

Indian Removal and the Trail of Tears

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Indian Removal and the Trail of Tears

Standards: 4.56, 8.57

Essential Question: How did the Indian Removal Act of 1830 impact the Cherokee and the United States?

From the earliest days of settlement in Upper East Tennessee, tensions had always existed between the settlers and their Cherokee neighbors over land. Between 1775 and 1819, the Cherokee agreed to a series of land treaties that reduced their holdings to a small corner in Southeast Tennessee. However, the Cherokee faced increasing pressure from both Tennessee and Georgia to abandon their lands entirely. As early as 1817, some Cherokee had voluntarily relocated to Arkansas. Most Cherokee wanted to remain on their lands so Cherokee leaders took steps to ensure their people were not forced out.

Many Cherokee had already adopted customs from their white neighbors including the practice of slavery. Sequoyah's invention of a written language and the translation of the Bible into Cherokee helped spread Christianity to a significant proportion of the population. In 1827, the leaders meet at New Echota to write a Constitution for the Cherokee nation based on the United States Constitution. John Ross and other leaders believed these steps would protect the Cherokee from removal. Events beyond his control soon proved the belief to be false.

Two momentous events occurred in 1828. The first was the discovery of gold on Cherokee lands in north Georgia. Georgia residents had already been pushing for Cherokee removal, but the discovery of gold made removal even more urgent in the eyes of Georgia's government officials. The second event was the election of President Andrew Jackson. Jackson had fought with the Cherokee and White Stick Creeks against the Red Stick Creeks in the Creek War of 1813-1814. However, in the Treaty of Fort Jackson, he forced the White Stick Creeks, his allies, to cede land along with the Red Sticks they had fought together. The Creek nation was forced to cede twenty-three million acres of land in Alabama and Georgia. Jackson had also played a key role in the Jackson Purchase of 1818 in which the Chickasaw gave up their land claims in west Tennessee.

In 1830, Jackson introduced his Indian Removal Act to Congress. Jackson argued the removal helped Native Americans by removing them from the corrupting influences of white society and allowing them to maintain their distinctive way of life. Few among the Cherokee agreed with his thinking. The act was challenged in Congress by Henry Clay and Daniel Webster, members of the Whig party. David Crockett, a fellow Tennessean also spoke against the act. As principal chief, **John Ross'** strategy was to challenge removal through the courts. Though the Cherokee lost the 1831 case *Cherokee v. State of Georgia*, they won in the Supreme Court case **Worcester v. Georgia**. In this case, missionary Samuel Worcester had challenged Georgia's claim to Cherokee lands. The court ruled in favor of the Cherokee. In the majority

opinion John Marshall wrote that Indian nations were “distinct, independent political communities retaining their original natural rights” and that Cherokee Nation remained a separate, sovereign nation with a legitimate title to its national territory.” However, President Jackson refused to enforce the decision. He is said to have remarked, “John Marshall has made his decision, now let him enforce it.”

While John Ross continued to fight removal, other Cherokee leaders came to see taking the money offered by the United States and moving west voluntarily as the best option for the Cherokee. In 1835, Major Ridge and other Cherokee leaders signed the **Treaty of New Echota** without Ross’ knowledge or consent. In the treaty, Ridge and the others ceded all Cherokee lands east of the Mississippi River. In return the Cherokee received a grant of land in Indian Territory and 5 million dollars. Ross protested that Ridge and the other did not have the authority to sign the treaty and Ross’ allies in Congress tried to block it, but the treaty passed in the Senate by one vote. Ross continued to resist removal until 1838, when General Scott, under orders from Martin van Buren, arrived to begin rounding up the Cherokee. A small number of Cherokee were able to evade the military and remained in the mountains of Western North Carolina.

Men, women and children were forced from their homes with nothing but the clothes on their backs. The land and possessions they were forced to leave behind were immediately seized by white settlers. They were marched to stockades where they spent a miserable summer with very little protection from the weather. Sickness spread quickly in to crowded stockades and many Cherokee died. When the Cherokee finally began the long journey west they faced freezing temperatures and very little food. John Burnett, a soldier on the journey, later wrote that “I have known as many as twenty-two of them to die in one night of pneumonia due to ill treatment, cold, and exposure.” John Ross’ wife, Quatie, died after giving away her only blanket. She was one of an estimated 4,000 to 5,000 Cherokee who died on the “trail where they cried,” commonly known as the **Trail of Tears**.

Sources: “A Brief History of the Trail of Tears.” *Cherokee Nation*, 2014. Web. 30 June, 2014, <<http://www.cherokee.org/AboutTheNation/History/TrailofTears/ABriefHistoryoftheTrailofTears.aspx>>

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Indian Removal and the Trail of Tears

Answer each of the following questions using information from the text. Use each of the highlighted terms from the text at least once. Answers should be in the form of complete sentences.

1. Why were the Cherokee forced off their land? _____

2. How did the Cherokee resist removal? _____

3. How did some Cherokee leaders cooperate with removal? _____

4. How did removal affect the Cherokee? _____

Indian Removal and the Trail of Tears Key

Answer each of the following questions using information from the text. Use each of the highlighted terms from the text at least once. Answers should be in the form of complete sentences.

1. Why were the Cherokee forced off their land? Gold was discovered on Cherokee land, continued westward migration by settlers and the election of Jackson who had previously gained land cessions from the Creeks and Chickasaw.
2. How did the Cherokee resist removal? John Ross chose to fight the Indian Removal Act through legislative actions and the courts. In Worcester v. Georgia, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of the Cherokee, but Jackson ignored the ruling.
3. How and why did some Cherokee leaders cooperate with removal? Major Ridge and others signed the Treaty of New Echota in which they ceded all Cherokee lands east of the Mississippi River for land in Indian Territory and 5 million dollars. Ridge and the others believed that they were going to lose their land no matter what they did, so taking the money and leaving on their own terms was the best solution.
4. How did removal affect the Cherokee? The Cherokee lost their lands and most of their personal property. Most were forced to leave their homes with nothing but the clothes on their backs. After waiting all summer in camps full of sickness, the Cherokee were sent west during a harsh winter. Thousands died along the way of hunger, exposure and disease. The journey is known as the Trail of Tears.

Indian Removal and the Trail of Tears

Answer each of the following questions using information from the text. Use each of the highlighted terms from the text at least once. Use the answers to help you plan your essay.

1. Why were the Cherokee forced off their land? _____

2. How did the Cherokee resist removal? _____

3. How did some Cherokee leaders cooperate with removal? _____

4. How did removal affect the Cherokee? _____

Essay

Describe the struggle between the Cherokee Nation and the United States government and the impact of the Indian Removal Act on the Cherokee.

Include evidence from primary source accounts of the Trail of Tears.

Indian Removal and the Trail of Tears Key

Answer each of the following questions using information from the text. Use each of the highlighted terms from the text at least once. Use the answers to help you plan your essay.

1. Why were the Cherokee forced off their land? **Gold was discovered on Cherokee land, continued westward migration by settlers and the election of Jackson who had previously gained land cessions from the Creeks and Chickasaw.**
2. How did the Cherokee resist removal? **John Ross chose to fight the Indian Removal Act through legislative actions and the courts. In Worcester v. Georgia, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of the Cherokee, but Jackson ignored the ruling.**
3. How and why did some Cherokee leaders cooperate with removal? **Major Ridge and others signed the Treaty of New Echota in which they ceded all Cherokee lands east of the Mississippi River for land in Indian Territory and 5 million dollars. Ridge and the others believed that they were going to lose their land no matter what they did, so taking the money and leaving on their own terms was the best solution.**
4. How did removal affect the Cherokee? **The Cherokee lost their lands and most of their personal property. Most were forced to leave their homes with nothing but the clothes on their backs. After waiting all summer in camps full of sickness, the Cherokee were sent west during a harsh winter. Thousands died along the way of hunger, exposure and disease. The journey is known as the Trail of Tears.**

Essay

Describe the struggle between the Cherokee Nation and the United States government and the impact of the Indian Removal Act on the Cherokee.

Include evidence from primary source accounts of the Trail of Tears. **(Not included in the text)**

John Ross on Indian Removal

Standards: 4.56, 8.57

In this 6-page letter, Cherokee Chief John Ross acknowledges that the Cherokee Nation is aware of President Andrew Jackson's desire to remove the Indians to the west. Ross references a previous letter in which a meeting was requested with the Cherokees to discuss a treaty for removal. He plainly states that the Cherokee Nation is not interested in meeting for a discussion because they are convinced there is nothing the United States Government can offer that will change their disposition against removal from their ancestral lands. Ross says that the Executive Department of the Nation is always willing to receive official representatives from the President to discuss various topics. He relays concern about the States being granted jurisdiction over the portion of the Cherokee Nation with each State's territory and believes that whatever decision is made has the potential to benefit or doom the Nation. He ends the letter with the assurance that the Cherokees are the allies of and depend upon the United States, having fought wars with the U.S., and they desire peace with the American people

[Page 1] New Echota Cherokee Nation August 29th 1829

Dear Sir, Your communication of this date containing the object of your visit to the Nation under instruction from the Secretary of War is received and maturely deliberated on in Executive Councils convened for the express purpose. The deep interest felt on the part of the President of the U. States for the removal of the Cherokees west of the Mississippi is known to the nation. It is a subject that has often and long since been submitted for consideration and been deliberated by the Councils of the Nation with all that solemnity its importance deserved, and the conclusion and result of those deliberations have been expressed in solemnness and sincerity to the Govt of the U. States, adverse to a removal. And we declare that those sentiments and dispositions remain the same and are unchangeable; you state that you are instructed simply to propose that "We will agree to meet commissioners to be appointed

[Page 2] by the President, at such time as may best suit the convenience of both parties for the purpose of discussing the subject of the Cherokees removing west of the Mississippi; and that we would then have an opportunity of hearing the propositions of the Government." It is deemed inexpedient to enter into a special agreement to meet commissioners for the purpose of discussing the subject of the Cherokees removing west of the Mississippi when it is well known that the disposition of the Nation is adverse to a removal and that no propositions could be made to change their disposition as to induce them ever to enter into a treaty on the subject. Especially as the proper authorities of the Nation are ever ready at all times to receive in the most friendly manner all public functionaries of the U. States that may be appointed by the President for the purpose of submitting subjects for our consideration. The Executive Department of the Nation will never neglect to attend to such business

[Page 3] during the recess of the Gen'l Council (as is manifest on the present occasion), and

the Legislative Department during its session (which is convened annually on the second Monday of October) in like manner will always receive and act upon all subjects submitted for their consideration and decision. The right of individual States exercising jurisdiction over the Territory solemnly secured and guaranteed to the Cherokee Nation by treaty is a subject that is certainly questionable. The principles contained in the Constitutions of the U. States and the Treaties establishing relationship between the U. States and the Cherokee Nations are in variance to the exercise of such a power by the State Government. We are aware that a decision on this important subject must seal our fate in prosperity and happiness or in misery and distruction [sic]. But confiding in the magnanimity and justice of the United States, we place our dependence upon their plighted faith and await the result. We are happy

[Page 4] to hear that it affords you much sattisfaction [sic] to find that the best feelings exist everywhere towards the U. States in the Nation and that you will take occasion to communicate this fact to the Pres. Of the U. States in contradiction to the slanderous reports circulated by the frontier newspapers prejudicial to the best interest of the Cherokee People. Permit us Sir in addition to say that so far from the Cherokees entertaining any hostile feelings towards the citizens of the U. States – that in our opinion, no people could be found in the U. States who would, in case of actual war, prove more loyal to the cause of the U. States than the Cherokees. Yourself as well as the President of the U. States have witnessed this fact realized during the late war – with great pleasure we reciprocate your wishes for the future happiness of this Nation. In return you will please to accept the best wishes for your health and happiness and for the peace prosperity of the United States. In behalf of the Cherokee Nation we have the honor to be Sir very respectfully your Servants.

John Ross Geo.

Lowrey William Hicks

Major Ridge his x mark

To His Ex'cy William Carroll Gov'r of Tennessee Presen

Source: “Letter from John Ross to Tennessee Governor William Carroll regarding the Cherokee Nation's stance on removal.” *Education Outreach*, Tennessee State Library and Archives. n.d. 28 June 2014. < <http://tsla.tnsosfiles.com/digital/teva/transcripts/42422.pdf>>

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<http://cdm15138.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/compoundobject/collection/p15138coll18/id/2081/rec/15>
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John Burnett's Account of the Trail of Tears

Standards: 4.56, 8.57

John Burnett was a young soldier assigned to assist with the removal of Cherokee in 1838-1839. In 1890, he shared his memories of Trail of Tears with his family.

Birthday Story of Private John G. Burnett, Captain Abraham McClellan's Company, 2nd Regiment, 2nd Brigade, Mounted Infantry, Cherokee Indian Removal, 1838-39.

"Children: This is my birthday, December 11, 1890, I am eighty years old today. I was born at Kings Iron Works in Sullivan County, Tennessee, December the 11th, 1810. I grew into manhood fishing in Beaver Creek and roaming through the forest hunting the deer and the wild boar and the timber wolf. Often spending weeks at a time in the solitary wilderness with no companions but my rifle, hunting knife, and a small hatchet that I carried in my belt in all of my wilderness wanderings.

On these long hunting trips I met and became acquainted with many of the Cherokee Indians, hunting with them by day and sleeping around their camp fires by night. I learned to speak their language, and they taught me the arts of trailing and building traps and snares. On one of my long hunts in the fall of 1829, I found a young Cherokee who had been shot by a roving band of hunters and who had eluded his pursuers and concealed himself under a shelving rock. Weak from loss of blood, the poor creature was unable to walk and almost famished for water. I carried him to a spring, bathed and bandaged the bullet wound, and built a shelter out of bark peeled from a dead chestnut tree. I nursed and protected him feeding him on chestnuts and toasted deer meat. When he was able to travel I accompanied him to the home of his people and remained so long that I was given up for lost. By this time I had become an expert rifleman and fairly good archer and a good trapper and spent most of my time in the forest in quest of game.

The removal of Cherokee Indians from their lifelong homes in the year of 1838 found me a young man in the prime of life and a Private soldier in the American Army. Being acquainted with many of the Indians and able to fluently speak their language, I was sent as interpreter into the Smoky Mountain Country in May, 1838, and witnessed the execution of the most brutal order in the History of American Warfare. I saw the helpless Cherokees arrested and dragged from their homes, and driven at the bayonet point into the stockades. And in the chill of a drizzling rain on an October morning I saw them loaded like cattle or sheep into six hundred and forty-five wagons and started toward the west.

One can never forget the sadness and solemnity of that morning. Chief John Ross led in prayer and when the bugle sounded and the wagons started rolling many of the children rose to their feet and waved their little hands good-by to their mountain homes, knowing they were leaving

them forever. Many of these helpless people did not have blankets and many of them had been driven from home barefooted.

On the morning of November the 17th we encountered a terrific sleet and snow storm with freezing temperatures and from that day until we reached the end of the fateful journey on March the 26th, 1839, the sufferings of the Cherokees were awful. The trail of the exiles was a trail of death. They had to sleep in the wagons and on the ground without fire. And I have known as many as twenty-two of them to die in one night of pneumonia due to ill treatment, cold, and exposure. Among this number was the beautiful Christian wife of Chief John Ross. This noble hearted woman died a martyr to childhood, giving her only blanket for the protection of a sick child. She rode thinly clad through a blinding sleet and snow storm, developed pneumonia and died in the still hours of a bleak winter night, with her head resting on Lieutenant Greggs saddle blanket.

I made the long journey to the west with the Cherokees and did all that a Private soldier could do to alleviate their sufferings. When on guard duty at night I have many times walked my beat in my blouse in order that some sick child might have the warmth of my overcoat. I was on guard duty the night Mrs. Ross died. When relieved at midnight I did not retire, but remained around the wagon out of sympathy for Chief Ross, and at daylight was detailed by Captain McClellan to assist in the burial like the other unfortunates who died on the way. Her unconfined body was buried in a shallow grave by the roadside far from her native home, and the sorrowing Cavalcade moved on.

Being a young man, I mingled freely with the young women and girls. I have spent many pleasant hours with them when I was supposed to be under my blanket, and they have many times sung their mountain songs for me, this being all that they could do to repay my kindness. And with all my association with Indian girls from October 1829 to March 26th 1839, I did not meet one who was a moral prostitute. They are kind and tender hearted and many of them are beautiful.

The only trouble that I had with anybody on the entire journey to the west was a brutal teamster by the name of Ben McDonal, who was using his whip on an old feeble Cherokee to hasten him into the wagon. The sight of that old and nearly blind creature quivering under the lashes of a bull whip was too much for me. I attempted to stop McDonal and it ended in a personal encounter. He lashed me across the face, the wire tip on his whip cutting a bad gash in my cheek. The little hatchet that I had carried in my hunting days was in my belt and McDonal was carried unconscious from the scene.

I was placed under guard but Ensign Henry Bullock and Private Elkanah Millard had both witnessed the encounter. They gave Captain McClellan the facts and I was never brought to trial.

Years later I met 2nd Lieutenant Riley and Ensign Bullock at Bristol at John Roberson's show, and Bullock jokingly reminded me that there was a case still pending against me before a court martial and wanted to know how much longer I was going to have the trial put off?

McDonal finally recovered, and in the year 1851, was running a boat out of Memphis, Tennessee.

The long painful journey to the west ended March 26th, 1839, with four-thousand silent graves reaching from the foothills of the Smoky Mountains to what is known as Indian territory in the West. And covetousness on the part of the white race was the cause of all that the Cherokees had to suffer. Ever since Ferdinand DeSoto made his journey through the Indian country in the year 1540, there had been a tradition of a rich gold mine somewhere in the Smoky Mountain Country, and I think the tradition was true. At a festival at Echota on Christmas night 1829, I danced and played with Indian girls who were wearing ornaments around their neck that looked like gold.

In the year 1828, a little Indian boy living on Ward creek had sold a gold nugget to a white trader, and that nugget sealed the doom of the Cherokees. In a short time the country was overrun with armed brigands claiming to be government agents, who paid no attention to the rights of the Indians who were the legal possessors of the country. Crimes were committed that were a disgrace to civilization. Men were shot in cold blood, lands were confiscated. Homes were burned and the inhabitants driven out by the gold-hungry brigands.

Chief Junaluska was personally acquainted with President Andrew Jackson. Junaluska had taken 500 of the flower of his Cherokee scouts and helped Jackson to win the battle of the Horse Shoe, leaving 33 of them dead on the field. And in that battle Junaluska had drove his tomahawk through the skull of a Creek warrior, when the Creek had Jackson at his mercy.

Chief John Ross sent Junaluska as an envoy to plead with President Jackson for protection for his people, but Jackson's manner was cold and indifferent toward the rugged son of the forest who had saved his life. He met Junaluska, heard his plea but curtly said, "Sir, your audience is ended. There is nothing I can do for you." The doom of the Cherokee was sealed. Washington, D.C., had decreed that they must be driven West and their lands given to the white man, and in May 1838, an army of 4000 regulars, and 3000 volunteer soldiers under command of General Winfield Scott, marched into the Indian country and wrote the blackest chapter on the pages of American history.

Men working in the fields were arrested and driven to the stockades. Women were dragged from their homes by soldiers whose language they could not understand. Children were often separated from their parents and driven into the stockades with the sky for a blanket and the earth for a pillow. And often the old and infirm were prodded with bayonets to hasten them to the

stockades.

In one home death had come during the night. A little sad-faced child had died and was lying on a bear skin couch and some women were preparing the little body for burial. All were arrested and driven out leaving the child in the cabin. I don't know who buried the body.

In another home was a frail mother, apparently a widow and three small children, one just a baby. When told that she must go, the mother gathered the children at her feet, prayed a humble prayer in her native tongue, patted the old family dog on the head, told the faithful creature good-bye, with a baby strapped on her back and leading a child with each hand started on her exile. But the task was too great for that frail mother. A stroke of heart failure relieved her sufferings. She sunk and died with her baby on her back, and her other two children clinging to her hands.

Chief Junaluska who had saved President Jackson's life at the battle of Horse Shoe witnessed this scene, the tears gushing down his cheeks and lifting his cap he turned his face toward the heavens and said, "Oh my God, if I had known at the battle of the Horse Shoe what I know now, American history would have been differently written."

At this time, 1890, we are too near the removal of the Cherokees for our young people to fully understand the enormity of the crime that was committed against a helpless race. Truth is, the facts are being concealed from the young people of today. School children of today do not know that we are living on lands that were taken from a helpless race at the bayonet point to satisfy the white man's greed.

Future generations will read and condemn the act and I do hope posterity will remember that private soldiers like myself, and like the four Cherokees who were forced by General Scott to shoot an Indian Chief and his children, had to execute the orders of our superiors. We had no choice in the matter.

Twenty-five years after the removal it was my privilege to meet a large company of the Cherokees in uniform of the Confederate Army under command of Colonel Thomas. They were encamped at Zollicoffer and I went to see them. Most of them were just boys at the time of the removal but they instantly recognized me as "the soldier that was good to us". Being able to talk to them in their native language I had an enjoyable day with them. From them I learned that Chief John Ross was still ruler in the nation in 1863. And I wonder if he is still living? He was a noble-hearted fellow and suffered a lot for his race.

At one time, he was arrested and thrown into a dirty jail in an effort to break his spirit, but he remained true to his people and led them in prayer when they started on their exile. And his Christian wife sacrificed her life for a little girl who had pneumonia. The Anglo-Saxon race

would build a towering monument to perpetuate her noble act in giving her only blanket for comfort of a sick child. Incidentally the child recovered, but Mrs. Ross is sleeping in a unmarked grave far from her native Smoky Mountain home.

When Scott invaded the Indian country some of the Cherokees fled to caves and dens in the mountains and were never captured and they are there today. I have long intended going there and trying to find them but I have put off going from year to year and now I am too feeble to ride that far. The fleeing years have come and gone and old age has overtaken me. I can truthfully say that neither my rifle nor my knife were stained with Cherokee blood.

I can truthfully say that I did my best for them when they certainly did need a friend. Twenty-five years after the removal I still lived in their memory as "the soldier that was good to us".

However, murder is murder whether committed by the villain skulking in the dark or by uniformed men stepping to the strains of martial music.

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 4000 silent graves that mark the trail of the Cherokees to their exile. I wish I could forget it all, but the picture of 645 wagons lumbering over the frozen ground with their cargo of suffering humanity still lingers in my memory.

Let the historian of a future day tell the sad story with its sighs, its tears and dying groans. Let the great Judge of all the earth weigh our actions and reward us according to our work.

Children - Thus ends my promised birthday story. This December the 11th 1890."

Source: Burnett, John. "John Burnett's Story of the Trail of Tears." *Trail of Tears*, Cherokee Nation. 2014. 28 June 2014. <

<http://www.cherokee.org/AboutTheNation/History/TrailofTears/JohnBurnettsStoryoftheTrailofTears.aspx>>

Memorial of the Cherokee Nation

Standards: 4.56, 8.57

Memorial of the Cherokee Nation, 1830:

"We are aware that some persons suppose it will be for our advantage to remove beyond the Mississippi. We think otherwise. Our people universally think otherwise. Thinking that it would be fatal to their interests, they have almost to a man sent their memorial to Congress, deprecating the necessity of a removal. . . .

It is incredible that Georgia should ever have enacted the oppressive laws to which reference is here made, unless she had supposed that something extremely terrific in its character was necessary in order to make the Cherokees willing to remove. We are not willing to remove; and if we could be brought to this extremity, it would be not by argument, nor because our judgment was satisfied, not because our condition will be improved; but only because we cannot endure to be deprived of our national and individual rights and subjected to a process of intolerable oppression.

We wish to remain on the land of our fathers. We have a perfect and original right to remain without interruption or molestation. The treaties with us, and laws of the United States made in pursuance of treaties, guaranty our residence and our privileges, and secure us against intruders. Our only request is, that these treaties may be fulfilled, and these laws executed. But if we are compelled to leave our country, we see nothing but ruin before us. The country west of the Arkansas territory is unknown to us.

From what we can learn of it, we have no prepossessions in its favor. All the inviting parts of it, as we believe, are preoccupied by various Indian nations, to which it has been assigned. They would regard us as intruders. . . . The far greater part of that region is, beyond all controversy, badly supplied with wood and water; and no Indian tribe can live as agriculturists without these articles. All our neighbors . . . would speak a language totally different from ours, and practice different customs. The original possessors of that region are now wandering savages lurking for prey in the neighborhood. . . . Were the country to which we are urged much better than it is represented to be, . . . still it is not the land of our birth, nor of our affections. It contains neither the scenes of our childhood, nor the graves of our fathers. . . .

We have been called a poor, ignorant, and degraded people. We certainly are not rich; nor have we ever boasted of our knowledge, or our moral or intellectual elevation. But there is not a man within our limits so ignorant as not to know that he has a right to live on the land of his fathers, in the possession of his immemorial privileges, and that this right has been acknowledged by the United States; nor is there a man so degraded as not to feel a keen sense of injury, on being

deprived of his right and driven into exile. . . .".

Reprinted from "Memorial of the Cherokee Nation," in Nile's Weekly Register, 1830.

Source: "Memorial of the Cherokee Nation," *Trail of Tears*, Cherokee Nation. 2014. 28 June 2014. <

<http://www.cherokee.org/AboutTheNation/History/TrailofTears/MemorialoftheCherokee.aspx>>

John Ross and Removal Primary Sources

Standard: 2.32, 4.54, 4.56, 8.56, 8.57

These sources can all be found at the Tennessee State Library and Archives Virtual Archive. Click on the link to the TeVA site. You can download jpegs of the files by clicking the download icon in the upper right hand corner.



[John Ross](#)



[Major Ridge](#)



[Tennessee Map, circa 1822](#)

Map shows Cherokee land in southeast

