

Louise Bayless  
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HISTORIAN TELLS TRAGIC STORY OF CHEROKEES' REMOVAL WEST  
TRIBESMEN HAD FORMED WEALTHY NATION WHEN TRICKED INTO MIGRATION

They had Substantial House, in Fine Villages, Well-Cultivated Fields,  
Extensive Trail System, Marked Progress.

One of the most brutal chapters in American History today has to do with  
the removal of the Cherokee Indians from their home in the area of which Murphy  
and Fort Butler is now the center, to the Oklahoma plains.

A trail of death and suffering on the way followed on the heartbreak caused  
by forcible removal from the land which they had held for so many centuries.

These Indians suffered because they trusted to the white man to be honorable  
and just in his dealings and loyal to his promises. They found the white man  
instead had been determined to grab their lands on any pretext, with as little  
bloodshed as possible, and had tricked them into abandoning their war equipment  
so they were helpless when the order for their removal came.

Preceding the removal, the whites carefully spread rumors that the Indians  
were planning an uprising and anonymous notes were received by white men in the  
Nation declaring that their lives were in danger. The Indians—not savages, but a  
Christianized people, more civilized than their white neighbors, replied:

"We have no military system, equipment or supplies, our instruments of war were  
buried long ago and the martial spirit of our people has disappeared. A futile and  
impossible revolution is not our thought."

The Missionaries and others who spread the gospel of Christ among this  
genuinely great people and enlisted them under the banner of the Prince of Peace  
caused them to be unable to defend themselves with the war-like prowess of their  
ancestors when they faced the white man's ruthless order taking their homes away  
from them. This does not mean that the coming of the missionaries was not a

TRAGIC STORY OF CHEROKEES' REMOVAL WEST FROM FORT BUTLER, CHEROKEE COUNTY, N. C.  
(Cont'd.)

blessing to the Cherokees; for had they kept their warlike spirit and attempted to save their homes by fighting for them, extermination would have been the certain result.

But even though history shows that to be true, its truth does not take from the shame of the wrongs committed against this civilized people.

The removal, the injustice of it frankly admitted but with praise for the humaneness of General Winfield Scott's management of the long overland journey. The removal started from Fort Butler where literally thousands were herded into a stockade at the Fort.

The Cherokee belonged to the great Iroquoian group and had at some remote time become detached from their kindred in the North.

Among the legends handed down in the tribe were stories of the Cherokees once having been driven by powerful enemies from their old home and pushed southward. They inhabited the mountain sections of the South, and long before the coming of white men were firmly established in this region. Their burial mounds, some of them centuries old, the one located at Peachtree section of Cherokee County, was excavated by the Smithsonian Institute in Washington in 1938, their villages, build of substantial houses, and their cultivated fields, dotted the river valleys on the Valley River, the Hiwassee River and the Tennessee and their other streams.

An intricate system of trails or roadways, connected the towns and villages, wound along the numerous clear-flowing streams, climbed through the mountain passes to rich primeval hunting grounds, where roamed large herds of deer and numerous small animals.