

"Journal of the Cherokee" - 1827-1839
J. A. R. Young

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Opposing this faction was John Ross who led the majority group which proposed never to give up their land granted to them by treaty with the United States Government in exchange for land west of the Mississippi. They were aware that this unbearable injustice could not continue, but they had an unfaltering faith and confidence in the Constitution of the United States and that the guarantees of right, government by law,---would come into its own again. In this faith they bore their cross, offering a form of passive resistance and always hopefully awaiting the dawn of a new day that would bring "freedom with justice."

Secretly, the minority faction entered into an agreement with U. S. Agents in which they ceded their land to the government in exchange for lands in Oklahoma. John Ross was held a captive for two weeks during which time the treaty was negotiated. This was the treaty of New Echota, December 29, 1835.

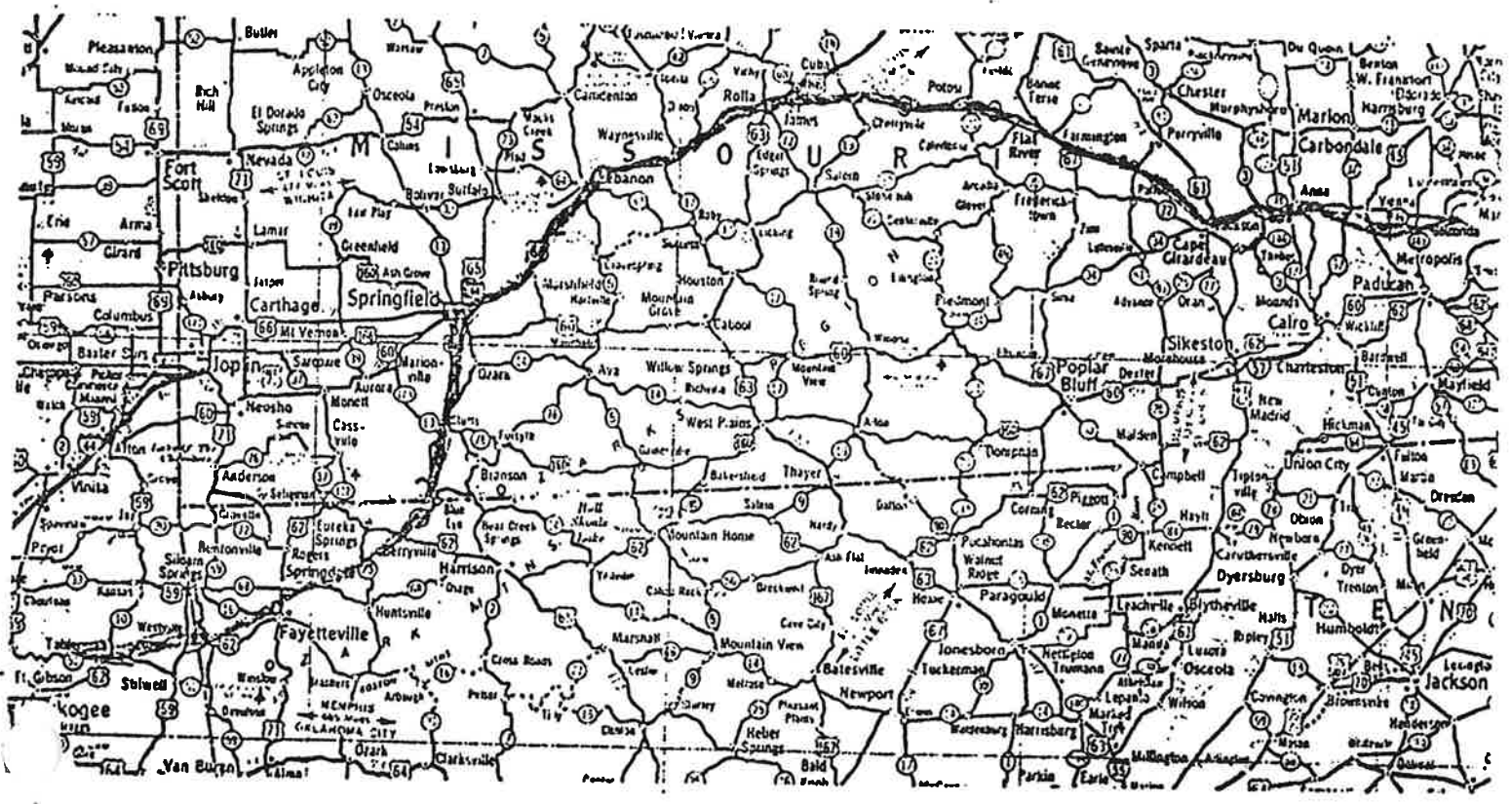
We can now say nothing more for this than that it was little if anything short of fraud. Major Ridge, wrote President Jackson, "We come now to address you on the subject of our griefs and afflictions from the acts of the white people. They have got our lands and now they are preparing to fleece us of the money accruing from the treaty. We found our plantations taken either in whole or in part by the Georgians--suits instituted against us for back rents for our own farms. These suits are commenced in the inferior courts, with the evident design that, when we are ready to remove, to arrest our people, and on these vile claims to induce us to compromise for our own release, to travel with our families. Thus our funds will be filched from our people, and we shall be compelled to leave our country as beggars and in want.

"Even the Georgia laws, which deny us our oaths, are thrown aside, and notwithstanding the cries of our people, and protestation of our innocence and peace, the lowest classes of the white people are flogging the Cherokees with cowhides, hickories, and clubs. We are not safe in our houses--our people are assailed by day and night by the rabble. Even justices of the peace and constables are concerned in this business. This barbarous treatment is not confined to men, but the women are stripped also and whipped without law or mercy...Send regular troops to protect us from these lawless assaults, and to protect our people as they depart for the West. If it is not done, we shall carry off nothing but the scars of the lash on our backs, and our oppressors will get all the money. We talk plainly, as chiefs having property and life in danger, and we appeal to you for protection."

The first party to be emigrated by the government under the term of the treaty was in charge of Dr. John S. Young, who had three assistants, one physician and three interpreters. All were paid by the government to conduct the party to Oklahoma. There were 466 Cherokees, one half of whom were children. The party was assembled in April, 1837. Dr. Lillybridge was not only a zealous official, but he took pains to set down accounts of the emigrants from day to day in his journals.

By flat boats and steamboats, and at times by railroad, the party descended the Tennessee, arrived at Paducah. From here they proceeded by keel-boats. There are frequent accounts telling whiskey having been sold to the Indians or traded to them for rations with the expected result of drunkenness, and disturbances which often involved local white people in the area where they traveled.

Also quoting from the doctor's journals, "Daughter of Young Squirrel sick with headache and fever, gave cathartic. Arthur, son of Archilla Smith sick with influenza; gave prescription.



The above map charts the route followed by the Cherokees across Southern Illinois (THE CHEROKEES CROSS EGYPT by Scerial Thompson), crossing the River at Moccasin Springs where Thomas Nicolas and Jacob Littleton maintained a horse ferry. (See Kochtitzky paper page 10)

This route was charted by B.B. Cannon who led the second party of 365 Cherokee in ther migration to the west, leaving the Indian agency in Tennessee on October 14, 1837 (Cannon, Journal of Occurences). This record shows the following data:

- November 12 - 13 -14 Ferrying the Mississippi River
- November 14 - traveled five miles and camped on Mr. Williams Farm
- November 16 Thru Jackson, Missouri 17 miles and Camped at Widow Roberts Farm. on Farmington Road.
- November 17 13 miles to whitewater Creek.
- November 18 Mr. Morans - 16 miles
- November 19 Wolf Creek 14 miles (this side of Farmington)
- November 20 Thru Farmington, halt at St.Francois River -15miles
- November 21 Thru Caledonia, halt at Mr. Jacksons - 14 miles
- November 22 Thru Courtois Diggin's , halt at Scotts - 13 mi.
- November 24 Halt at Huzza Creek, 12 mi.

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Applied blister to the chest of Henry Clay. Stand has been in quite a feeble state of health since I first saw him at New Echota. --James William taken very suddenly with inflammation of spleen. Bled him and applied blister. --Sally Rainbow has been slightly indisposed for some days. She is a doctress and conjureress herself."

Shifted from keel-boat--to raft--to steamboat, they made their way down the Mississippi, up the Arkansas to Little Rock, Fort Smith, and ended the journey at Fort Gibson in Oklahoma. Major Ridge and his family were in this first detachment.

Late in 1837 a second party numbering 365, with B. B. Cannon as conductor left Tennessee. Generally, such a party was furnished with one wagon for every twenty people, one horse for every five persons. Thus, this party probably had 18 wagons and some 70 horses. It had a physician, wagoners, and interpreters. The government furnished and paid them. Also they were furnished with money to pay ferry charges, toll for road, fodder was bought for horses, smithies along the way repaired wagons, and shod the horses. Camp sites were selected ahead where they halted for the night. Never did they camp overnight without the permission of the owners of the land.

Food rations were at a rate of about 16¢ per person per day. Thus the removal, counting all costs, was costly to the government. The cost per party or detachment ranged from \$55,880.00 to \$70,000.00. Since there were these first two and 13 more in 1838, the cost can be estimated, and in terms of money value of that day and compared with the present value, this would represent a terrific expense.

This second party came thru Tennessee, Kentucky, Illinois, Missouri, Northwest Arkansas into Oklahoma.

Crossing the Cumberland Mountains took four days; thru Murphysboro, Nashville, Hopkinsville, and crossing the Ohio River at Berry's Ferry opposite Golconda they entered Illinois. Following the Golconda road they reached the Mississippi on November 12th. The Kochtitzky paper covers this well.

Death among the aged and children were high. The dead were buried in the morning before the march resumed. Illness which beset the party since it left Georgia remained with them as a result of exposure to the severe weather of rain and cold. Dr. Townsend tells of 60 persons ill with dysentery and bowel complaint.

On May 23, 1838, General Scott ordered the removal of all of the tribe by force. By June he reported that nearly all had been taken prisoners. Some escaped into the hills of North Carolina where they live yet, but Scott had nearly 15,000 in his concentration camp.

A severe drouth hit the Middle West, and water was scarce. The land parched in the summer sun. An epidemic of cholera swept through the concentration camp. Upon the request of leading men of the tribe, Scott consented to halt the removal until September 1. He also agreed to let the tribe move itself under the supervision of John Ross.

Under Ross's supervision all that remained and were now in prison camp were divided into thirteen parties or detachments. Each was headed by a conductor, who was assisted by a wagon master, a farrier, a commissary, and a physician -- which was very similar to the arrangement of the two earlier ones. Kochtitzky gives the names of each conductor on page 12. All of the parties started at various times at intervals of ten days to two weeks in succession. This was likely done in

accordance with the time it required to assemble personnel and supplies. It further eliminated concentrations of large numbers on the way, for hay, corn and food had to be bought for them.

Eleven of the thirteen parties came the overland way charted by Cannon. This was done because of ferry service at the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers; also, there were some roads established on this route. Furthermore, they avoided crossing of large streams by coming through the area of the upper course of the streams through Missouri, which were the Whitewater, Castor, St. Francois, Black, Meramec, and Gasconade.

Two parties which did not come the overland route came as far as the Mississippi. One of them probably went by way of riverboat down to the Arkansas River and up the Arkansas. John Ross himself was in this last party. His wife died on the journey at Little Rock and lies buried there.

The other party took a course to the south and west from Jackson, Missouri. It would be interesting to know more about this party and the course of their journey.

These last are the thirteen parties whose trail along to their destination to Oklahoma is known as the Trail of Tears. It was such a sad and cruel thing which had been forced upon them. They suffered from cold, severe weather, from disease, and torts of white settlers.

George Hicks, the conductor of one of the parties, sorrowfully reported to John Ross, on November 4, 1828:

"We are now about to take our final leave and kind farewell to our native land, the country that the great spirit gave our Fathers; we are on the eve of leaving that country that gave us birth. . . it is with sorrow that we are forced by the authority of the white man to quit the scenes of our childhood. . . we bid a final farewell to it and all we hold dear. From the little trial we have made in a start to move, we know that it is a laborious undertaking, but with firm resolution we think we will be able to accomplish it, if the white citizens will permit us. But since we have been on our march many of us have been stopped and our horses taken from our Teams for the payment of unjust & past Demands; Yet the Government says we must go, and its citizens say you must pay me, and if the debtor has not the means, the property of his next friend is levied on and yet the Government has not given us our spoliation [compensation] as promised; our property has been stolen and robbed from us by white men and no means given us to pay our debts. [The Government officers will not protect us, our property is] robbed of us in open Day light and in open view of hundreds, and why are they so bold; they know that we are in a defenseless situation. . ." (Grant Foreman, Indian Removal, page 305)

From the diary of a traveler on the frontier, we quote the following:

". . . On Tuesday evening we fell in with a detachment of the poor Cherokee Indians . . . about eleven hundred Indians -- sixty wagons -- six hundred horses, and perhaps forty pairs of oxen. We found

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Special recognition is due to Dr. Richard Brownlee, Director of the State Historical Society and Dr. B. B. Lightfoot, Professor of History at the Southwest State College at Springfield, Missouri, for their co-operation and help in supplying information for this paper.