

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Oklahoma	
COUNTY: Muskogee-McIntosh	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 70,10,35,0012	DATE 9/29/70

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Honey Springs Battlefield

AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Some 2,995 acres of land located between

CITY OR TOWN:  
Oktaha and Rentiesville

STATE Oklahoma	CODE 35	COUNTY: Muskogee-McIntosh	CODE 101	CODE 091
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**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ _____ _____

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
Oklahoma Historical Society (and various private owners)

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Historical Building

CITY OR TOWN:  
Oklahoma City

STATE:  
Oklahoma

CODE:  
35

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Office of the County Clerk

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Muskogee & McIntosh County Courthouse

CITY OR TOWN:  
Muskogee and Eufala

STATE:  
Oklahoma

CODE:  
35

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Honey Springs Battlefield

DATE OF SURVEY: 1968     Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Oklahoma Historical Society

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Historical Building

CITY OR TOWN:  
Oklahoma City

STATE:  
Oklahoma

CODE:  
35

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

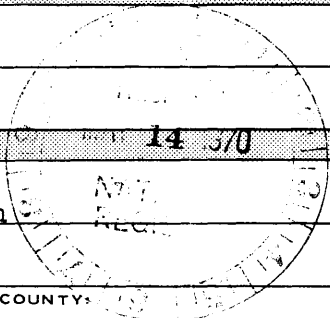
STATE: Oklahoma

COUNTY: Muskogee-McIntosh

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

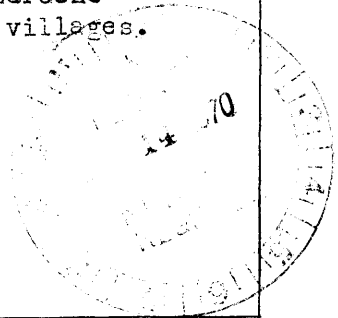
Site of the Civil War Battle of Honey Springs straddles the Muskogee-McIntosh county line about 14 miles south of the city of Muskogee, Oklahoma. It consists of 2,993 acres of land in a rural area.

The site possesses both scenic and historic importance. It is composed of some tillable prairie land and vast hilly and unusually rocky grazing areas covered primarily with trees and undergrowth. The site includes several farm homes, farm ponds, and semi-improved section line roads. The village of Oktaha (Pop. 199) lies opposite the north boundary of the battle site, the village of Rentiesville (Pop.: 122) just outside the southwest perimeter. The battle location parallels on the east and is immediately adjacent to the Missouri, Kansas & Texas Railroad, first to be constructed through present-day Oklahoma. The battle site includes a readily discernible section of the Texas Road, the major artery of travel and commerce between Missouri, Kansas, and Texas during the last century, and Honey Springs itself, a stagecoach, provision and watering point for travelers on the road. The site of the battle is readily accessible by major roadways. U. S. 69 parallels it on the west and Interstate 40 runs five miles to the south. The site is only 100 miles from Pea Ridge National Military Park in Arkansas, just 170 miles from Wilson's Creek Battlefield Park in Missouri.

The Battle of Honey Springs site is near the population recreational, historic, and cultural centers of east-central and northeastern Oklahoma. It is 60 miles from Tulsa (Pop.: 265,000), 14 miles from Muskogee (Pop.: 40,000); and 45 miles from Tahlequah (Pop.: 6,000). The battle site is relatively near the housing and recreational facilities of Arrowhead, Fountainhead, Greenleaf Lake, and Sequoyah state parks. Honey Springs lies in the old Creek Nation in one of Oklahoma's most historic and culturally significant areas.

The original condition of the Honey Springs battle site was not much different from today. Several changes, however, should be noted. Since the 1920s the Texas Road, which originally bisected the 2,993-acre battlefield, has been closed and returned to nature and agricultural purposes. The log station and storage building, together with the stone Confederate powder house (at Honey Springs itself), no longer stand, though the foundation of the powder magazine remains. Clear flowing Honey Springs, an important source of water during the Civil War, still flows. The battle area in 1863 had perhaps 25 percent more trees and undergrowth, but only one house site and no villages. Then as today, the site was wooded and rural.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



## SIGNIFICANCE

## PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian |  16th Century |  18th Century |  20th Century  
 15th Century |  17th Century |  19th Century

## SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

July 17, 1863

## AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal     | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric    | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy       | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic       | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science                   | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture    | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                 | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture   | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian       | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art            | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater                   | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation   |   |  | _____                                    |

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Federal units under Colonel William A. Phillips temporarily occupied Fort Gibson (near present-day Muskogee, Oklahoma) during the autumn of 1862. They came to stay for the duration of the Civil War in the spring of 1863. Even then, however, Confederate forces encamped at nearby Honey Springs Depot on the Texas Road continued to pose a threat to Union supremacy north of the Arkansas River. On July 1-2, 1863, a large Federal supply train enroute to Fort Gibson from Kansas on the U. S. Military Road was attacked at Cabin Creek by Confederate cavalry units under Colonel Stand Watie. Awareness of Watie's plans enabled the guard to defend the train successfully, but the encounter underscored the urgency of a Federal offensive.

When Major General James G. Blunt, then at Fort Gibson, heard (1) of Confederate plans to attack his post with troops encamped around Honey Springs Depot and (2) of the movement of a large Confederate force from Fort Smith, Arkansas, under Brigadier General William L. Cabell, he decided to attack the Depot at once. Blunt and his forces, now strengthened by additional units from Kansas, Colorado, and Wisconsin, were also heartened by news of recent Federal victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg. Blunt's troops numbered 3,000 and were newly equipped with the best uniforms, rifles, artillery, and ammunition available to the U.S. Army. The Confederate forces at Honey Springs, commanded by Brigadier General Douglas H. Cooper, consisted of 6,000 men, poorly armed and equipped. The climactic battle came on July 17, 1863, in the densely wooded area surrounding Elk Creek and on the nearby prairie. It resulted in the burning of Honey Springs Depot and defeat of the Confederates.

The Confederates were at a decided disadvantage because of some wet powder and the vigorous attack of the First Kansas Colored Volunteer Infantry Regiment, informed before the battle that if taken captive no quarter would be given. While decisive militarily, Honey Springs is also significant as one of the first battles of the war in which Negroes proved their qualities as fighting men.

The Battle of Honey Springs was the largest and most significant of 89 Civil War engagements in Indian Territory. It was, in fact, the Gettysburg of the war in Indian Territory, for it marked the climax of massed Confederate military resistance in the area and opened the way

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Britton, Wiley, The Civil War on the Border, (2 Vol., New York, 1890-1904), Vol. II, pp. 112-126  
 Epple, Jess O., (Muskogee, Oklahoma, 1964), 76 pages  
 Foreman, Grant, Muskogee and Eastern Oklahoma and the Battle of Honey Springs, (Muskogee, Oklahoma), pp. 58-70  
 Freeman, Charles R., "The Battle of Honey Springs," The Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XIII (June 1935), pp. 154-168  
 United States War Department, War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies (4 series, 128 vols., Washington, 1880-1901), Ser.1, Vol. XXII, Pt. 1, pp. 447-462, Pt. 2, pp. 393, 398, 411, and Ser.1, Vol. LIII, pp. 565-67

HPB  
 and  
 NTH

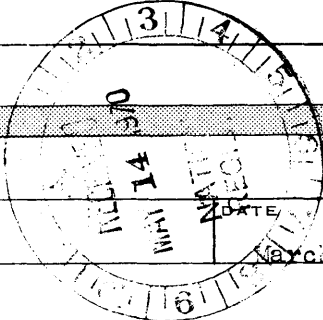
**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	35 ° 34 · 14 "	95 ° 28 · 53 "		°	'	"
NE	35 ° 33 · 57 "	95 ° 27 · 33 "				
SE	35 ° 31 · 15 "	95 ° 28 · 28 "				
SW	35 ° 31 · 15 "	95 ° 29 · 17 "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 2,993 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: LeRoy Fischer & Kent Ruth

ORGANIZATION: Historical Society of Oklahoma

STREET AND NUMBER: Historical Building

CITY OR TOWN: Oklahoma City STATE: Oklahoma CODE: 35

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name: [Signature] Title: Liaison officer for OKLAHOMA Date: JUL 13 1970

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

[Signature]  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation  
 SEP 29 1970

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ ATTEST: [Signature]  
 Keeper of The National Register  
 JUN 23 1970

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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(Continuation Sheet)

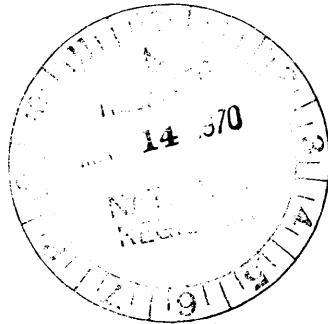
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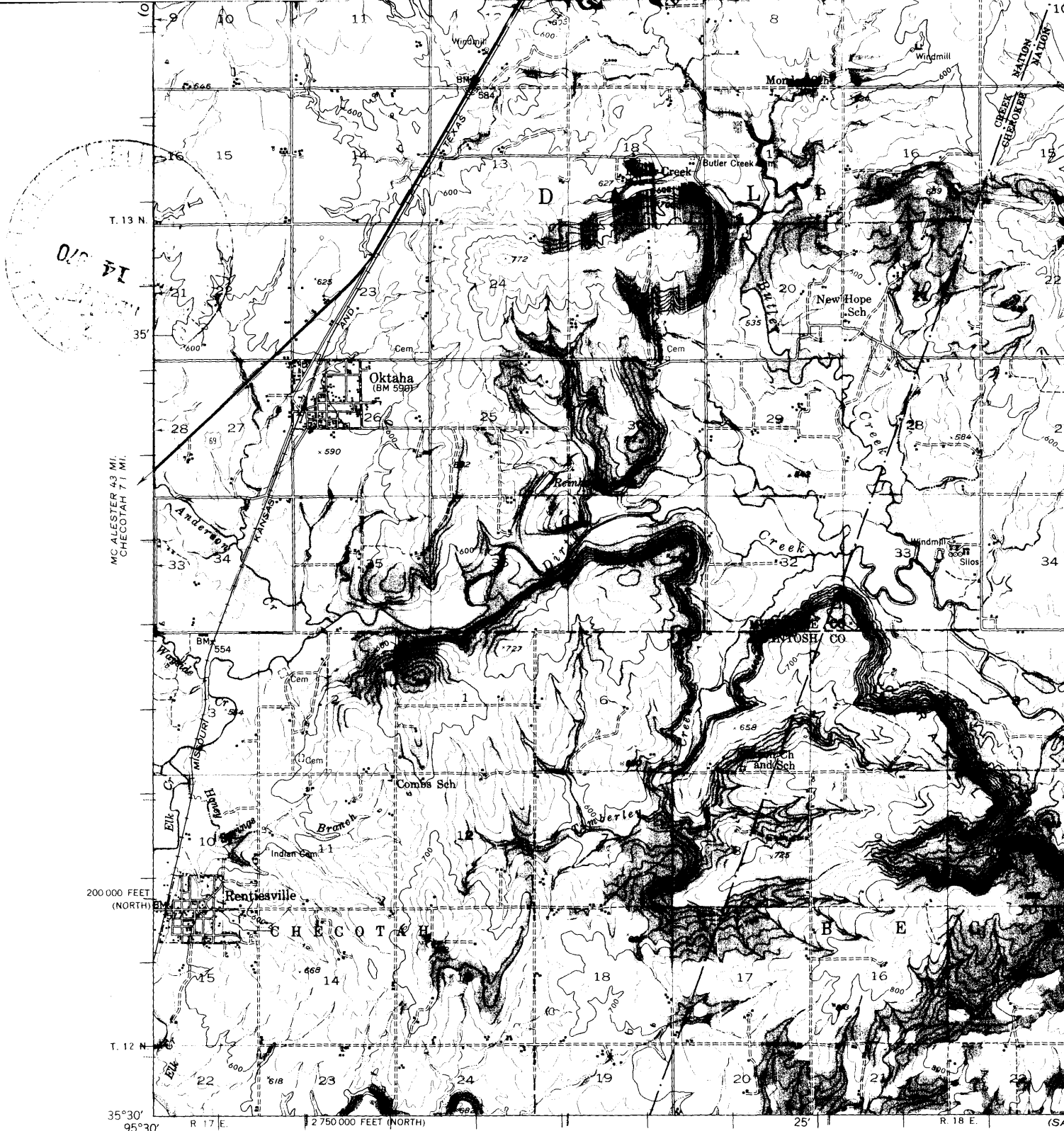
(Number all entries)

HONEY SPRINGS BATTLEFIELD

8. Historical Significance - 2

for the capture of Fort Smith by Federal forces and their control of Indian Territory and much of Arkansas. Perhaps, in terms of results, Honey Springs was even the Gettysburg of the trans-Mississippi West. As one of the three most significant Civil War battles fought west of the river, it rates in importance with the Battle of Wilson's Creek in Missouri and the Battle of Pea Ridge in Arkansas.



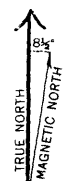


MC ALESTER 43 MI.  
CHECOTAH 71 MI.

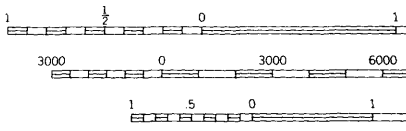
200 000 FEET  
(NORTH)

35°30'  
95°30'

Mapped by the Army Map Service  
 Edited and published by the Geological Survey  
 Control by USC&GS and AMS  
 Topography from aerial photographs by multiplex methods



APPROXIMATE MEAN  
DECLINATION, 1948



Oklahoma Muskogee-McIntosh

Honey Springs Battlefield

(Cf. attached map for L/L's)

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH  
 FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY  
 A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHY

