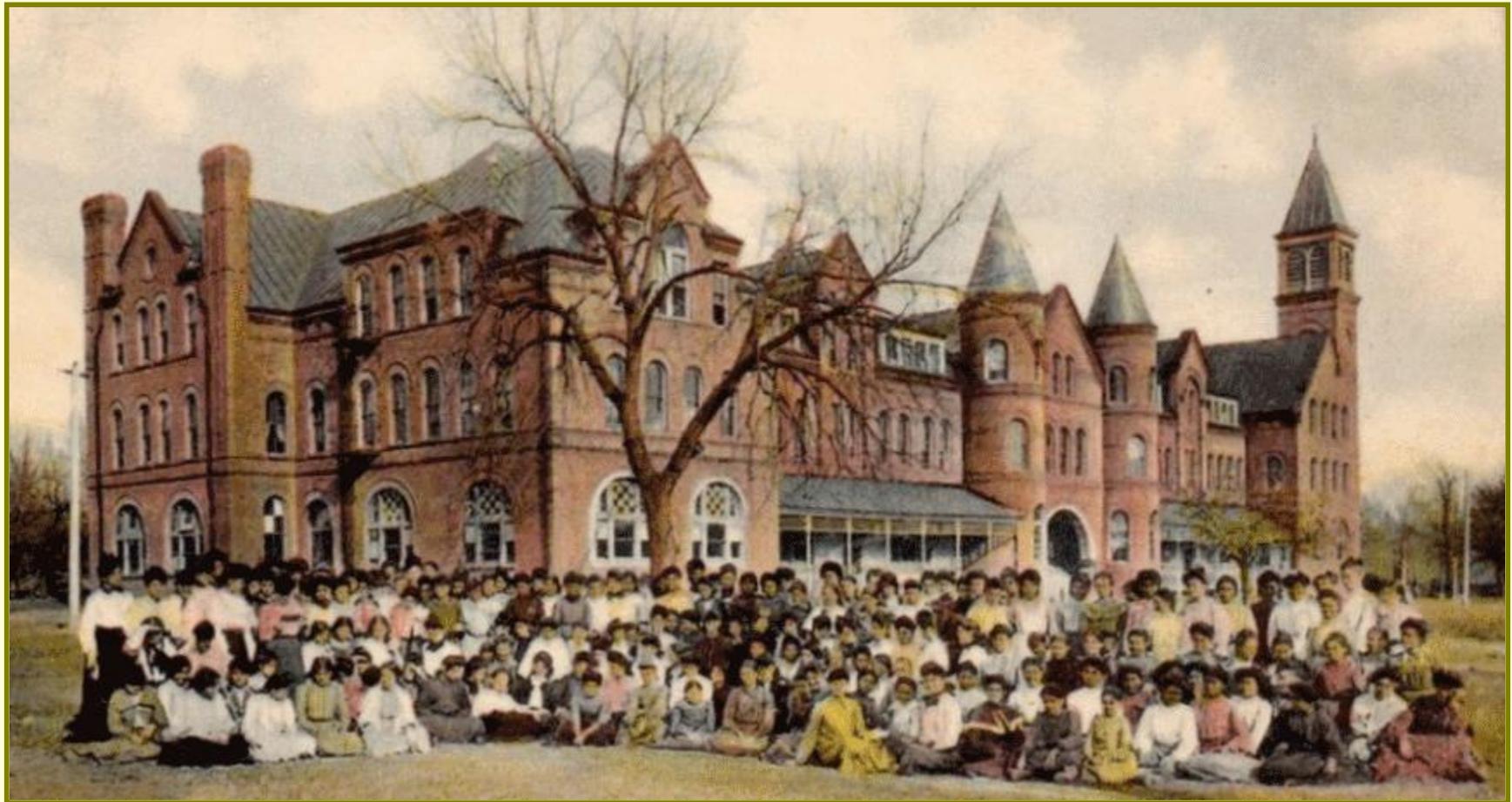
The Chickasaw turned their attention to rebuilding their schools and caring for war orphans.



Their best-known school was the Burney Institute.

The Cherokee continued their excellent public school system, adding seminaries, or residential schools, for both men and women.

They also had a school for orphans and a high school for the children of Freedmen.



*The Seminole built a capital city at Wewoka,
a name meaning “Barking Waters.”*

It refers to the sound made by a small waterfall in the nearby creek.



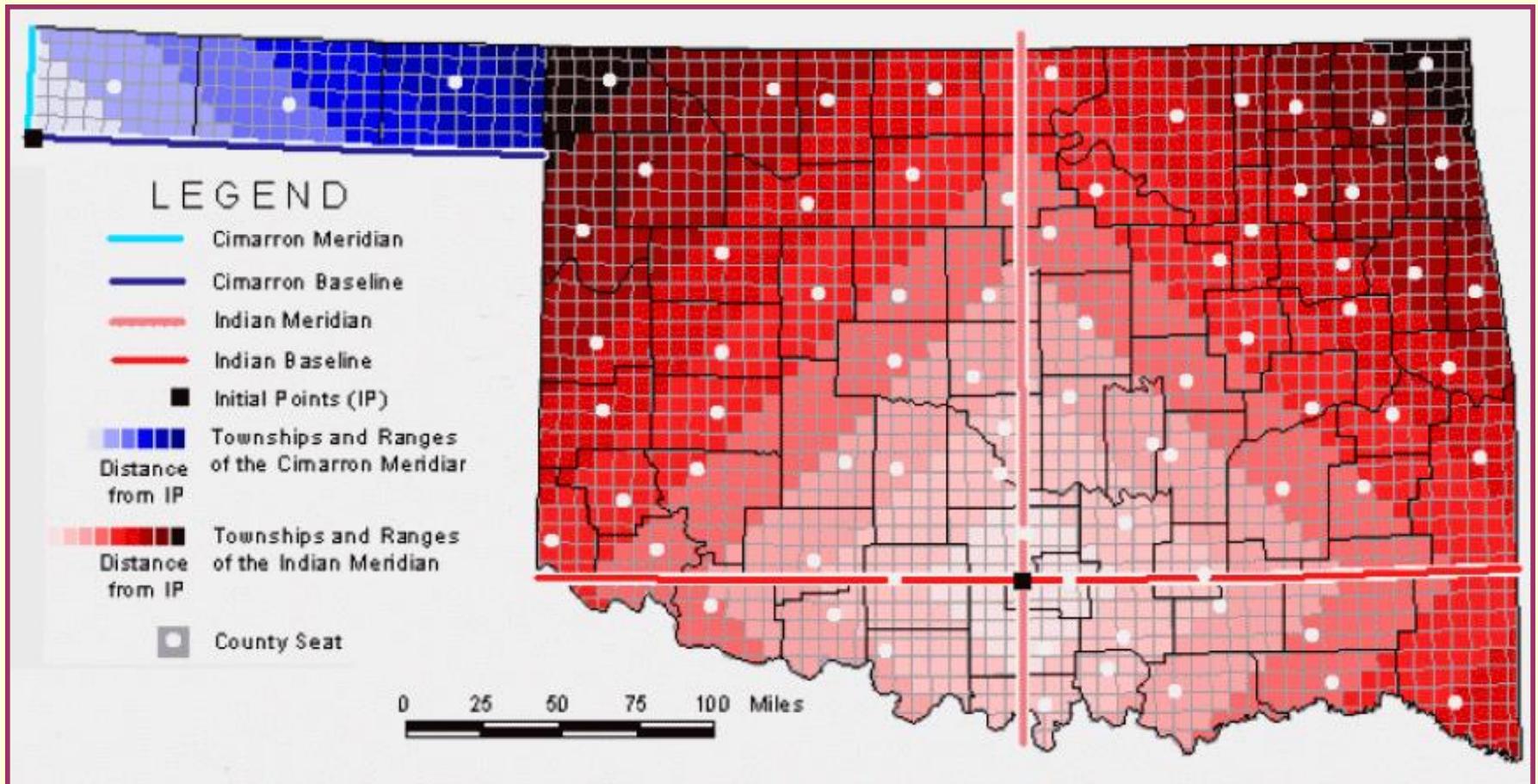


**A sandstone pillar
called the
Initial Point Marker
established
Indian Territory's
new grid system.**

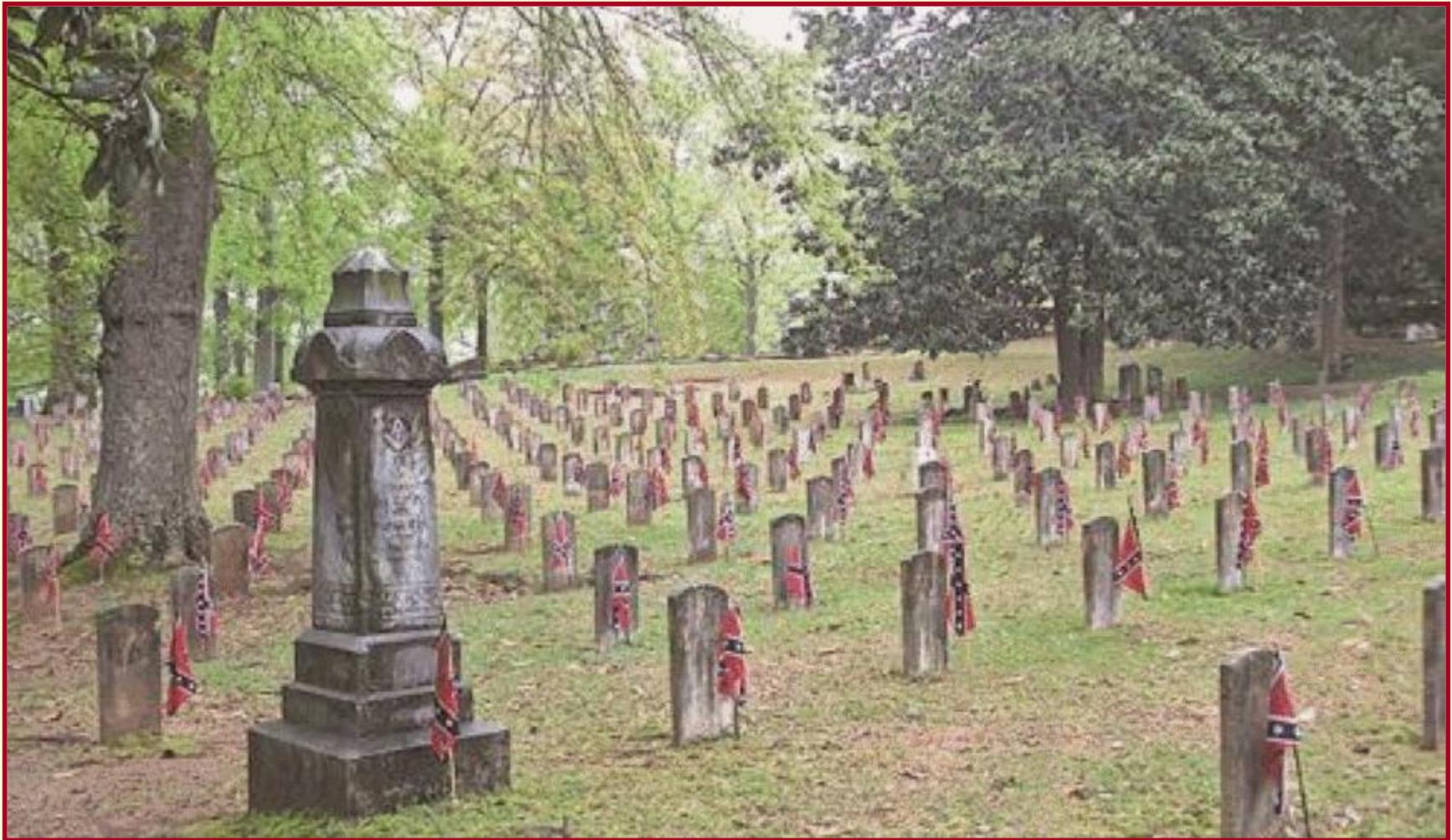
*All legal land descriptions
would originate from this spot.*

The survey included an east-west line called the Baseline and a north-south line called the Indian Meridian.

The Panhandle was surveyed in 1881.



The Five Tribes lost a quarter of their population during the War, but continued the long process of rebuilding.



Section 2: The Indian Wars



While the U.S. Army was occupied with the war, some Plains tribes took advantage of the situation.



The Comanche tried to drive settlers from their hunting grounds.

Raids on Americans often resulted in the loss of life.

They also went back to raiding outlying Chickasaw settlements for horses and cattle.

**Small bands of renegade Cheyenne and Arapaho
were encouraged by the Comanche's success
and tried to drive settlers out of Colorado.**

It was a decision that would prove disastrous for the rest of their tribes.



The remaining peaceful Cheyenne had settled down for the winter alongside a creek in eastern Colorado.



The Colorado Cavalry attacked the unprotected camp.

They killed more than 150 Natives, mostly women and children.

It was called The Sand Creek Massacre.



**Chief Black Kettle and the Cheyenne who survived
were confined to a reservation, or set-aside lands,
along The Washita River in western Indian Territory.**

*They were told they would be safe
as long as they stayed on reservation lands.*

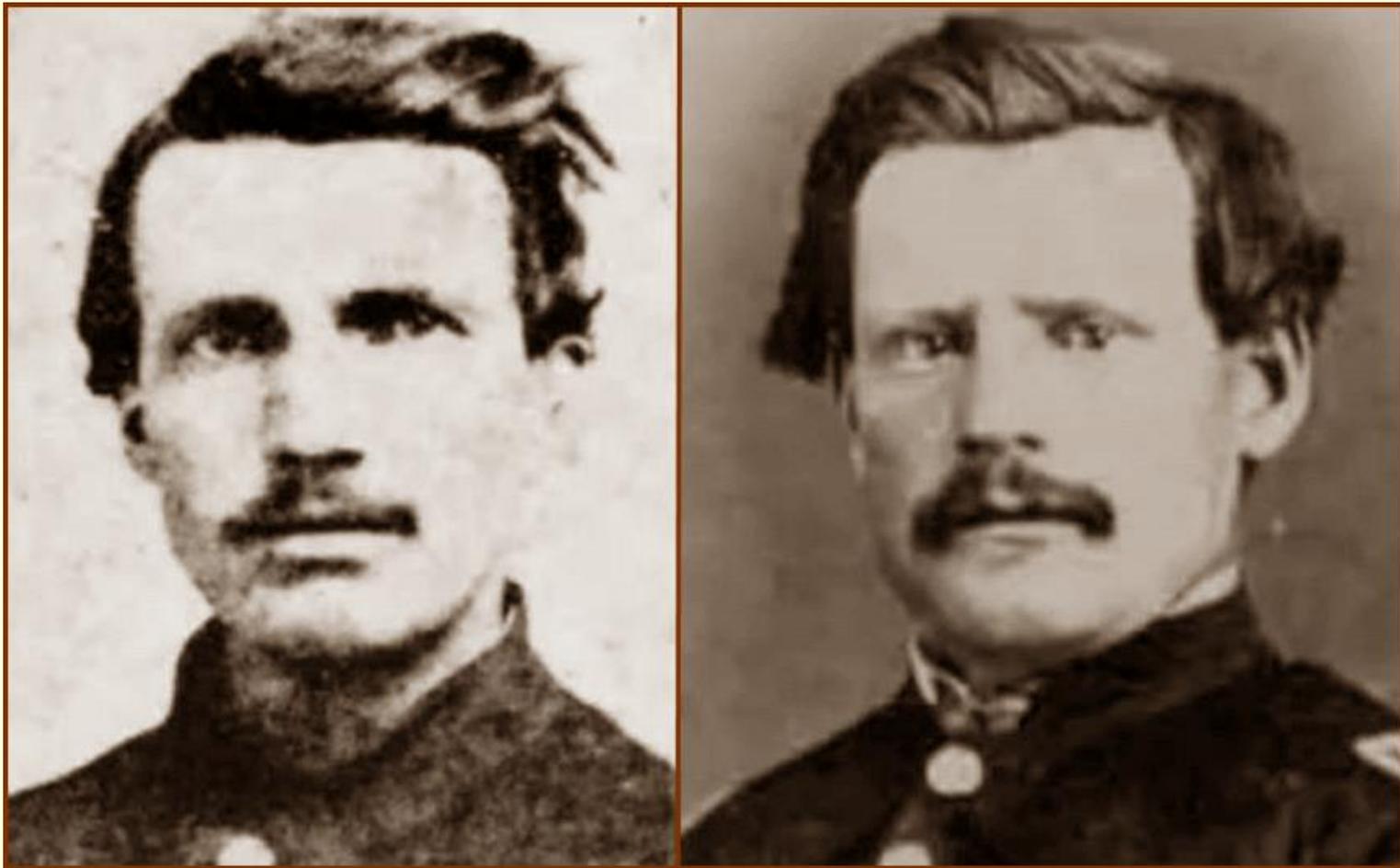


The commander of the
Sand Creek Massacre,
Col. John Chivington,
was court-martialed,
but resigned
from the Army
to escape punishment.

*The Army then publicly stated
that the incident was
"a cowardly and
cold-blooded slaughter."*



Lt. Joseph Cramer (left), and Capt. Silas Soule are still honored today by the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes for refusing orders to kill unarmed civilians.



Embittered by their treatment by the whites, Plains warriors began to target wagon trains.

Settlers now needed safe passage as they crossed the prairies.



**Col. "Kit" Carson,
a trapper, soldier,
and Indian fighter,
was told to establish
a fort on the
Cimarron Cutoff
to protect travelers.**



Carson thought he was locating the fort in New Mexico Territory. He mistakenly placed it several miles east of the border.



Fort Nichols was noted for its dugouts, or buildings half underground and half above.

The sides were covered with stone, the floors were dirt, and blankets served as doors.



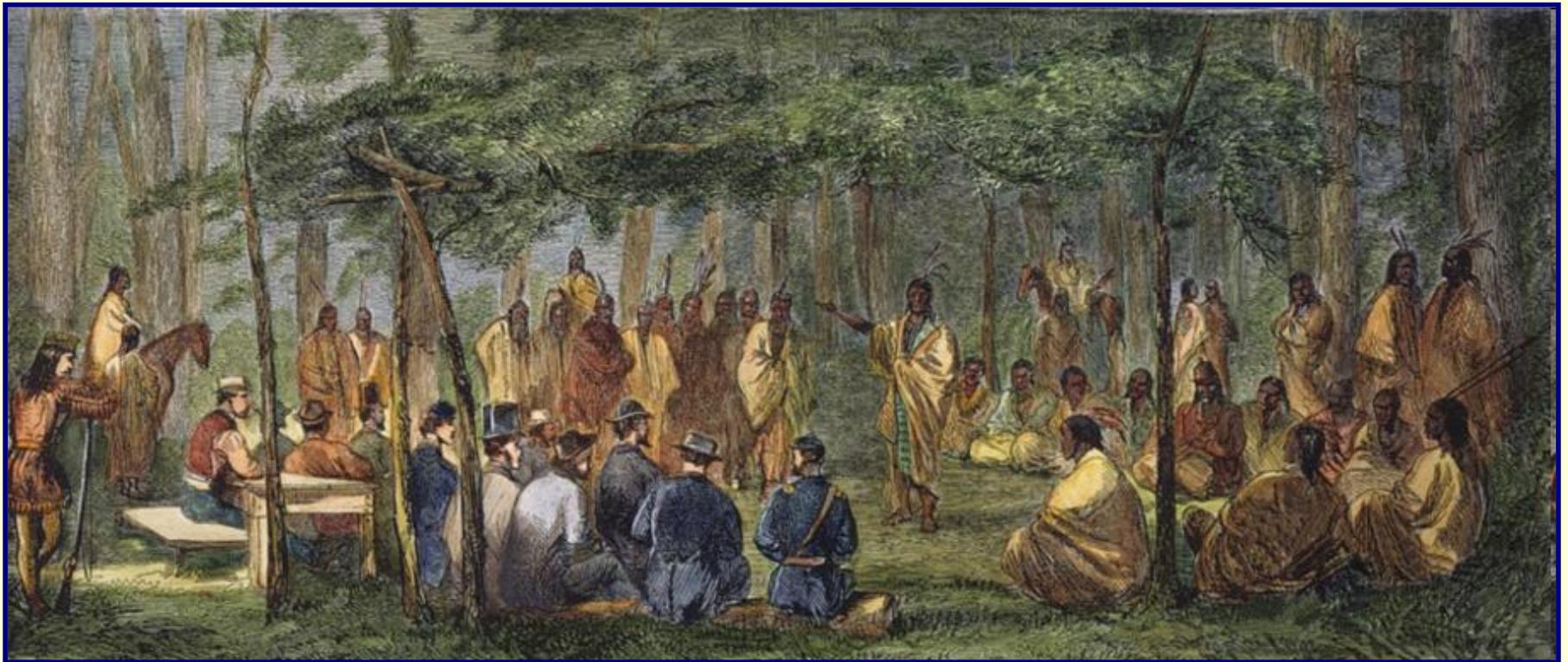
**It was
one of the
few Army forts
where soldiers
could be
accompanied
by their wives.**



In 1867, the Medicine Lodge Treaty encouraged the Plains Indians to stop fighting and become farmers.

The Kiowa, Comanche, Kiowa-Apache, Cheyenne, and Arapaho tribes agreed to live on reservations in Indian Territory.

The government agreed to protect them and give them annual supplies.



In spite of the treaties, deadly attacks by renegades continued in Kansas, Colorado, and Texas.

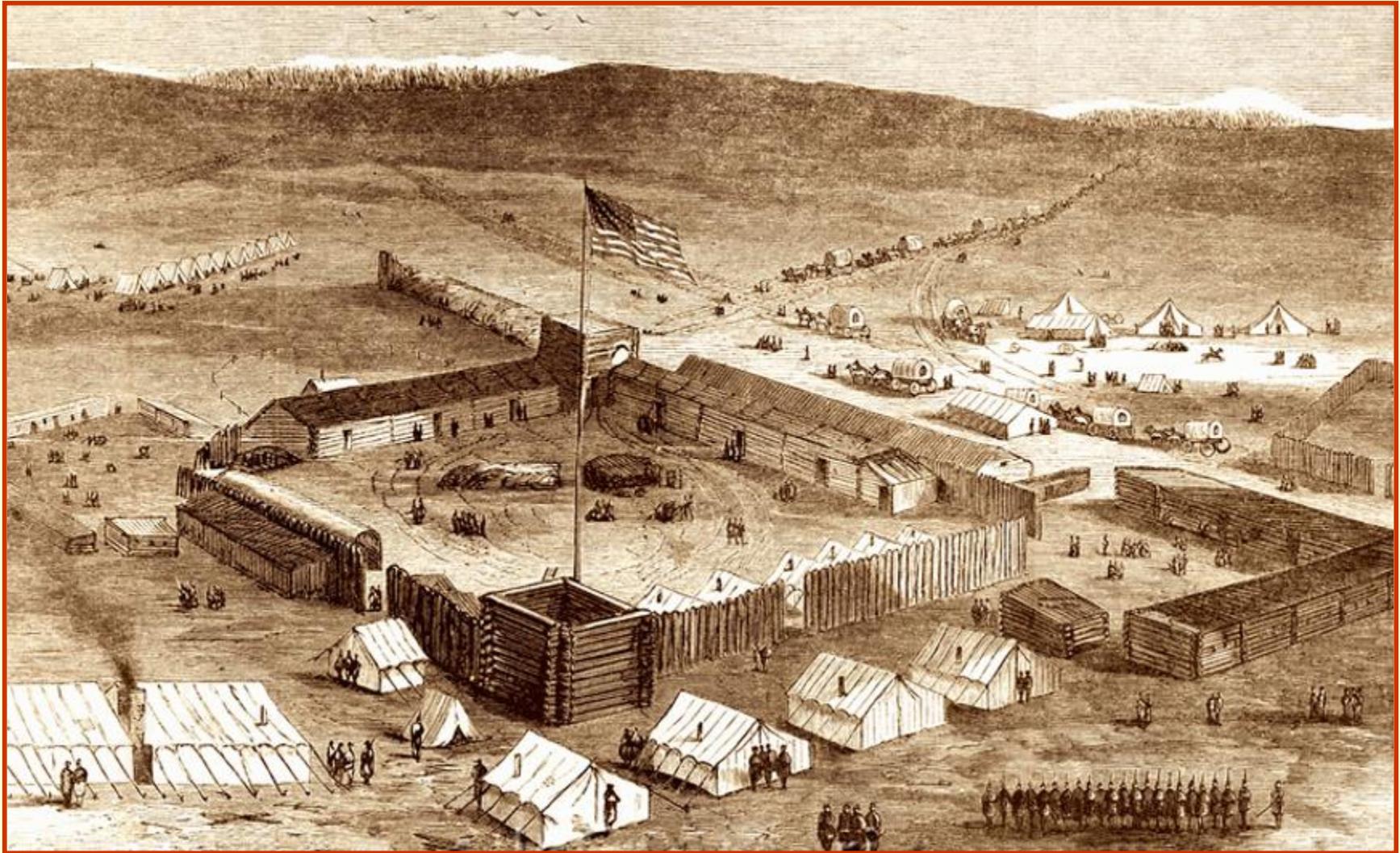


**General
Philip Sheridan,
a Civil War veteran,
led the
Winter Campaign
to defeat
the Plains tribes.**

Sheridan chose wintertime because he knew the tribes would be at a disadvantage: the Natives would settle in and not move until Spring.



He directed General Alfred Sully to establish Fort Supply on the west end of the Cherokee Outlet.



In November 1868, some of the Cheyenne lodges were just outside reservation lands on the Washita River.

They had spread out to be closer to the water during the winter.





**A Cheyenne
war chief
known as
Roman Nose
left the
Washita River
reservation
with his followers
to kill settlers
in Kansas.**

Chief Black Kettle was worried that the renegades would endanger his peaceful Cheyenne.

The elderly leader and an Arapaho Chief named Big Mouth rode to Fort Cobb to ask if their camps could move there.

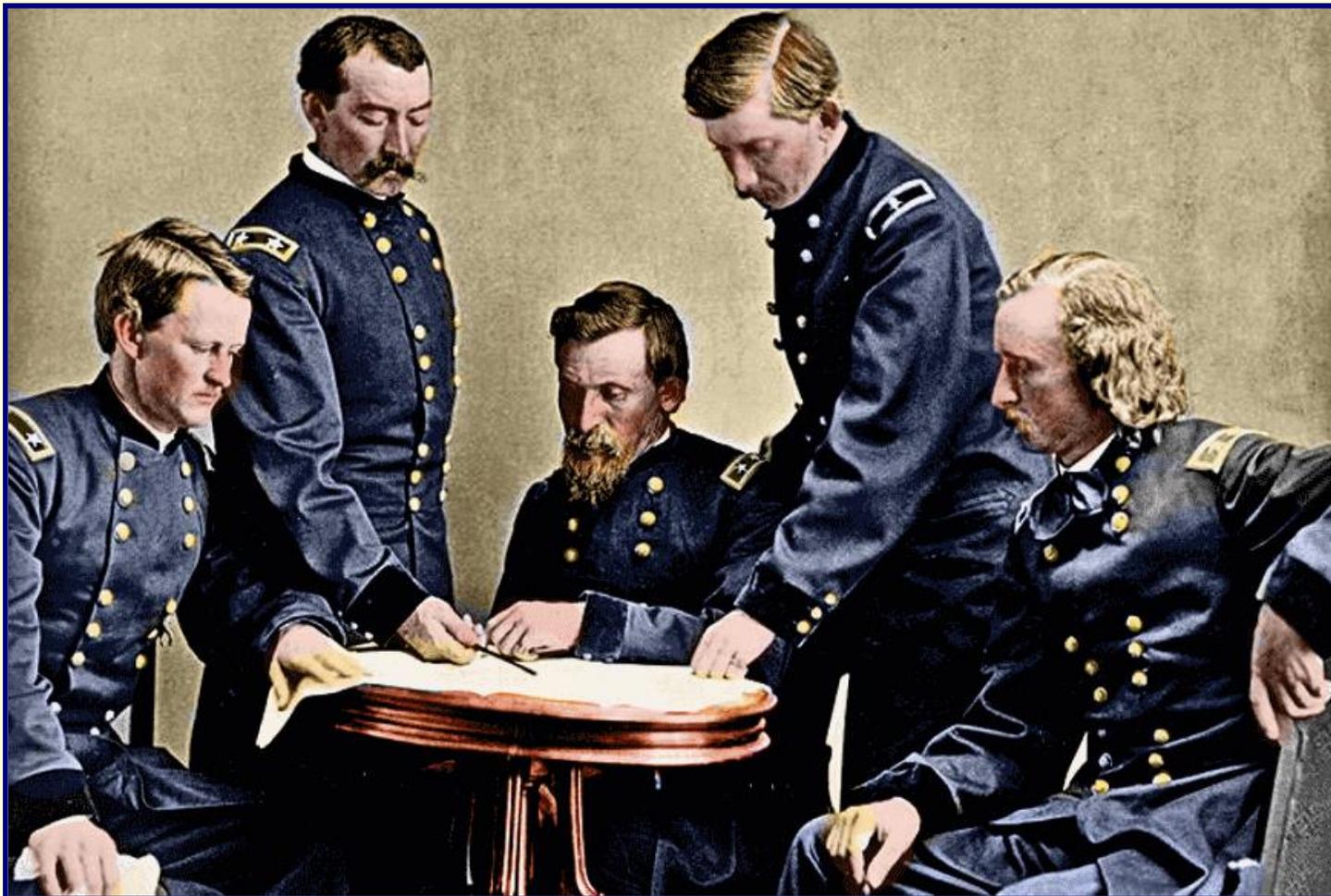
General William Hazen told them he wasn't authorized to protect them if they weren't on their treaty lands.

The chiefs returned to their camps and decided to move the lodges the next day.

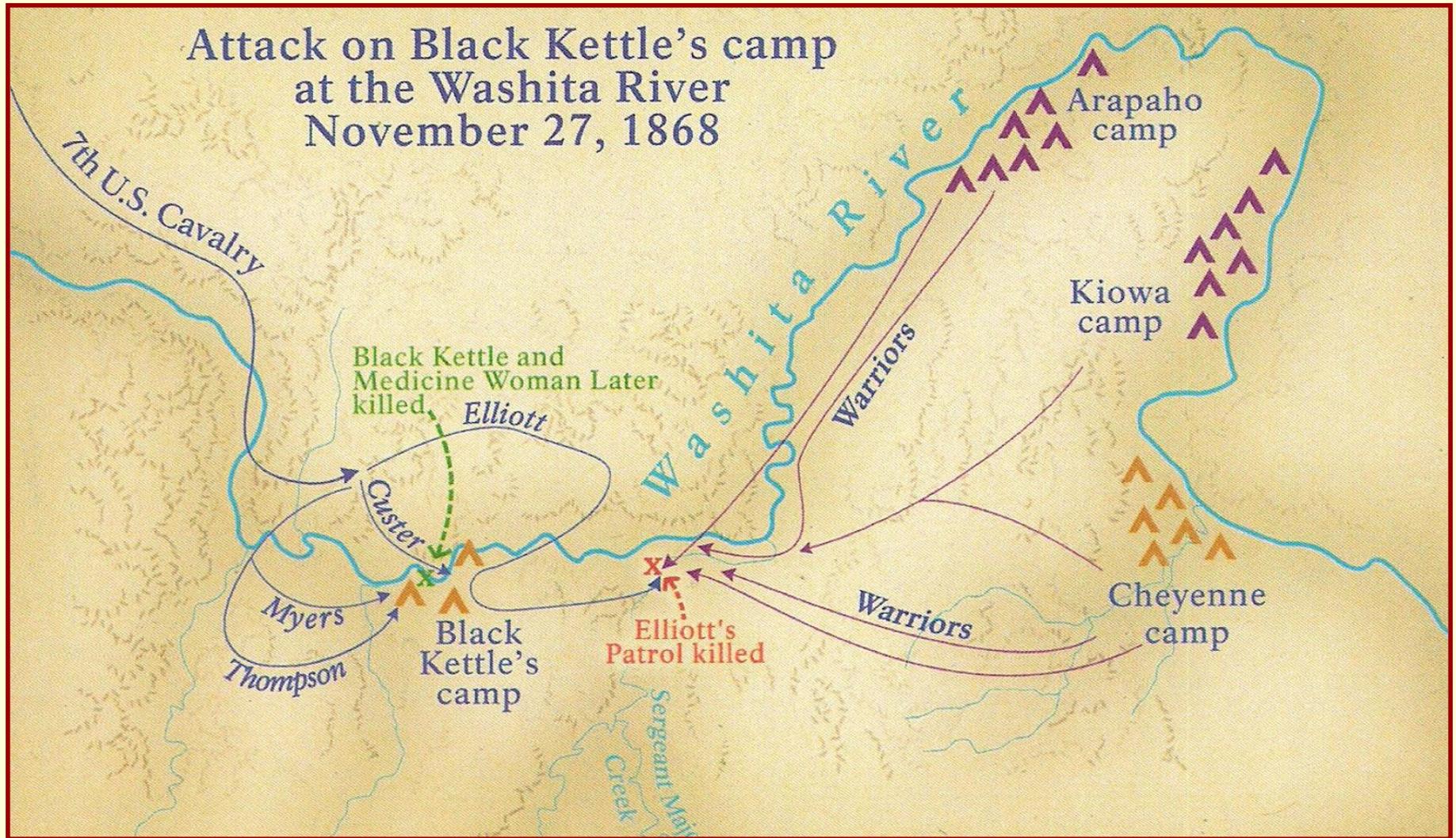


General Sheridan had vowed to punish Roman Nose and the renegades.

Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer was sent to find the warriors responsible for the attacks.



Instead, Custer and his troops turned south toward Black Kettle's camp on The Washita River.



The 7th Cavalry attacked the Cheyenne village at dawn, killing 103 men, women, and children.



Black Kettle and his wife were shot in the back.

Both died. Among the dead, only 11 were found with weapons.



The Battle of The Washita ended quickly.

More than 50 survivors were taken hostage. The troops then slaughtered the Cheyenne's horses and burned their food, clothes, blankets, and lodges.



*I visited the Washita Battlefield
National Historic Site in the summer of 2015.*



Custer was promoted to general but was killed in 1876 at The Battle of the Little Bighorn River in Montana, known as "Custer's Last Stand."

He tried the same tactic as at The Washita, a surprise attack, on a Sioux village. This time, there were more than 4,000 warriors waiting for him.



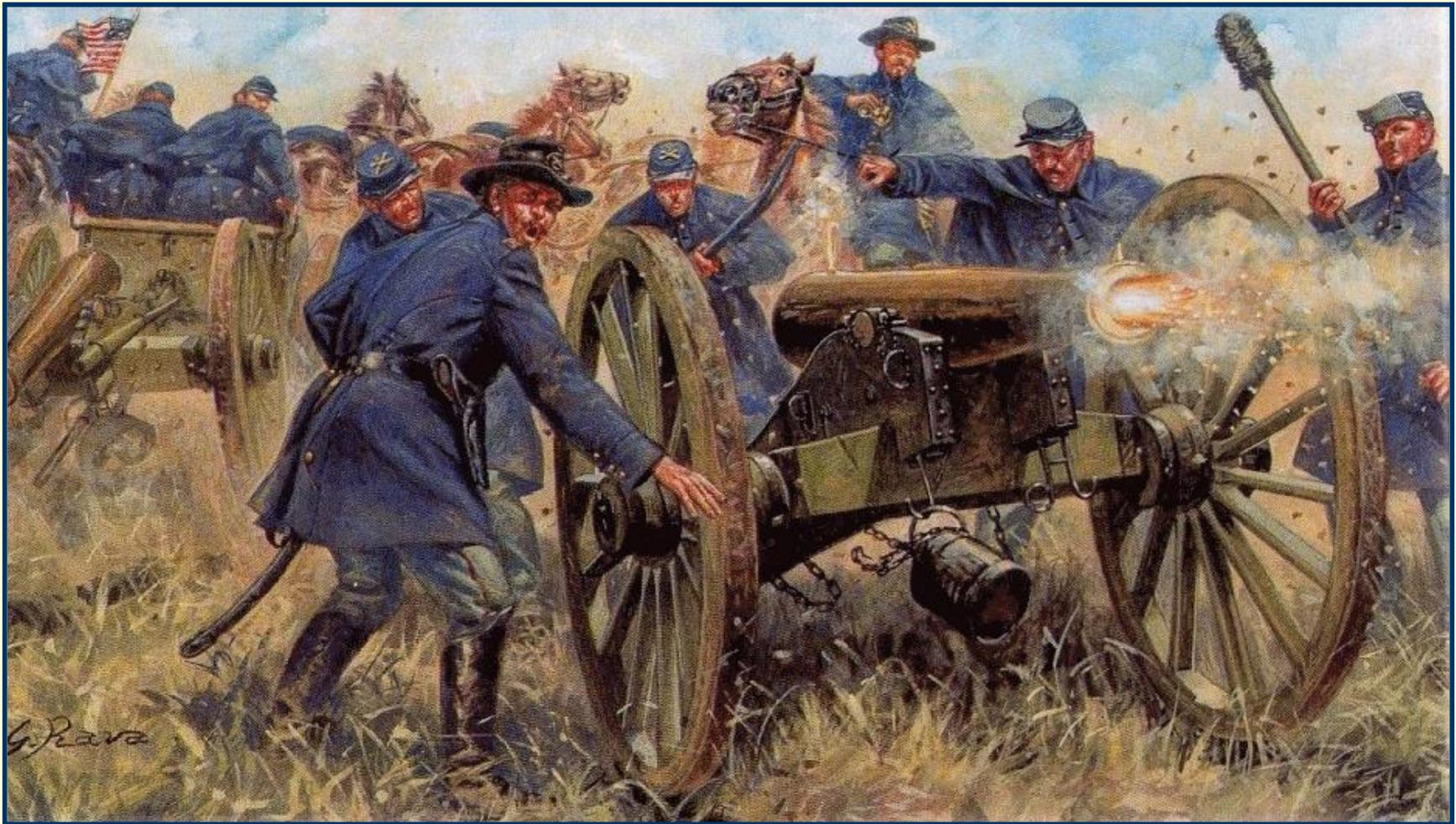
A month after The Washita, troops from New Mexico crossed the Texas Panhandle into Comanche lands.

The military believed a band of renegade Noconee Comanche were responsible for raids in Texas a few months earlier.



The soldiers attacked a Comanche village at The Battle of Soldier Spring.

The Army fired cannons into the camp, then rode in to destroy what was left.



General Sheridan wanted a new fort in the heart of the Comanche lands in Indian Territory.



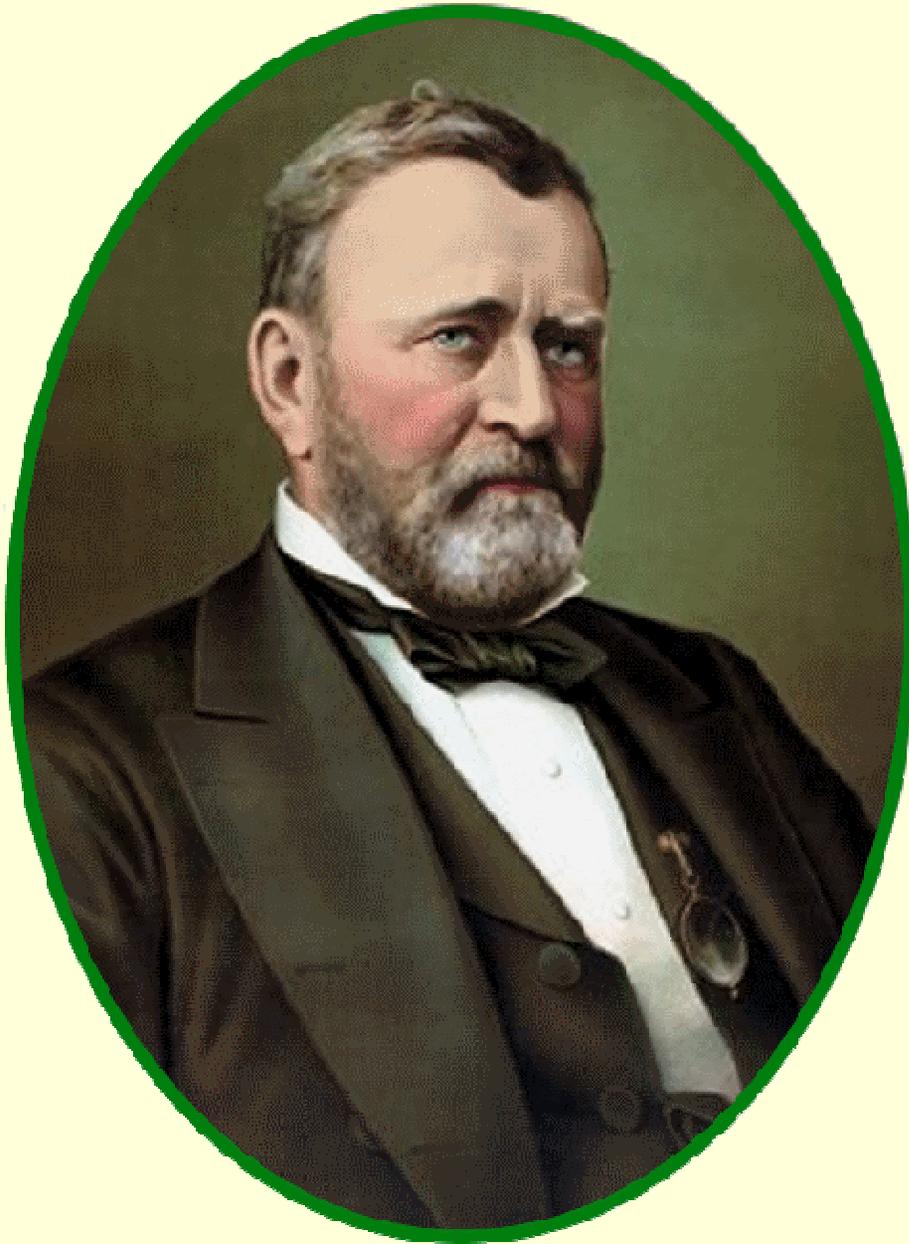
The Buffalo Soldiers, an all-black unit of the 10th Cavalry, were assigned to build Camp Wichita.



At the
dedication,
Gen. Sheridan
chose to
name it
Fort Sill,
after a friend
who had died
in the Civil War.

*Fort Sill is the only
fort built during the
Southern Plains Wars
that is still active.*





*In 1869,
the new president,
Ulysses S. Grant,
introduced a
“Peace Policy,”
believing that the
reservation system
was the best
way forward for
Native Americans.*

But being restricted to reservations was difficult for the Plains tribes, because they had hunted buffalo on the southern prairies for centuries.



The food promised to the Natives was often inadequate or of poor quality.

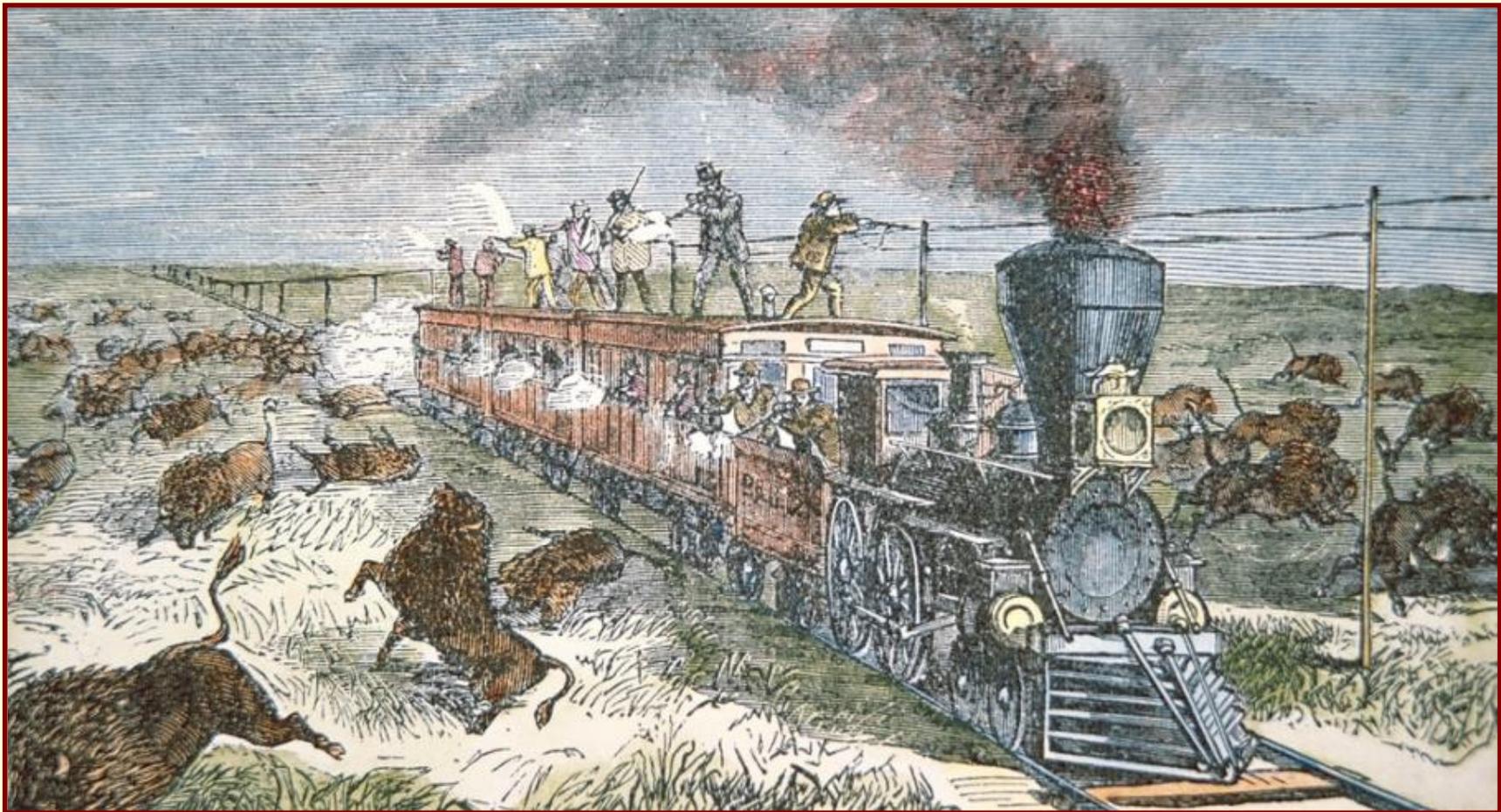
A few tribes asked permission to form temporary buffalo-hunting parties. The government refused.



Instead, the government encouraged white hunters to begin deliberately slaughtering the buffalo.

This was an intentional plan to deprive the Plains tribes of their source of food.

Col. William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody shot and killed 4,280 buffalo in just 17 months.



Many of the remaining Plains tribes believed that they must either fight or starve.





**Comanche Chief
Quanah Parker
led outlaw warriors
as they attacked
settlements in
the Texas Panhandle.**

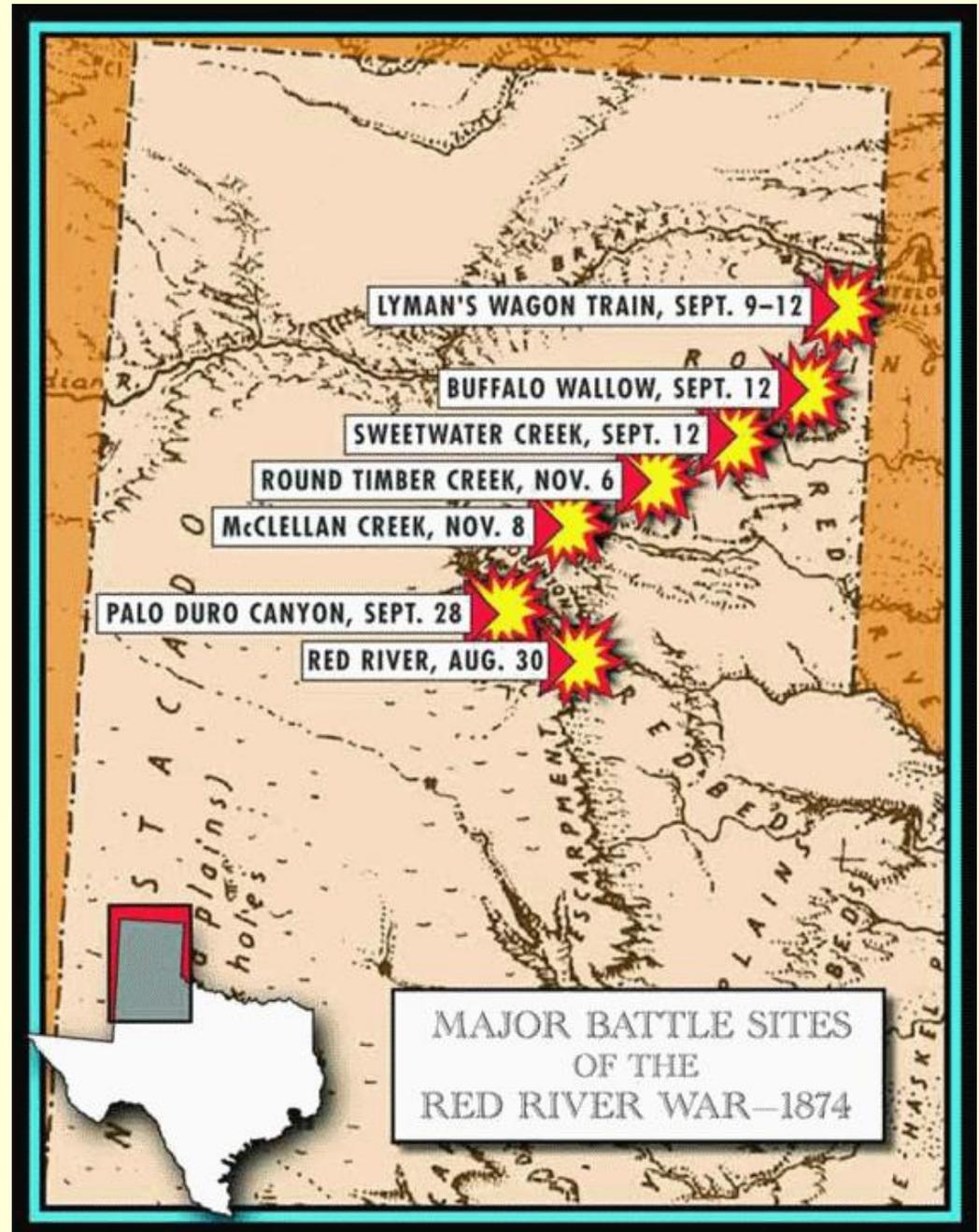
In late summer 1874,
a series of battles
ended the uprising
known as
The Red River War.

*The Natives called it
The War to Save the Buffalo.*

*The Army finally broke
the resistance by killing
most of the Indians' horses.*

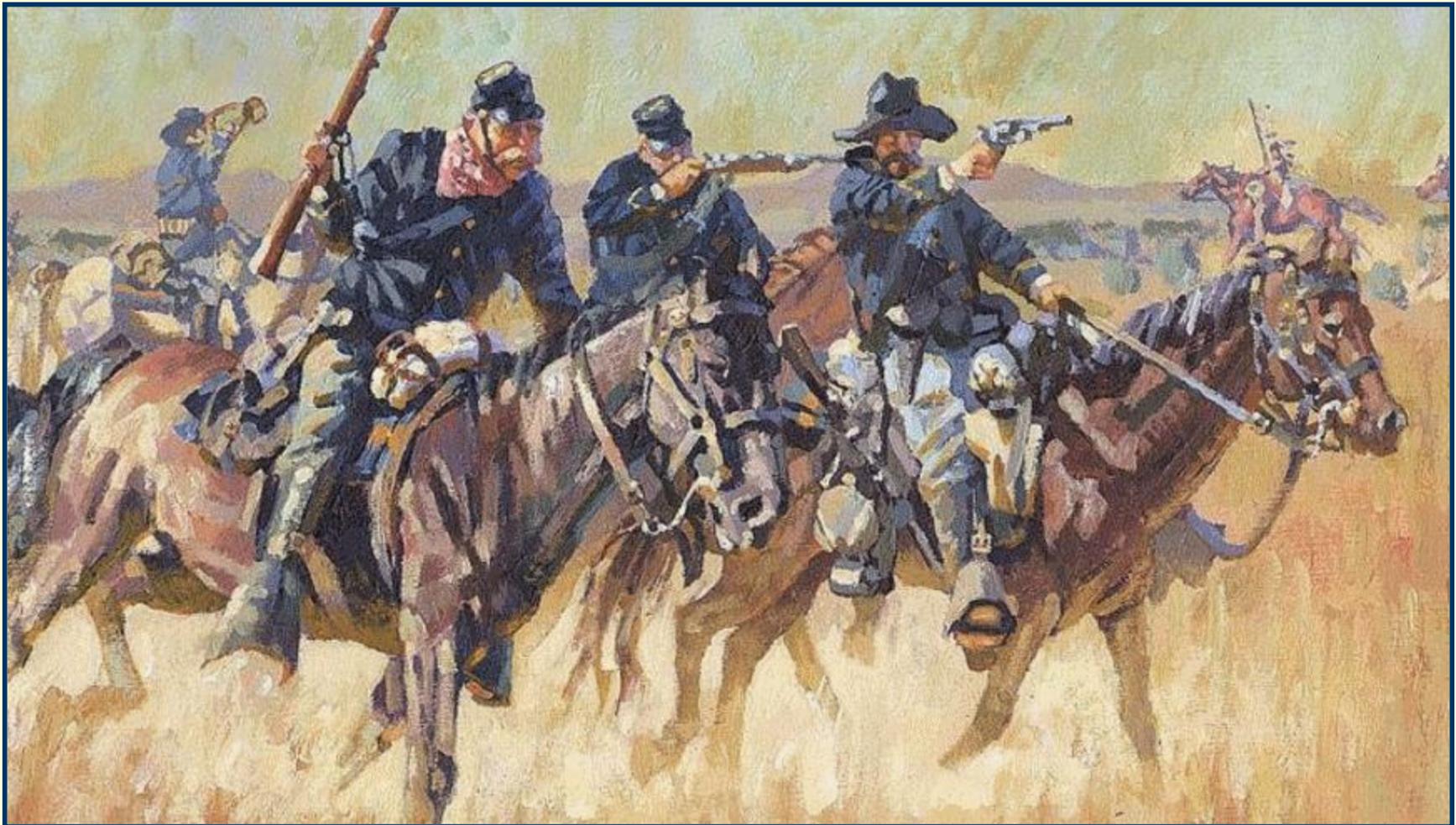
*At Palo Duro, more than
1,000 horses were shot.*

*Quanah Parker surrendered
at Ft. Sill in 1875.*



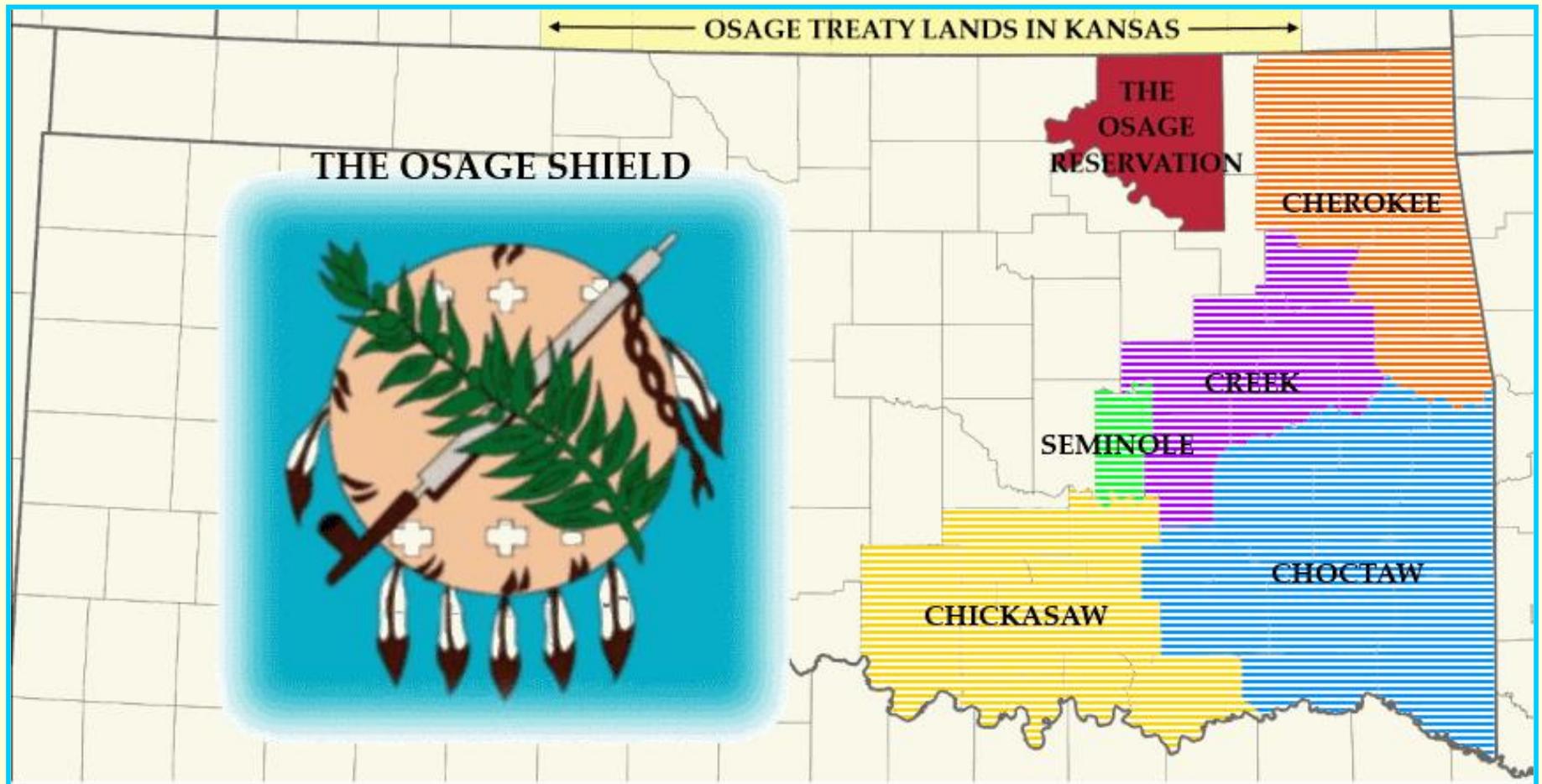
The last armed skirmish in Indian Territory was the Battle of Turkey Springs in 1878.

Renegade Cheyenne escaped the reservation but were captured at the Kansas border.



*The Osage sold their treaty lands in Kansas
and purchased a reservation in Indian Territory.*

Their new homeland was on the east end of The Cherokee Outlet.



The Pawnee Tribe from Nebraska were apprehensive about relocating – their new reservation bordered the Osage, who had previously been their rivals.



Ponca Chief Standing Bear sued the government when his tribe was moved from Nebraska.

His case showed that the United States had failed to provide the cause for their removal, as well as their arrest and captivity.



In 1877, the United States decided to relocate the Nez Perce tribe from their treaty lands.

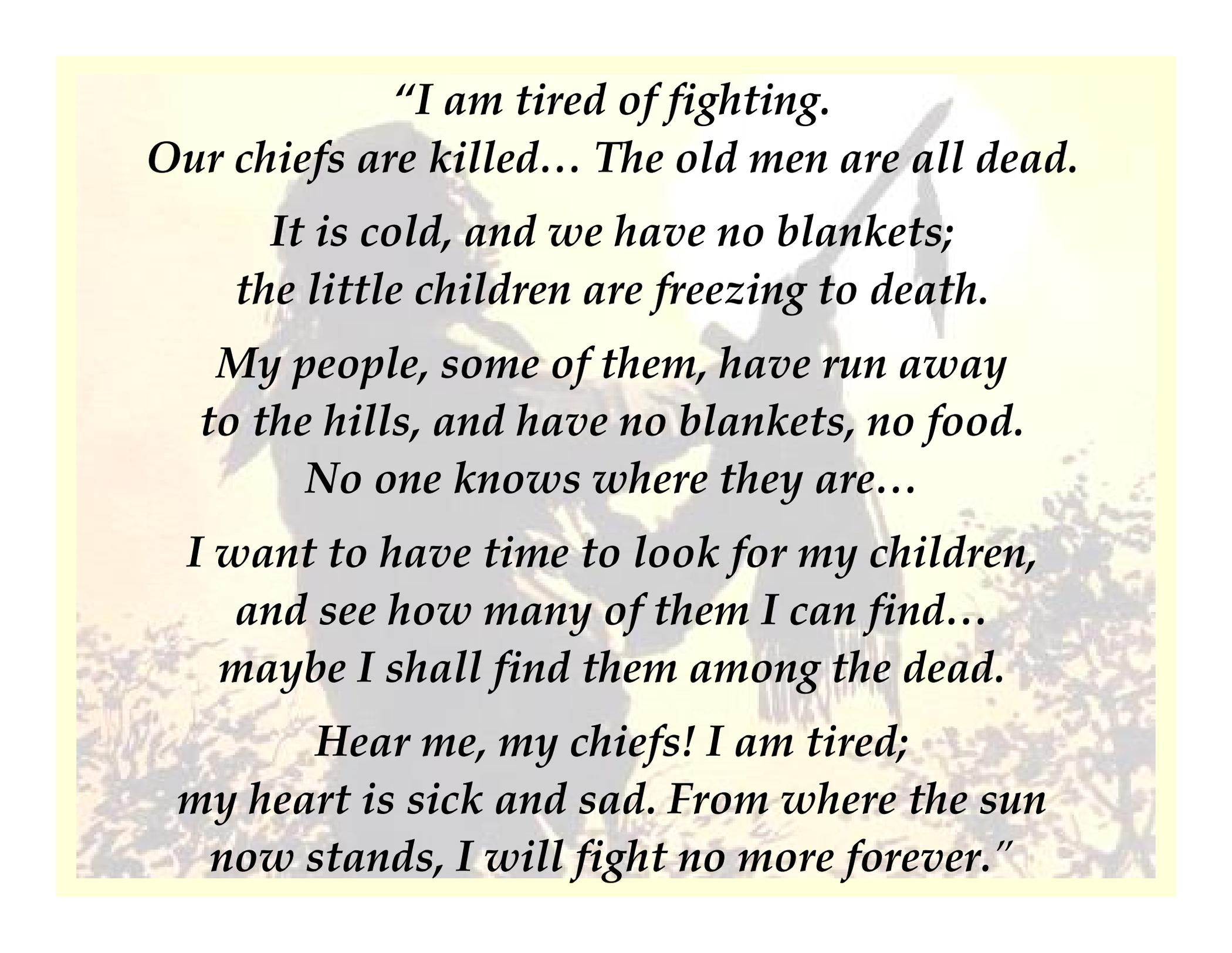




The tribe fought their way toward Canada for three months before surrendering.

After a devastating five-day battle at the Canadian border, the tribe was defeated and taken prisoner.

Their leader, Chief Joseph, is remembered for the appeal he made to Army General Oliver Howard.



*“I am tired of fighting.
Our chiefs are killed... The old men are all dead.*

*It is cold, and we have no blankets;
the little children are freezing to death.*

*My people, some of them, have run away
to the hills, and have no blankets, no food.*

No one knows where they are...

*I want to have time to look for my children,
and see how many of them I can find...
maybe I shall find them among the dead.*

*Hear me, my chiefs! I am tired;
my heart is sick and sad. From where the sun
now stands, I will fight no more forever.”*

After six years, the Nez Perce were allowed to go back to a reservation in Washington State.



There are now 39 tribes in Oklahoma.

The American Indian population in the state is more than 320,000.



With the Indian Wars over, the economy of Indian Territory began to get back on track.

