

# Last Indian Raid

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In 1911 a marble obelisk memorial was erected in the Oberlin Cemetery, off of U.S. 36, near the graves of some of those who died during the Last Indian Raid in Kansas.

During the spring of 1878, Oberlin was a growing settlement while in Oklahoma Indians were preparing to leave the reservation and head north.

After the battle of the Little Big Horn, the government placed a group of Northern Cheyenne on a reservation in Oklahoma with the Southern Cheyenne. Members of the two groups and the government continued to break promises.

Under the cover of darkness, the Northern Cheyenne, led by Chiefs Dull Knife and Little Wolf, left the reservation and headed for the Black Hills of South Dakota.

The Indians were followed by the cavalry, but they temporarily turned back after the Indians set a prairie fire.

No one knows for sure why the Indians started killing people. The Indians needed supplies for their long trek to the Black Hills, and they may have been angry about a massacre of Cheyenne women and children at Sappa Creek several years before.

In all, 39 settlers were killed including 18 in Decatur County.

On Sunday, Sept. 29, the Indians shot at two immigrant boys on the North Fork of the Solomon River. The boys got away but one, John Young, was hit and died four days later. Although the other boy, who went for the doctor, reported

the attack no one believed him.

In Oberlin, several men were gathering to go to Buffalo Park to pick up their families when Indian scouts saw the activity.

The Indians next attacked men haying in the Sappa Valley to the southwest. They killed John C. Hudson and wounded James G. Smith, who died 36 hours later. Mr. Smith's son Watson rode into town with the Joe Rabb family and brought the first news of the killings. Watson had escaped by getting in the creek and following it down towards the Rabb homestead.

William Laing and his son Freeman were on their way to Kirwin with the VanCleave girls, who were going to school. The Indians attacked and killed both men within sight of the Anthony home. They abducted the girls, who were turned loose hours later.

Pat Lynch and Jimmy Kelly were at the Anthony home for breakfast when they saw the killings and prepared to defend the homestead.

Along the road a short distance from the Anthonys', Marcellus Felt and Moses Abernathy, who had been on their way to Oberlin, were shot off their horses.

E.P. Humphrey and his son John were hauling hay. E.P. was killed outright and John was shot in the stomach and died a month later.

An account previously published in The Oberlin Herald recounted his escape from the Indians and death.

"John Humphrey got away from them and was brought to Rodehaver's who, with his mother, cared for him the four weeks he suffered 'til death relieved him. Their pay was the thanks of



**AT THE OBERLIN CEMETERY** a monument (above and right) was erected in 1911 in memory of those that died during the Last Indian Raid in Kansas.

