

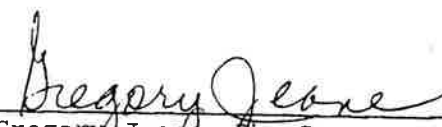
NPS
#212

AN ARCHIVAL AND FIELD SURVEY OF SELECTED
HISTORIC CULTURAL RESOURCES, ALLATOONA
LAKE, GEORGIA

Contract No. DACW01-83-C-0186

Compiled for the U. S. Army, Corps of Engineers
Mobile District

ROUGH DRAFT



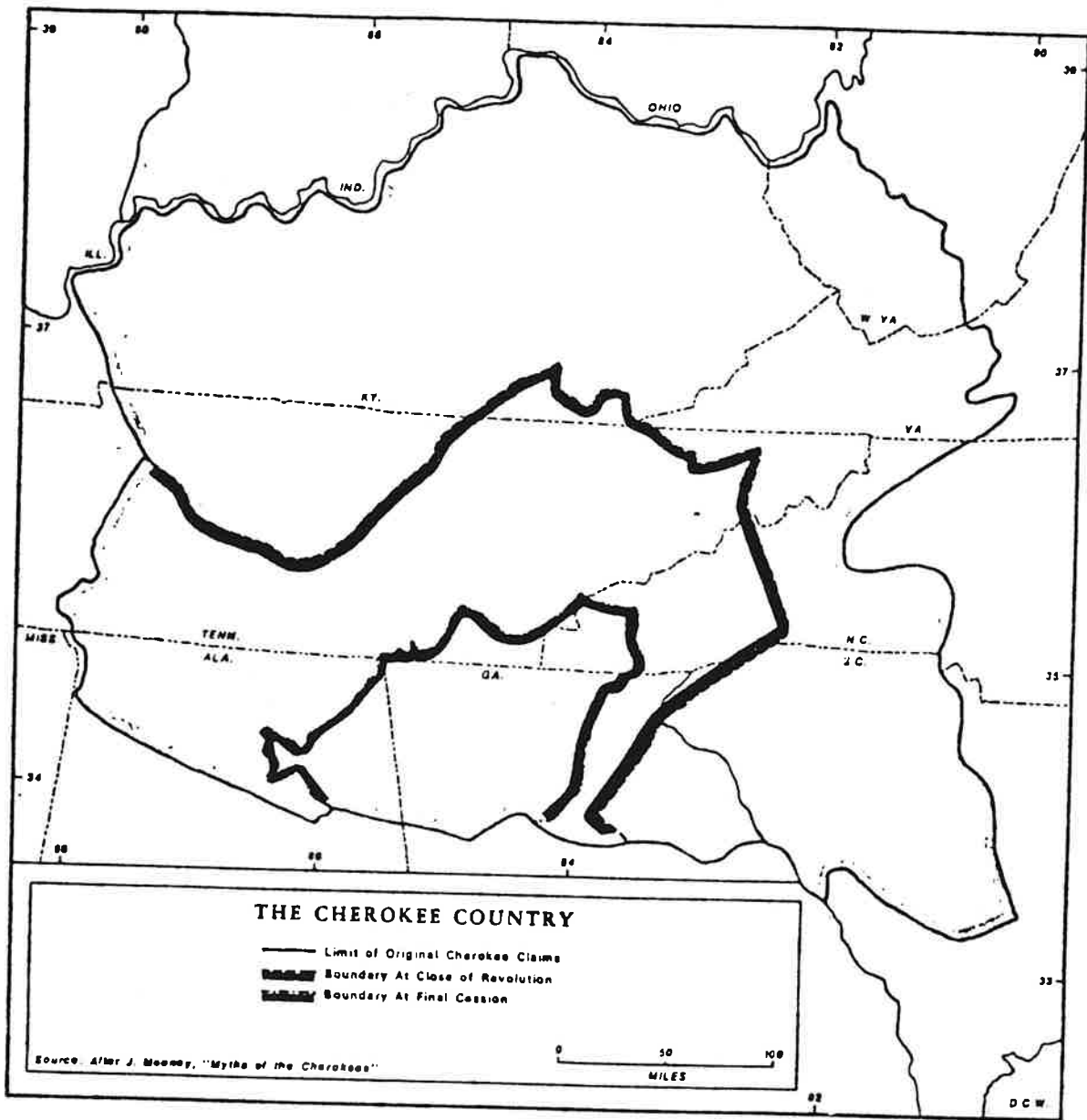
Gregory Jean, Ph. D.
1307 Cordelia Drive
Opelika, AL 36801

Chapter 2

THE CHEROKEE LANDSCAPE, 1800-1838

The last major land lottery conducted by Georgia took place in 1832 and was known as the 1832 Land Lottery or the Cherokee Lottery. It has significance as the last of a series of state lotteries which began in 1803. More importantly, however, it represented the beginning of the end of a modest, but fruitful, Cherokee occupation of the region. The Cherokee were one of the few Indian tribes that successfully adopted a europeanized lifestyle introduced by settlers immigrating to America. The process was a dynamic one, taking place over numerous decades but eventually culminating in a thoroughly transformed Indian landscape.

The original Cherokee nation was not centered in Georgia but to the north: in present-day Tennessee and North Carolina. Nearly all of Kentucky and a sizeable portion of the northern tier of Alabama, Georgia and western South Carolina was claimed as well. By the close of the American Revolution, this vast domain had shrunk by about fifty percent and centered on Tennessee, northern Alabama and north Georgia. Gradually, as the process of europeanization triumphed and whites successfully encroached themselves upon Cherokee land, the Indians retreated until their territory centered on the northwest corner of Georgia (Evans 1981:61, Mooney 1900) (Map 2-1).



May #

• Europeanization

The process of change began long before 1800. Changes not only in land use but in the material culture took place. By the early part of the nineteenth century the Cherokee settlement pattern had changed from a prehistoric palisaded village form to one of "dispersed" occupance (Wilms 1974:50-51). This process probably was initiated by traders and gradually the European approach to agriculture diffused along the frontier. There were other factors that spurred this process along including increased white contact, intermarriage, and eventually a move on the part of the government to "civilize" the Indians, an effort largely conducted by missionaries (Evans 1981).

The acculturation process was most active among the Cherokees in the eighteenth century, the period when initial contact was being made. Foremost among those initiating change, albeit unconsciously rather than by concerted effort, were the traders. It is known the Cherokees intermarried more readily and more often than any other southeastern tribe (Foreman 1934:360). As the Cherokee migrated southwestward into what is now northwest Georgia, a phenomenon largely of the last quarter of the eighteenth century, the impact of mixed marriage continued to make itself felt on the material culture of these people. It was the mixed-blood element that increasingly dominated tribal leadership and that appears to have been most susceptible to the acculturation process (Wilms 1973:28).

At any rate, by the time our narrative begins the Cherokees have been settled in Georgia for approximately twenty years. They were practicing agriculturists who had established their farms in

the main river valleys, following the common practice of farming the rich alluvial soils of the floodplains. Thus, their settlements were loosely strung out along the rivers and their tributaries creating a linear pattern. The dispersed linear pattern of settlement was well developed by the 1830s and the Cherokee had even promulgated laws to keep neighbors at least a quarter mile distant. Thus, Cherokee "towns" often were strung out over long distances, consisting of loosely clustered homesteads with much woodland between (Wilms 1974:52).

Scholars are fortunate to have access to valuable Indian documentation in reconstructing the Cherokee landscape. Most notable of these is the collection of field notebooks, surveyors' plats and maps prepared for the 1832 Land Lottery. Douglas C. Wilms (1973) has synthesized the data from more than 55,000 of these plats to produce one of the most authoritative documents on Cherokee land use that is in existence. The value of the work done by state surveyors cannot be overestimated. Each surveyor was to submit a plat of each lot in his particular assigned area (there were 160-acre land lots as well as some 40-acre gold lots). Surveyors noted streams, quality of land and Indian improvements. Sizes of Indian improvements were regularly noted.

There was a significant shift in attitude toward the Cherokee between the eighteenth and nineteenth century. The evidence points toward an eighteenth^h century acculturation process that was largely accidental and unplanned with the trader as the cultural linchpin. The nineteenth century was characterized by a concentrated, or at least purposeful, government effort to "civilize" the Indians; the

trader had been supplanted by the missionary. The main thrust of the missionary effort was in upper Georgia, nearer Chattanooga. Thus, the Allatoona Lake environs were not affected except in a peripheral way. Because the Cherokee had an alphabet and did publish their own newspaper (keeping in mind the large mixed-blood element), it is only logical to assume that they were knowledgeable about agricultural and other material culture innovations championed by the missionaries even though direct contact was very restricted.

The data available indicates that there was substantial progress in converting the Cherokee to europeanized farmers. The Holston Treaty of 1791 officially encouraged the Cherokees to become sedentary farmers. In addition, there are Cherokee censuses that prove gains were made. While the census material is for the Cherokee nation as a whole and one cannot realistically speculate about interregional development, the trend is obvious.

Economic Activity

Jonathan Meigs, the Cherokee Indian agent, conducted a census in 1809. The census is revealing in several ways. First, few whites were in Cherokee territory. Slightly less than three percent was white; interestingly, nearly five percent was Negro slaves. More importantly, the tabulation of "principal articles" suggests the Cherokees were into stockraising and modest industrial activity. Cattle, horses, sheep and swine were the dominant livestock; nearly 20,000 head of swine and black cattle were tabulated. In addition, there were grist mills and saw mills (Evans 1981:68-70; Sturtevant 1981:79-82). The

higher value of saw mills, even though far less in number, might indicate a desire for lumber useful of flooring, doors, fencing, and similar use. Cherokees were known to have built log houses, a trait obviously picked up from Scotch-Irish pioneers who diffused their modified German-style log houses along the interior and southern frontier.

Table 2-1 is a comparison of changes within the Cherokee Nation between 1809 and 1824, the year of the second major census. The europeanization process continued at an expansive pace during that 15-year period. Increases in schools, number of students, grist and saw mills, Negro slaves, looms and spinning wheels, plows, livestock, and the addition of service enterprises all point to the increased influence of white civilization. Percentage changes of 100 to greater than 400 percent in farm-related categories is further expressive of the dynamism of acculturation. Further, the Census suggests that the level of food production had increased as well. Livestock, domestic hides and corn appear to have been the chief trade items (Wilms 1973:34). The dramatic increase in slaves suggests that cotton was being produced as well but statistics are inconclusive as to bales per acre or total production. Charles Hicks, a young chief of the nation states that the manufacture of cotton clothing was introduced to them in 1800 "by the repeated recommendations of Silas Dinsmoor, Esq. which were given to the Chiefs in Council..." (Evans 1981:68). References to the growth of cotton, use of the wheel (spinning) and cards, manufacturing their own clothes from cotton produced in their own fields, and the like leave little room to doubt that the Cherokee had cotton cultivation (Evans 1981, Sturtevant 1981).

TABLE 2-1

CHEROKEE NATION INTER-CENSUS CHANGES, 1809-1824.

	Meigs' Census of 1809	Cherokee Nation Census of 1824	Percent of Change 1809-1824
Population ^a	12,395	16,060	30
Negro Slaves	583	1,277	119
Whites	314	215	-29
Schools	5	18	260
Students	94	314	234
Grist Mills	13	36	177
Saw Mills	3	13	333
Looms	429	762	78
Spinning Wheels	1,572	2,486	58
Wagons	30	172	473
Ploughs	567	2,923	416
Horses	6,519	7,683	18
Black Cattle	19,165	22,531	18
Swine	19,778	46,732	136
Sheep	1,037	2,566	147
Goats	. .	430	. .
Blacksmith Shops	. .	62	. .
Stores	. .	9	. .
Tan-Yards	. .	2	. .
Powder Mill	1	1	. .
Threshing Machine	. .	1	. .

^aThese figures include only Cherokees.

Source: Cherokee Censuses of 1809 and 1824 from Wilms, 1973.

Roads

Because white settlers had systematically encroached on Indian lands, the Cherokee nation at the beginning of the ^{spell out} 19th century had not only been whittled down to a fraction of its former size but virtually surrounded as well (Map 2-1). Very early on there was pressure to allow passage of whites through the territory, particularly from Tennessee to Georgia (Malone 1956:146-50). The eagerness for transportation routes was not met with particular enthusiasm by the Cherokee, expressing a desire to maintain the peace by avoiding contact. Not surprisingly, the American demands were eventually met and treaties were negotiated for a number of routes through the territory (Maps 2-2 and 2-3). One instance in the Cherokee laws indicated the nature of a road and its repair (Malone 1956:147).

The road to be cut and opened twenty-four feet wide, clear of trees, and the causwaying to be covered with dirt, together with the digging of mountains and hills, to be fourteen feet wide, clear of rocks, roots and grubs, and the banks of all water courses to be put in complete order.

The roads were not only used as post and coach roads but also by cattlemen moving herds to market in Georgia and the Carolinas (Wilms 1977:9-11).

Charles Hicks reports "... those roads, which were traveled by numerous emigrants of the whites, to the westward; ..." (Evans 1981:69). Further Hicks states "The intercourse with the whites in, and through this country is still very considerable on those roads leading from Georgia to east and west Tennessee, and from Tennessee to Alabama (Evans 1981:70).

Although there was mixed reaction, often negative, toward road development, some of the more enterprising mixed-bloods availed themselves of the opportunity to supplement their income by erecting taverns (stands as they were called then), establishing ferries, or acquiring toll rights along the routes. One of the more important roads in the area of Allatoona Lake was the Alabama Road, a major route for settlers wanting quick access through Cherokee lands to the fertile acreage in the Tennessee Valley of northern Alabama (Map 2-4).

29



Sketch
 of the
 Country between the
 State of Georgia
 and the
 Chickasaw Nation
 all within the shaded
 lines is disputed
 country

Wright

17

Line between the States of Alabama and Georgia South of de East

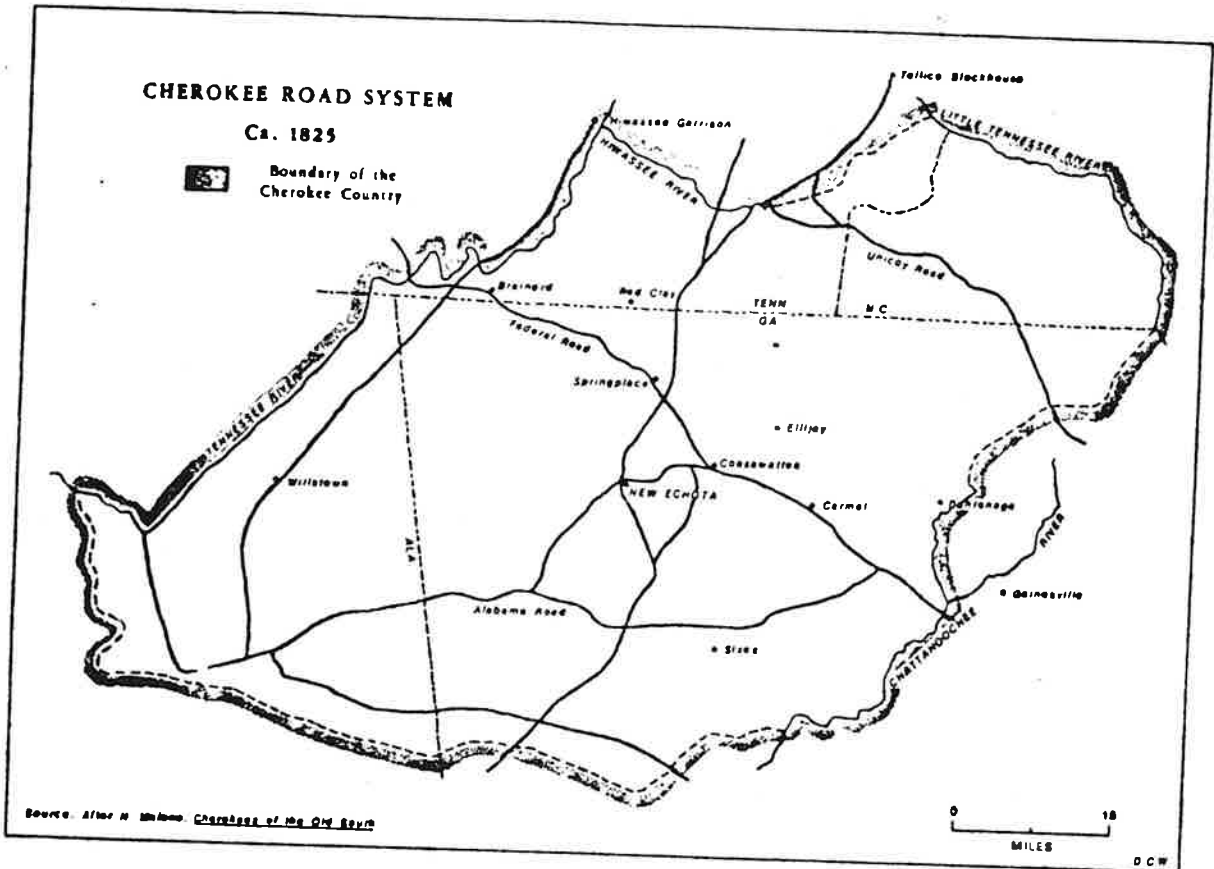
old Creek path spoken of by John Wright

disputed by
 both old and
 new authority

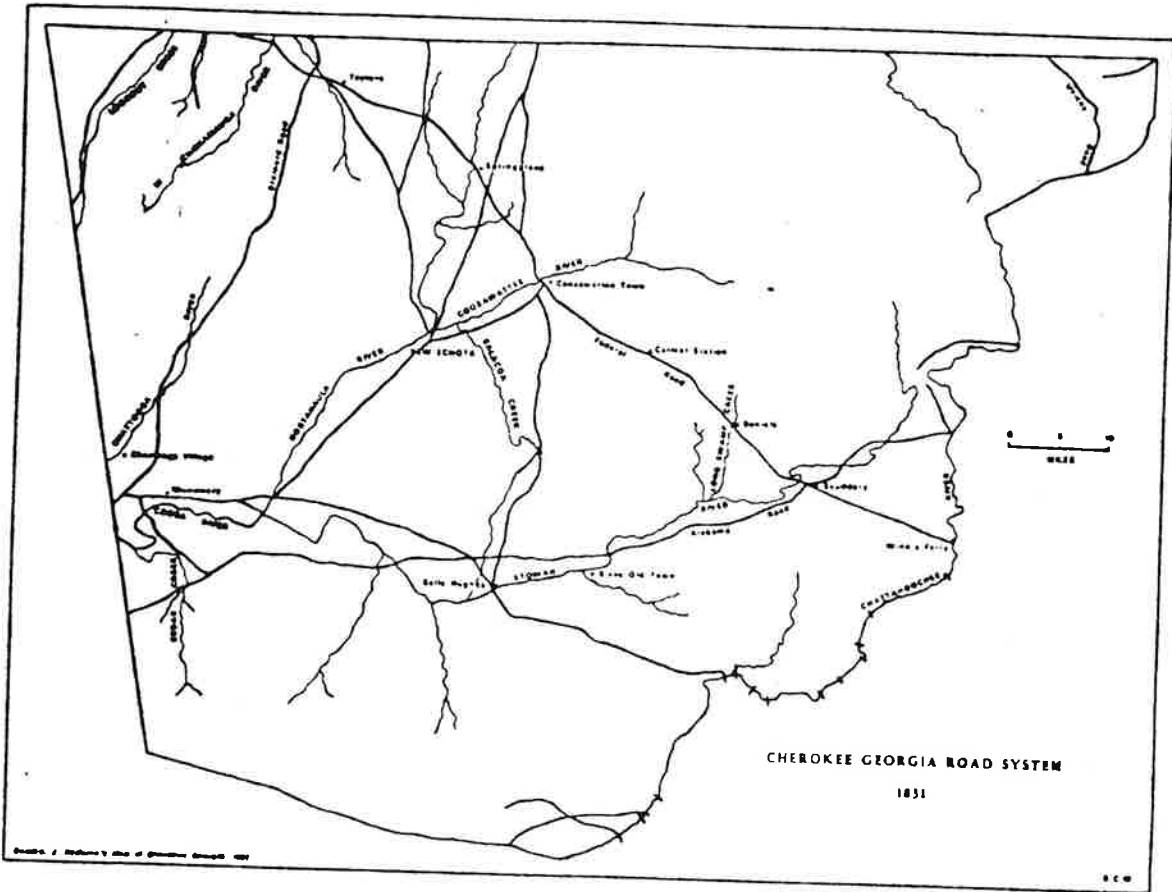
CHEROKEE ROAD SYSTEM

Ca. 1825

 Boundary of the Cherokee Country



41



• Material Culture

One might reasonably wonder about some of the particulars of Cherokee life in the time span from 1800-1835. Scholars are fortunate that documentation exists for much of this period albeit focused largely upon legal matters pertaining to resisting the encroachment of whites and losses of more Indian lands. It is not arguable that the Cherokee were well along in their transition to a sedentary, white-inspired agrarian system. As is so often the case historically, little is recorded about mundane affairs, about dwellings, about processes involved in managing a farm, or the like. We know little about Cherokee dwellings, for example. Literature on the Vann House is abundant because of Vann's position and wealth. An excerpt from Samuel A. Worcester, missionary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, about living conditions in the Cherokee nation gives a brief glimpse into "average" conditions (Kilpatrick 1968:79-80):

The houses of the Cherokees are of all sorts; from an elegant painted or brick mansion, down to a very mean log cabin. If we speak, however, of the mass of the people, they live in comfortable log houses, generally one story high, but frequently two; sometimes of hewn logs, and sometimes unhewn; commonly with a wooden chimney, and a floor of puncheons, or what a New England man would call slabs.

This description from March, 1830, is one of the few written. Worcester wrote copiously about his Indian charges, often repudiating false accusations against them by whites. In January, 1831, the view of Worcester about the common house was supported in a letter saying that "The meanest are not meaner than those of some of the neighboring white..." (Kilpatrick 1968:86). Thus the missionary

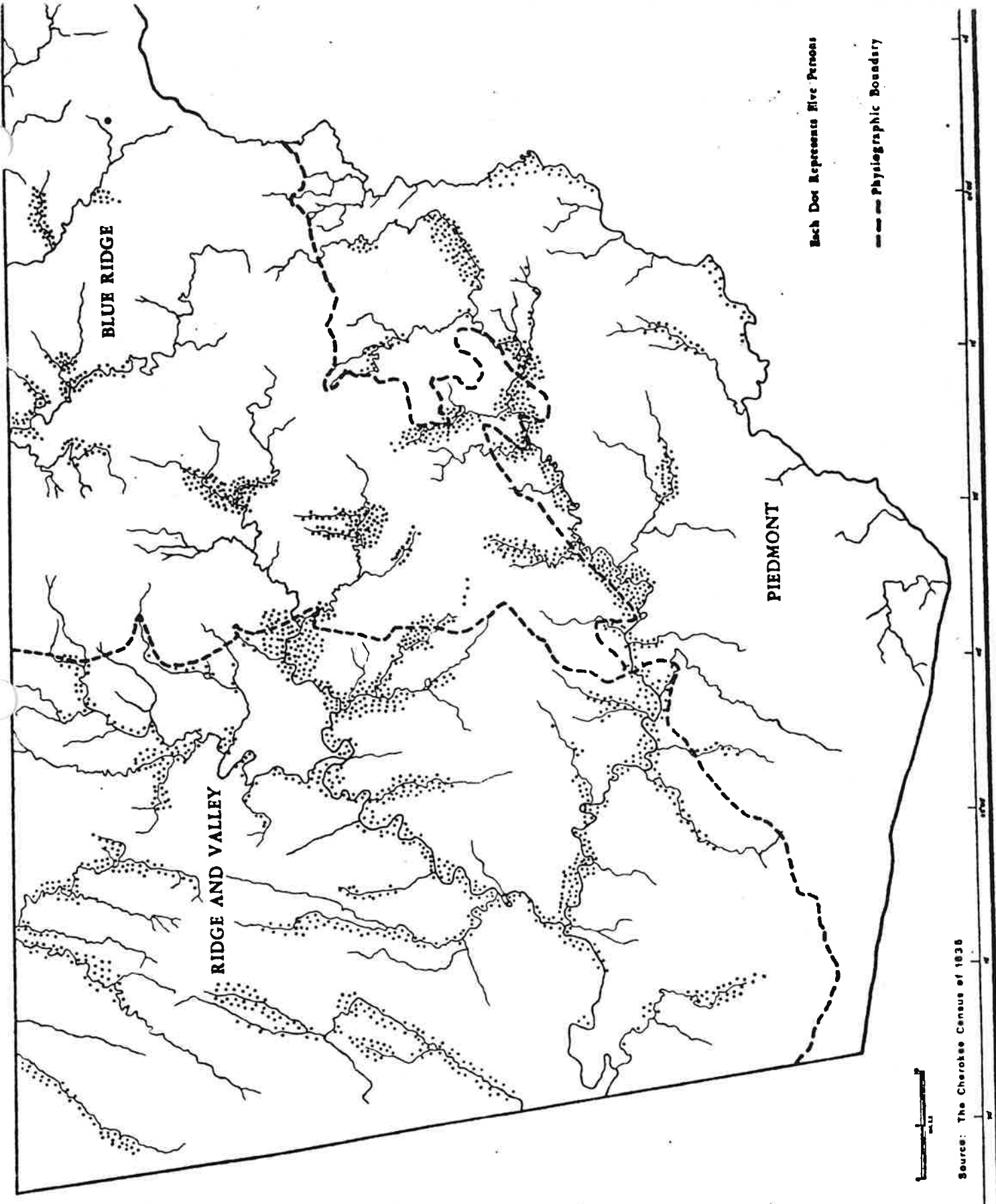
Viewpoint was reaffirmed in a strongly worded resolution published in the Cherokee Phoenix, official newspaper of the Cherokee nation. Even earlier John Ridge had in his letter to Albert Gallatin of March, 1826, commented briefly on dwellings "... but their Houses are usually constructed of hewed logs with brick chimnies and shingled Roofs..." (Sturtevant 1981:81).

The distribution of Cherokee population is indicated on Map 2-5. Concentration in the river valleys is apparent, particularly of the Etowah, Oostanaula, and Coosawattee rivers. Of particular interest here is the distribution that is evident in the Etowah valley between Allatoona Creek and Little River. The distribution of cultivated fields (Map 2-6) shows a direct correlation, as does a survey of land improvement in 1831 (Map 2-7). We are considerably better informed about economic activity because of Census data.

From agricultural data, general census information, missionary correspondence, federal reports on Indian affairs, and the like, it is possible to fairly accurately reconstruct the Cherokee landscape in partial detail. From the same data, then, it is possible to establish something of a profile of the Indian occupation of this coveted region.

Settlement and Land Use

Settlement and land use constitute two of the most essential elements of the human occupation of any given region. The historical data indicates that by the early nineteenth century the Cherokee settlement and land use patterns had appreciably changed from initial contact with whites in the early eighteenth century. The acculturation

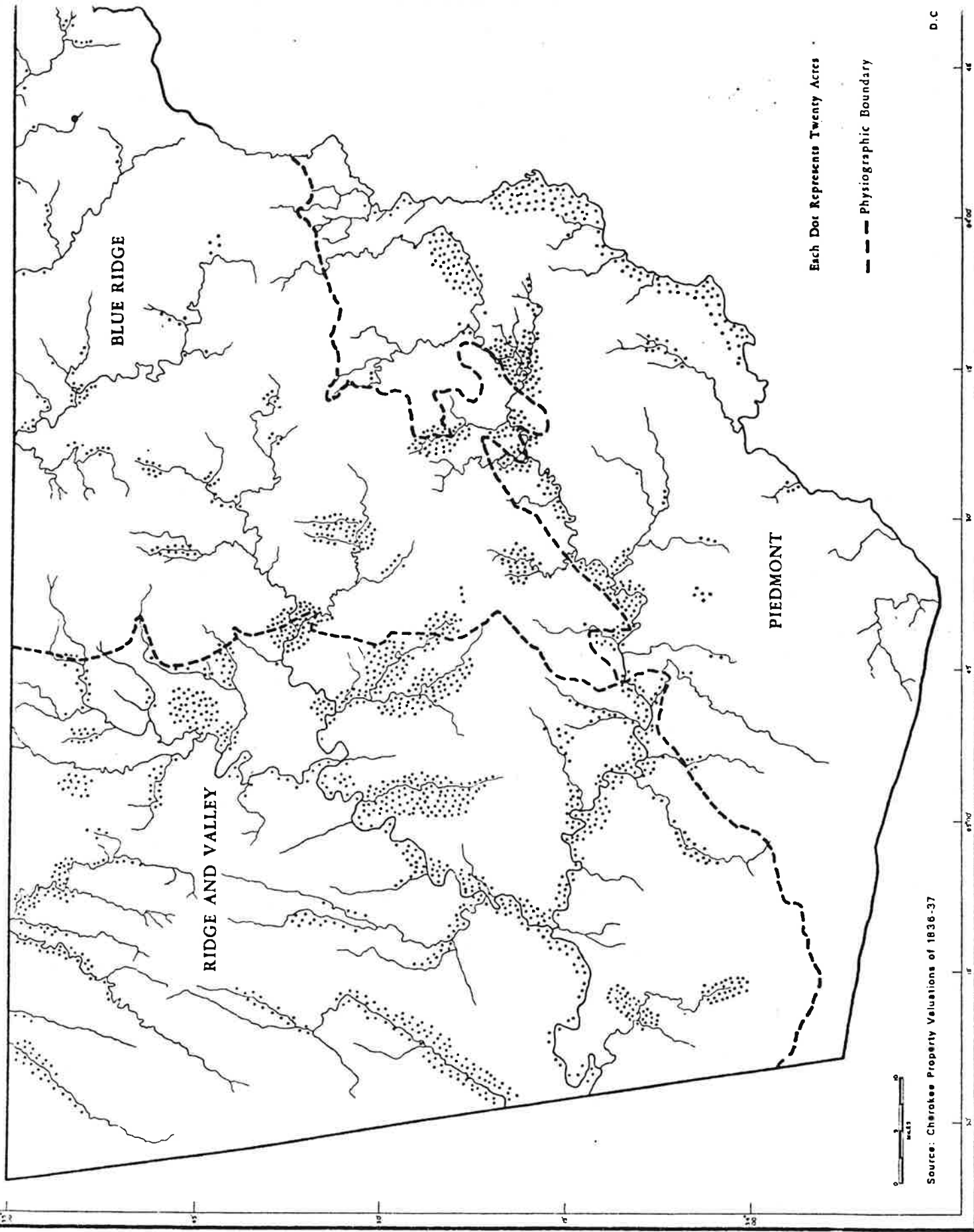


Each Dot Represents Five Persons
 --- Physiographic Boundary

Source: The Cherokee Census of 1838

2-5
 Dick R 14

DISTRIBUTION OF CULTIVATED FIELDS IN CHEROKEE GEORGIA, 1836-37



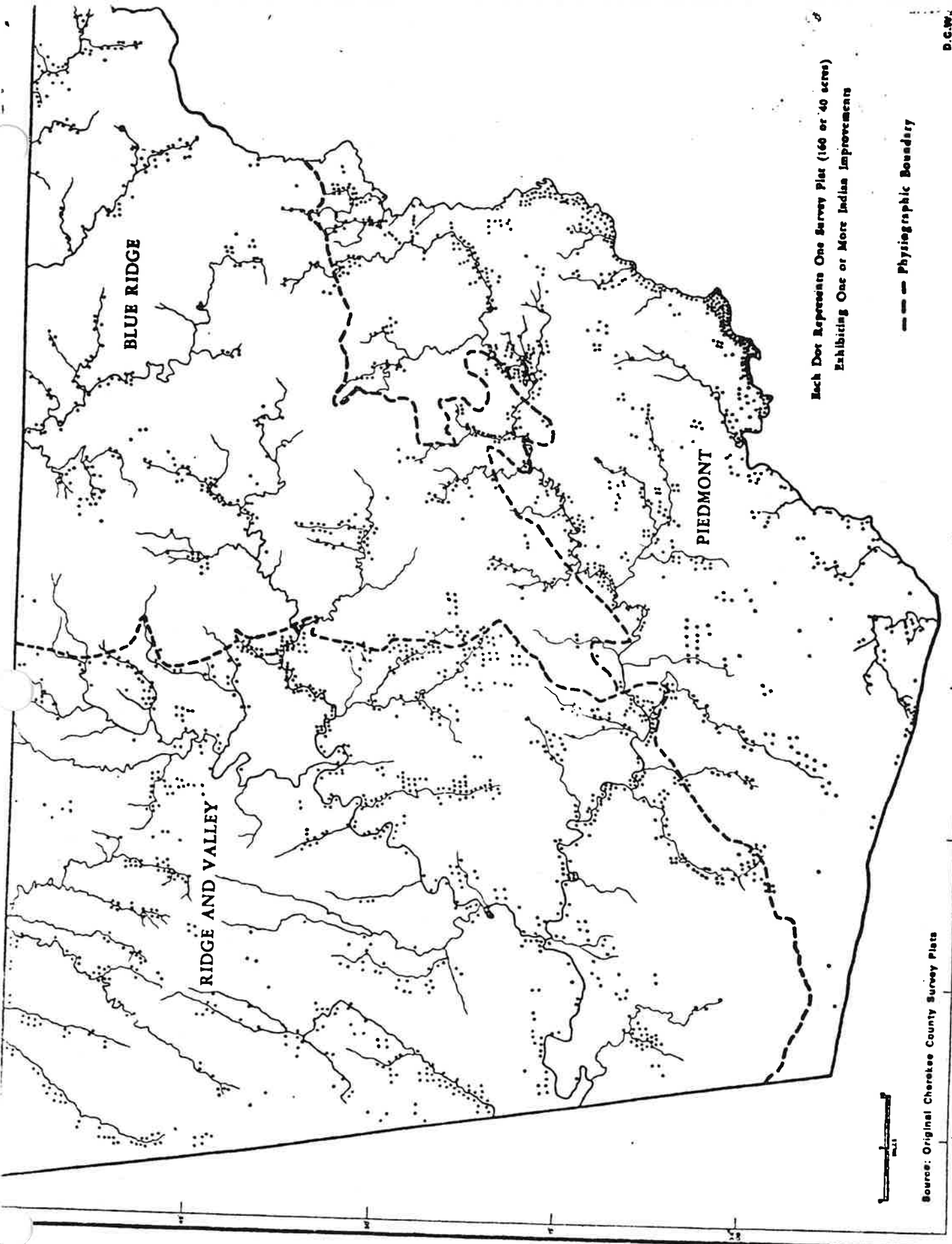
Each Dot Represents Twenty Acres

--- Physiographic Boundary



Source: Cherokee Property Valuations of 1836-37

D.C



BLUE RIDGE

RIDGE AND VALLEY

PIEDMONT

Each Dot Represents One Survey Plat (160 or 40 acres)
Exhibiting One or More Indian Improvements

--- Physiographic Boundary

Source: Original Cherokee County Survey Plats



D.C.W.

37

map to 2007

process, unlike the slow evolution of the pre-white occupance pattern, resulting in the occupance patterns in the nineteenth century was rapid. The former nucleated, palisaded villages gave way to a linear, riverine settlement pattern where homesteads were widely dispersed along stream banks where it was possible to cultivate bottomlands. The Cherokees changed from a hunting economy to an agrarian one. They cleared land, built farm structures, improved their land, fenced their fields, raised domesticated crops of which corn and wheat were dominant, and actively participated in a big way in stockraising, especially swine and cattle. The commitment to agriculture as a new way of life is possibly best expressed in the permanent structure^s that peppered the landscape. Survey and census data from the 1830s indicate over 6,000 privately owned dwellings and outbuildings including cabins, smokehouses, corn cribs and kitchens. In addition there were fences, livestock pens, fish traps and other material culture artifacts to indicate a thoroughly transformed lifestyle (Wilms 1973:173-174).

In addition to agrarian evidence, there is additional evidence of europeanization. The increase in plows, spinning wheels, stores and blacksmith shops, cotton gins, grist and saw mills, and other technological artifacts further attest to the success of the "civilizing" process.

The average Cherokee lived in a modest log cabin (the techniques of construction presumably adopted from Scotch-Irish pioneers) and cultivated an average of approximately eleven acres. Corn was the dominant crop but ^{the Cherokee} he also tended fruit trees, raised cotton and wheat, and maintained a kitchen garden providing a variety of vegetables.

part of sentence missing

Hogs and cattle were the meat source and the large numbers suggest surplus was sold to neighboring states via travellers and drovers passing through Cherokee territory on the very roads the Cherokee initially opposed.

There is irony in the plight of the Cherokee. The United States government had long voiced its desire that Indians should be absorbed into the mainstream of American culture. Yet, the Georgians were incensed at the rapid acculturation of the Cherokee. The legal system, rising literacy and permanent attachment to the land were read as negative signs by neighboring whites. One cannot overlook the fact that white perception of the potential value of Cherokee land for industrial development was strong; gold had been discovered in Dahlonega and the rush was on. In the final analysis the Georgia Cherokees, possibly the most thoroughly acculturated Indians in nineteenth-century America, were guilty of one major accomplishment - they were too successful in adopting a lifestyle patterned after that of frontier Americans.

References

- Evans, E. Raymond
1981 "Jeddiah [sic] Morse's Report to the Secretary of War on Cherokee Indian Affairs in 1822," Journal of Cherokee Studies (6):60-78.
- Foreman, Grant
1934' The Five Civilized Tribes. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Kilpatrick, Jack Frederick and Anna Gritts (eds.)
1968 New Echota Letters: Contributions of Samuel A. Worcester to the Cherokee Phoenix. Dallas, Texas: Southern Methodist University press.
- Malone, Henry Thompson
1956 Cherokees of the Old South: A People in Transition. Athens, Georgia: The University of Georgia Press.
- Mooney, James
1900 "Myths of the Cherokees," Nineteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1897-98. Part 1. Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office.
- Sturtevant, William C.
1981 "John Ridge on Cherokee Civilization in 1826," Journal of Cherokee Studies (6):79-91.
- Wilms, Douglas C.
1973 "Cherokee Indian Land Use in Georgia, 1800-1838," unpublished dissertation, University of Georgia, Athens.
- 1974 "Cherokee Settlement Patterns in Nineteenth Century Georgia," Southeastern Geographer (14):46-53.
- 1977 "Agrarian Progress in the Cherokee Nation Prior to Removal," in Essays on the Human Geography of the Southeastern United States. Carrolton, Georgia: West Georgia College, Studies in the Social Sciences, (16):1-16.

wide assortment of origins for the remainder, including Ireland.)
Most of these settlers moved westward on the Federal Road, Indian trading paths, or any of a number of routes called the "Alabama Road." A large contingent of Cherokee County's early settlers were from the Spartanburg, South Carolina, piedmont region. According to Lamar Roberts (1981:8) it is probable that the Alabama Road was the most heavily traveled road through the county. On 1838 land grant plots it shows an origin in Gainesville, intersected the Hightower Trail and became Canton's Main Street. It went over Copper Mine Hill, travelled down the existing Sixes Road, followed the south bank of the Etowah and forded the river into Bartow County at old New Hope Church. According to local accounts settlers "swarmed" along the Alabama Road down Canton's main street on their way west. The general movement of settlers from the northeast along the Piedmont and then northwestward tend to be supported by Zelinsky's (1951) research on Georgia's settlement progression from 1750-1850 (Map 3-5).

The Cherokee Lottery

The value of Cherokee lands was known long before whites began to insistently push for Indian removal. The limited access provided opportunities to witness first-hand the nature and extent of improvements being systematically accomplished by the Indians. White access was rigidly controlled, however, as the Cherokee leadership was increasingly aware of the covetous desires of white neighbors. While the United States government had certain trade and military access, authorization to travel in Cherokee lands was mandatory and only certain whites with essential skills were allowed to remain. Millwrights,

• blacksmiths and mechanics, for example, were welcome, others were expected to pass through in an orderly and timely manner (Evans 1981:72-73). Violators were hastily expelled.

While documentation is limited, it appears that two basic white views of Cherokee land use were commonly held. One can envision the scenario without much difficulty - either the lazy savages were wasting perfectly good farmland and shouldn't be allowed to keep it or the land was too fruitful to be allowed to remain in Indian hands. Wilms (1973:172) has pointed out that some whites were alarmed at the progress Cherokees were making in transforming to a sedentary farming culture and were appalled at the thought they might be permanently entrenched in their midst.

The chief stimulus to white immigration was the gold rush of 1830, although not many permanent settlers moved at this time. Immigration rapidly escalated following the Gold Lottery of 1832, sometimes called the Cherokee Lottery as well (Map 3-6).

A brief note about the lottery is important as it bears directly upon the distribution of early settlement patterns in the Allatoona Lake area. The lottery as an institution was the principal means by which Georgia disbursed her public lands. In 1827 the Cherokee declared themselves a sovereign nation exempt from the laws of Georgia and the United States. In the same year the Georgia Legislature extended the state's authority over the Cherokee Territory. In 1828 the area was annexed to several Georgia counties and a curious legal existence continued for some three years. The discovery of gold in Dahlonega and the sharp influx of whites led to conflicting claims

• and confused cases of jurisdiction. This period was the turning point for Cherokee rights - the whites were ensconced permanently. Like their Creek neighbors before them, the Cherokee leadership knew its time was limited and that their lands were going to be confiscated.

Georgia's authorities anticipated Indian removal and had the Cherokee lands surveyed in 1831 (Wilms 1974:46). More than 6800 square miles (17,612 sq. km.) was subdivided into four sections. Sections were laid off into land districts nine miles square (14.48 km sq.) (Map 3-7). A portion of these districts was further subdivided into 40-acre (98.8 ha) lots, called "Gold Lots" because of ^{the} possibility of their containing gold. Other districts were laid off in 160-acre (395.4 ha) "Land Lots" to distinguish them from "Gold Lots" (Cunyus 1933: 12ff). A total of 60 land and 33 gold districts was surveyed. These lands were then distributed through a public lottery by act of the Legislature. What ensued was a traumatic period of legal confusion over right to possession of the land (Malone 1952:341ff; Carter 1976:145). Whites poured into the territory eager to claim their prized land. Because whites were entitled to all improvements on their land, immigrants sometimes arrived with little more than the clothes on their backs ready to evict unprotected and disenfranchised Cherokees. Some found cabins already empty where Indians had already removed voluntarily westward. Some Cherokee families were forcefully evicted, resulting not only in privation but engendering bitterness that remains unresolved among some Cherokee descendants to the present time. Not every white land owner was insensitive to the Cherokee predicament. Many patiently waited to claim their property until after the fateful removal of 1838-39.

Claiming the Land

Although whites began to pour into this country shortly after the discovery of gold, the real immigration began in mid-antebellum times. There was some movement of planters from the piedmont lands farther south, but the bulk of settlers were yeoman farmers who brought with them a variety of agricultural practices, some of which were incorporated into their cultural milieu during the rapid movement through the Upland South hearth area. Many were simply refinements of ancient traditions evolved in Europe and transported to the New World.

Cultural geographers have long accepted that settlement patterns represent one of man's most important contributions to the landscape. The human imprint involves more than just the individual structures man erects such as houses, barns, fences, churches, and the like. According to Newton (1974:340) an extension of the individual settlement unit (the farm) is the association of all units within the group which produces a larger, more complex settlement pattern that is the largest tangible expression of the configuration of the culture. One must be aware that the associations observed are not random, or haphazard, but that the various elements have meaning within the context of the overall settlement pattern and that the pattern is reflective of attitudes that have evolved through a long period of trial and error, thus the suggestion of preadaptation. What has been proven effective in meeting the needs of the group has survived and is what expresses the desires of the group as a whole. The material artifacts, therefore, give character to the area under observation or study.