

**GET TO KNOW :**

- Andrew Jackson
- Treaty of Potawatomi Stand
- Indian Removal Act
- John Quincy Adams
- Pushmataha
- Tecumseh
- Opothleyahola
- Chickasaw
- Choctaw
- Creek

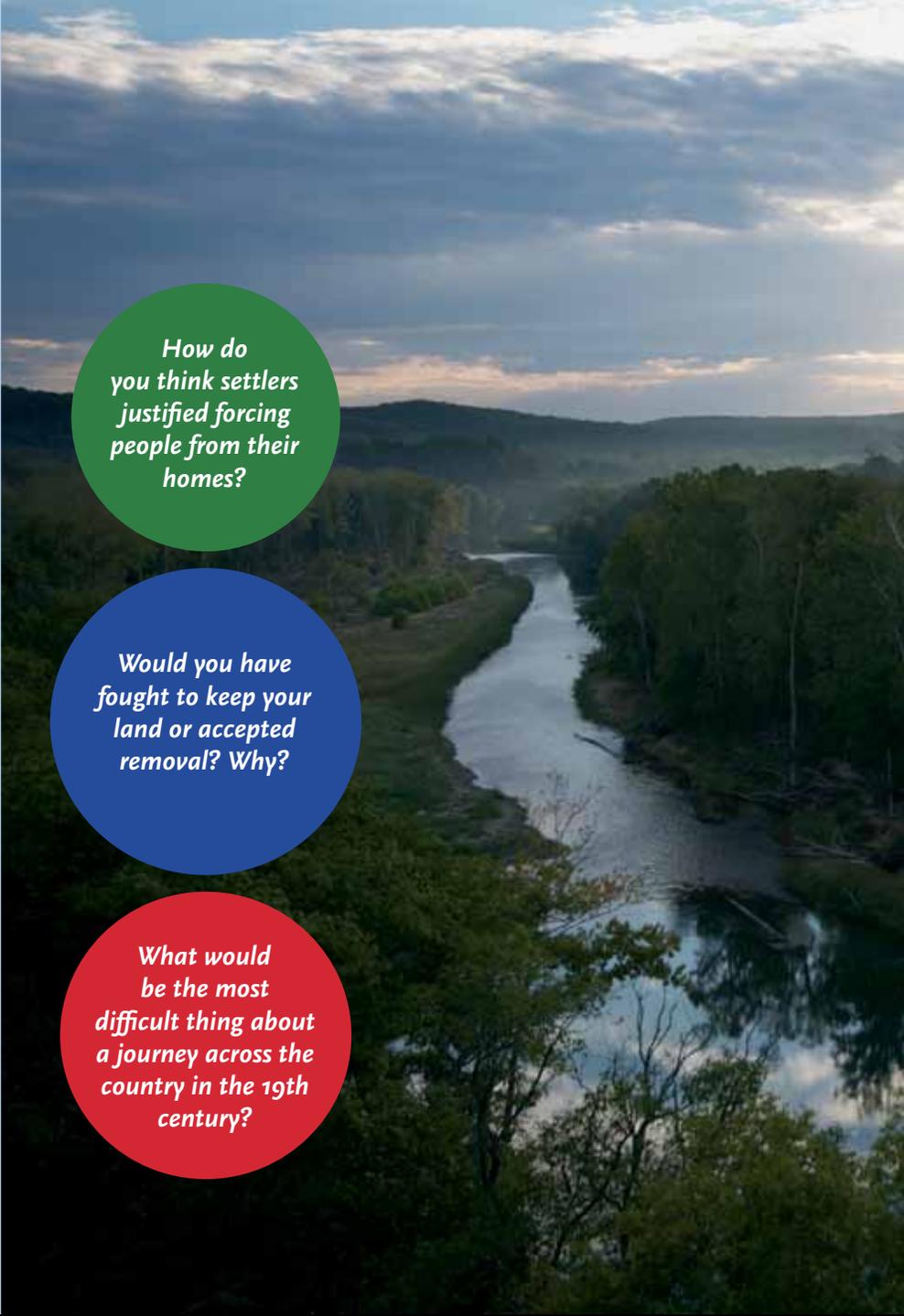
**OBJECTIVES :**

- To explain why removal happened;
- To discuss the treaties of removal;
- To understand the process of removal; and
- To determine long-term impact of the removal process.

*How do you think settlers justified forcing people from their homes?*

*Would you have fought to keep your land or accepted removal? Why?*

*What would be the most difficult thing about a journey across the country in the 19th century?*



• 1815 • • • • • 1820 • • • • • 1825 •

1813 Redsticks/Creek Wars begin

1819 Oklahoma becomes part of the Arkansas Territory  
1819 United States purchases Florida from Spain  
1819 Treaty of Doak's Stand

1820 Missouri Compromise abolishing slavery in the Missouri Territory while allowing slavery in the Arkansas Territory

1821 Missouri statehood

1824 Forts Gibson and Towson established.

## CHAPTER 4

# Removal

Pressure from the wave of settlers seeking land mounted on Native Americans. Continuous expansion by the United States forced them to fight for their tradition of collectively owned land, to divide the land into homesteads and to adopt the settlers' way of life. The other option was to trade their land for unsettled areas of the Louisiana Purchase in the West.

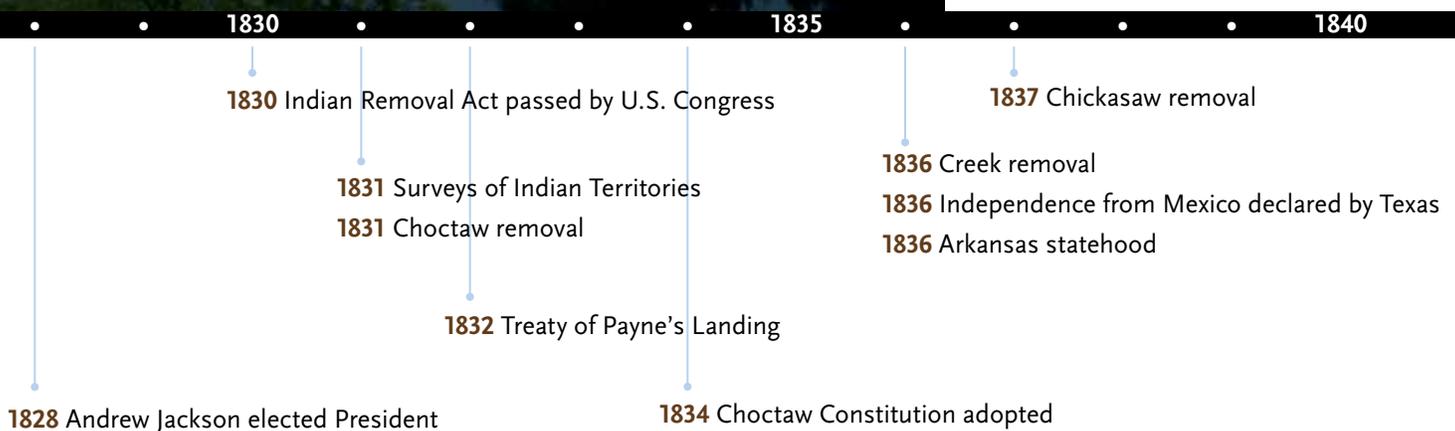
### THE WAR OF 1812 DIVIDED LOYALTIES

within the Five Civilized tribes. Those factions favoring **assimilation** sided with the United States. Others opposed U.S. expansion into their territories and sided with the British and Spanish and began raiding American frontier settlements. Federal forces were engaged in the War of 1812 with the British. Militias were formed by Georgia, Alabama, and Tennessee; they were led by Colonel **Andrew Jackson** with the help of Cherokee and Creek allies to "clear" the area for American settlement.

Jackson's forces won a major battle with opposing Creek forces and their allies at Horseshoe Bend in Alabama. As a result, the Creek were forced to cede 23 million acres of central Alabama and parts of Georgia.

Because of some Native American factions' opposition during the war, those wanting to settle tribal territories pushed for **removal** of all Indians and the confiscation of their lands.

VIEW OF THE ILLINOIS RIVER IN EASTERN OKLAHOMA, HOMELAND OF THE CHEROKEE AFTER REMOVAL





**T**he U.S. government appointed committees to handle its business with native peoples. Committee members were white men. They were known as Indian commissioners because they worked with Indians. Beginning in 1818 and continuing for three consecutive years, commissioners met annually with Choctaw leaders to discuss removal. In 1820, they met at Doak's Stand, Mississippi, to discuss terms of a treaty.

### *What was the Treaty of Doak's Stand?*

The terms were that the Choctaw would cede five million acres, about one-third of their land in the East, in exchange for thirteen million western acres. They would also receive financial and practical assistance with moving, and, eventually, **annuities** (annual payments to the tribe).

One commissioner was Andrew Jackson, a frontiersman and military leader. He repeatedly warned the Indians that if they did not move, they would certainly perish in the East, and that if they did not accept the treaty, they would jeopardize friendly relations with the government. Chief Pushmataha and a few others knew that Jackson spoke the truth. They persuaded the tribe to accept the terms. On October 18, 1820, Choctaw leaders and Indian commissioners signed the Treaty of Doak's Stand.

Most white people who knew about the treaty felt that it was fair to everyone. The Choctaw, though, were doubtful. They had dealt with whites for more than two centuries and with the U.S. for half a century. Their doubts were verified when Arkansas settlers protested the treaty. The U.S. was giving away land which was already settled by whites — more than three thousand of them. The Choctaw refused to keep the agreement. They were now less confident than ever that the government would keep its word.

For the next eight years, negotiations continued. They led to several shaky agreements, none of which was carried out. In each case, either Congress refused to ratify the treaty or an incident occurred, such as the Treaty of Doak's Stand, causing the Choctaw to change their minds. Until 1828, removal remained voluntary.

**ANDREW JACKSON** was the seventh President of the United States (1829–1837). Based in frontier Tennessee, Jackson was a politician and an army general who defeated the Creek Indians, at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend (1814), and was victorious over the British at the Battle of New Orleans (1815).

Jackson was nicknamed "Old Hickory" because of his toughness and aggressive personality; he fought in duels, some fatal to his opponents.

As President, he aggressively enforced the Indian Removal Act and the forced relocation of thousands of Native Americans to Indian Territory (now Oklahoma).

## *How did electing Andrew Jackson as President affect Indian removal?*



Peter Pitchlynn led the 1828 Choctaw expedition into southeastern Oklahoma to evaluate the tribe's new homeland. He reported the area unsuitable, but the Choctaw were moved anyway. He was also known as Ha-tchoo-tuck-nee or "Snapping Turtle."

In the nineteenth century, white men had the power to vote, and Indians did not. Whites began to elect public officials who were willing to remove Indians from eastern soil. They elected Andrew Jackson as President in 1828. Jackson was dedicated to Indian removal and had a **profound** effect on it.

Many Southern states began to pass oppressive laws to restrict the powers of tribal governments. Indian leaders went to Washington to plead for the protection they had been promised. But federal officials, intimidated by pioneer delegations who were demanding Indian removal, did nothing.

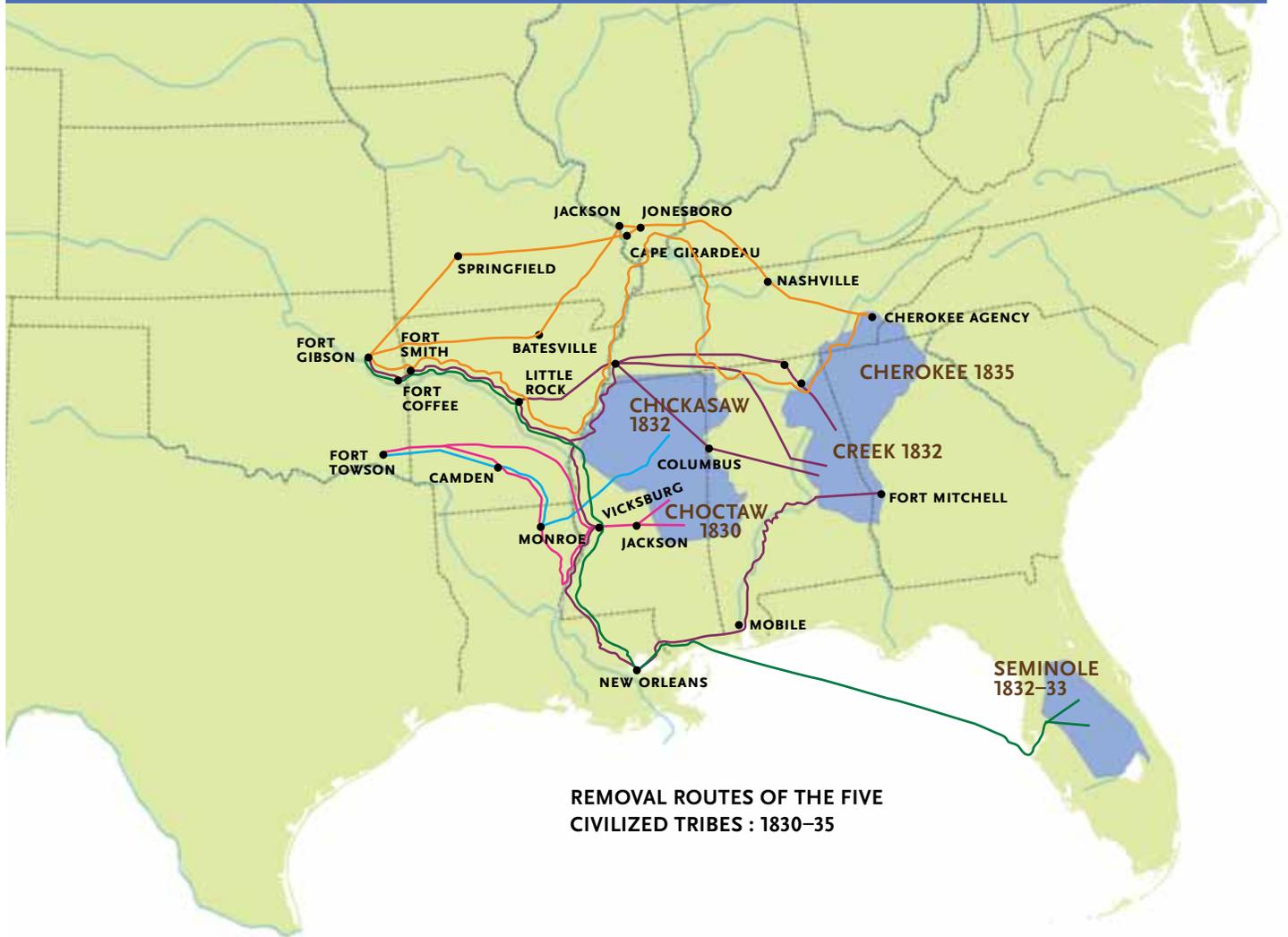
In 1832, Chief Justice John Marshall of the U.S. Supreme Court declared that legislative actions restricting tribal functions were unconstitutional. Elated, tribesmen petitioned the President to act upon the decision and grant them protection. Jackson responded that he was "powerless in the matter." He stated the only hope for the Indians was "to accept their fate and move to the West."

Jackson's refusal to comply with his constitutional duty was the final blow for the Southern Indians who had vigorously fought removal. New treaties were signed, and the Five Civilized Tribes began to move west.

## *What was the Indian Removal Act?*

With Andrew Jackson as President, removal efforts intensified. In response to the President's statements to Congress in December 1829, the state of Mississippi passed laws canceling special privileges for the Choctaw and restricting tribal functions. In May 1830, Congress passed the Indian Removal Act. This act, although calling for land exchanges with the Indians, did not authorize a forced removal. It did, however, give Jackson the power to push for removal, and many Indians saw removal as **inevitable**.

## REMOVAL ROUTES OF THE FIVE CIVILIZED TRIBES : 1830–35



### *How did the Choctaw react to the Indian Removal Act?*

The tribe was divided. Leaders were removed from office and replaced. Few Choctaw actually wanted to leave their homelands, but many felt that without removal, the tribe would not survive. Others felt that somehow the government could be made to honor its past agreements and protect the tribe. Jackson took advantage of these divisions. Through the commissioners, he made personal offers to Indian leaders. He promised tracts of land and annuities. Leaders who gave in to temptation agreed to push for removal. A number of them, already convinced that removal was inevitable, accepted the gifts and felt that they had “put one over” on the government.

### *What was the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek?*

In September 1830, negotiations re-opened. About six thousand Choctaws gathered at the forks of Dancing Rabbit Creek in Noxubee County, Mississippi. Secretary of War John Eaton attended with John Coffee, the government representative.

A number of gamblers and saloon-keepers also attended. They hoped to capitalize on the event. Yet missionaries were denied attendance. “The conference was neither the time nor the place for missionary activities,” according to federal officials. In reality, the government feared the political influence of the missionaries who had cautioned the Indians against certain agreements in the past.

The Choctaws expressed dissatisfaction with



**PUSHMATAHA**  
A CHOCTAW CHIEF

Pushmataha led the Choctaw into an alliance with the U.S. during the War of 1812. He later fought alongside Andrew Jackson to bring an end to the Creek War in 1813. Choctaw soldiers also aided Jackson with the Battle of New Orleans.

In 1824, Pushmataha was upset about encroaching settlement patterns and the unwillingness of local authorities to respect Indian land title. He took his case directly to the Federal government in Washington, D.C.

Pushmataha died of a respiratory infection, at that time called the croup, on December 24, 1824, while in Washington. As requested, he was buried with full military honors, as a Brigadier General of the U.S. Army, in the Congressional Cemetery in Washington. He is the only Native American chief interred there.

His epitaph inscribed in capitals reads:

*Push-ma-ta-ha, a Choctaw chief, lies here. This monument to his memory is erected by his brother chiefs who were associated with him in a delegation from their nation in the year 1824 to the general government of the United States.*

*Push-ma-ta-ha was a warrior of great distinction. He was wise in council — eloquent in an extraordinary degree, and on all occasions & under all circumstances the white man's friend.*

the land they were offered in the West. Further, they asked for other **concessions**, such as permanent security guarantees. The commissioners threatened to close negotiations and reminded the Choctaw that they could remain in the East and be subject to the oppressive state laws.

The Indians signed the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek on December 27, 1830. It firmly established government policy on Indian removal. Jefferson had hoped for voluntary removal. Calhoun had hoped that education would show the Indians its value. Jackson, however, believed it was a necessity, and he forced the issue.

### *How did the Choctaws respond to the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek?*

A small band of Choctaws left immediately for Indian Territory. They were tired of the **dissension** in the tribe and of the **intrusion** by whites, and they were anxious to obtain choice lands. For most of the tribe, however, the political dissension continued. Confusion and distress clouded their removal issues.

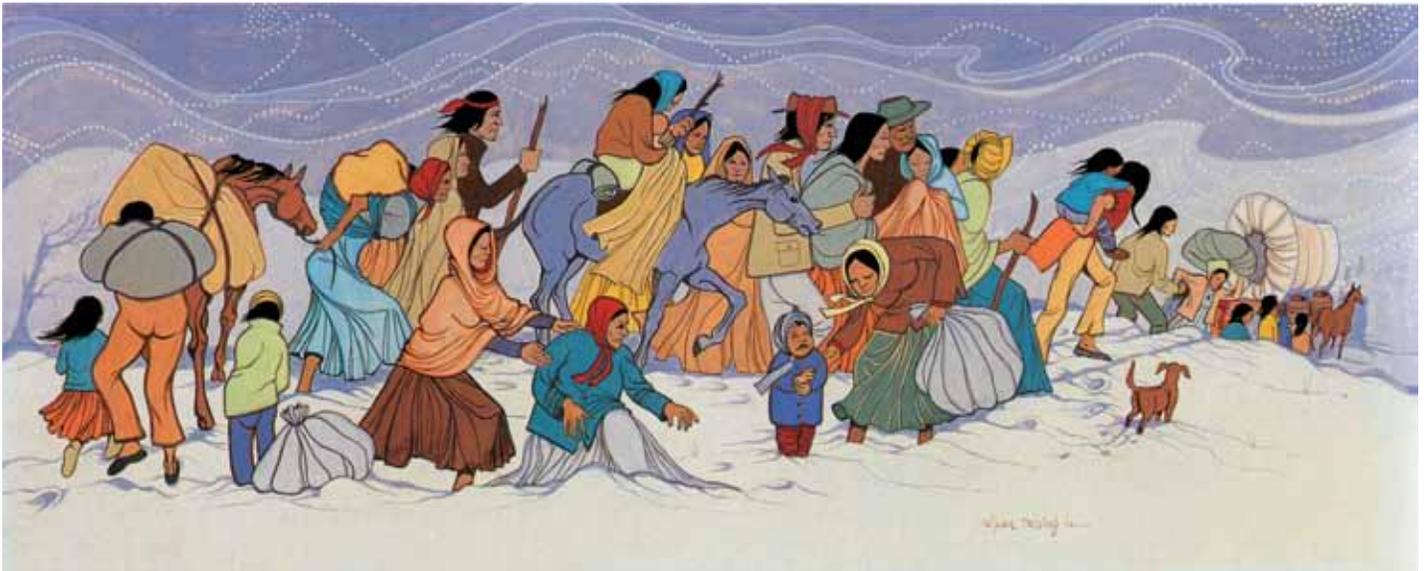
The tribe selected, and approved, land. For removal, the government counted 18,635 Indians, whites married to Indians, and slaves of the Indians.

Secretary of War John Eaton left office in 1831. Lewis Cass, who knew little about removal procedures, replaced him, and removal was delayed. The first party of four thousand finally left for Indian Territory in October 1831. Conditions on the journey were grueling. Divided into three groups, the last of the party arrived at their destination in March 1832. Two hundred and fifty had died on the nightmarish trip.

### *What happened during the second removal?*

Another change took place in the government with the resignation of Secretary Cass. John Robb, Acting Secretary of War, declared that the cost of the first removal, handled by civilian contractors, had been too high. He ordered the army to carry out the second removal. Like the first, it did not begin until October because of governmental changes and delays.

This second party was aware of the more ample supplies and better planning, which the military had provided. The people hoped for a smooth and uneventful trip. Unfortunately, travel



**CHOCTAW REMOVAL** BY CHOCTAW ARTIST VALJEAN MCCARTY HESSING

was slow because the government had decided that everyone who was not sick or elderly would walk. Then a cholera **epidemic** struck the group. The army divided the Choctaw into subgroups and changed their routes to avoid the deadly disease. Still, the death toll of the second removal was higher than the first.

From an economic standpoint, however, when the second removal was completed in February, it was more successful than the first one. The army moved more Indians for less money.

### *How did the Choctaw respond to the third removal?*

While preparations began for the third removal, news of the suffering of the first two parties reached the Choctaw in Mississippi. Many refused to go, fearing for their lives. In October 1833, only about nine hundred Choctaws reported for removal, and their trip was no better than the first two had been. After a boiler explosion aboard a riverboat killed several of them, two-thirds of the group refused to board another boat. Instead, they walked overland through heavy rains without adequate supplies. Disease and exposure again took their toll. Despite these tragedies, the third group traveled more quickly than the first two. They arrived in Indian Territory in December, just before Christmas.

Although thousands of Choctaws remained in the East, the treaty had provided for only a three-year endeavor. The official government removal was over. William Ward was the agent in charge of registering those who wanted to stay in Mississippi. He shuffled and reshuffled papers so that only a few actually

### **THE TREATY OF DANCING RABBIT CREEK HAD THE FOLLOWING PROVISIONS:**

1. The Choctaw would surrender 10,423,130 acres in Mississippi;
2. They would receive a similar amount of acreage in Indian Territory;
3. Removal would take place over three years, removing about one-third of the people each year;
4. The U.S. would pay all expenses of removal, furnish transportation and supplies, and provide for basic needs in the new land for one year;
5. The U.S. would protect new Choctaw lands against intruders;
6. It would provide a \$20,000-dollar annuity for each of twenty years, as well as a continuation of all past annuities;
7. It would provide funds to educate 40 Choctaw children per year for twenty years. It would give another \$2,500 for the hiring of three teachers for Choctaw schools each year as well;
8. The U.S. would make \$10,000 available to erect necessary public buildings in Indian Territory;
9. Each Choctaw family would receive personal, domestic, and farm articles for beginning life in the West;
10. Chiefs would receive land gifts; and
11. Choctaws who wished to remain in Mississippi would be given land allotments there and made citizens of the state.



**MENAWA**  
AN UPPER CREEK CHIEF

Menawa worked to revive traditional practices and resisted assimilation to European-American ways. He was one of the principal leaders of the Upper Creek, known as “Red Sticks,” a name derived from their red-colored war clubs.

The leaders started a civil war among the Creek people, where strong divisions had arisen with the Lower Creek, who comprised the majority of the population and had adopted American ways. During this period, the British were already at war against the United States during the War of 1812. They supported the Red Sticks’ resistance to United States settlers’ incursions into their territory.

Menawa was second in command of the Red Sticks at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend in 1814, when they were defeated by General Andrew Jackson who was commanding militias of Tennessee, Georgia, and the Mississippi Territory, and was also allied with the Choctaw and Cherokee. Menawa was wounded during the battle, but he escaped and survived his wounds.

Menawa was among the hundreds who died during the general removal of the Creek to Indian Territory in the 1830s. His burial place was along the way but is unknown.

registered, and removals continued unofficially. Pressure from whites succeeded in sending small groups westward periodically until the Civil War.

### *What were the responses to inhumane treatment of Indians during the removals?*

Some whites who saw the suffering of the Choctaws wrote to officials in Washington, protesting the inhumane conditions. One farmer wrote of giving a group of starving Indians permission to enter his pumpkin field. “These [pumpkins] they ate raw with the greatest avidity [eagerness],” he said. He pointed out that, even though the Choctaw were starving, they refused to enter the field without his permission.

Nevertheless, in Washington, officials looked the other way. Elbert Herring, head of the War Department’s new Bureau of Indian Affairs, said, “The humane policy. . . adopted by the government with respect to the Indian tribes . . . is now in operation . . .” The Bureau closed its eyes to the cruel treatment and neglect of the Choctaw and other tribes undergoing removal. It also ignored the treatment of those who remained in the East and who eventually lost most of their land.

In the West, the survivors of the removal felt stunned and grief-stricken. The divisions in the tribe were still damaging, and confusion reigned for a time. Soon, however, the survivors rallied and re-organized. They built homes and schools and churches. They raised crops and opened businesses. They adopted a constitution based on that of the U.S. They elected officials. The Choctaw made their own laws and successfully governed themselves, despite white interference, for the next three-quarters of a century.

### *Who was Tecumseh?*

In 1811, Tecumseh, a Shawnee chief from the North, visited the Creek. He encouraged a tribal **alliance** and Indian Confederacy. By uniting, Tecumseh believed, the Indians could stop the continual encroachment of the whites onto their lands. The Creek Council refused to support the confederacy. In fact, Tecumseh’s visit further divided the tribe. The “conservatives” supported the Shawnee chief’s views. They wanted to make war on the whites to protect their lands and possibly to regain them.



The “progressives” opposed Tecumseh’s views. They approved of the white culture and would sell Creek lands.

### *How did Creek Indians disagree within their tribe?*

The Creek tribe also experienced problems. In fact, their internal strife was even greater than that of the Choctaw. The Creek were divided into two distinct factions. The Lower Creek were mixed-bloods, led by the McIntosh family. The Upper Creek were full-bloods, led by Opothleyahola.

The Lower Creek, who resided in Georgia, found themselves subject to government pressure, as the Choctaw had been, after the 1802 signing of the Georgia Compact. The Upper Creek in Alabama were having similar problems. Everywhere, white settlements surrounded the Creek.

The tribe lost a great deal of land through several treaties signed after 1802. In 1811, the Creek Council passed a measure imposing the death penalty on anyone who gave up Creek lands without approval of the Council.

### *Who were the Red Sticks?*

During the War of 1812, the Red Sticks began attacking white settlements. The Red Sticks were Creek and conservative warriors. They carried small, red-colored clubs which they believed were magic. When they attacked Fort Mims, Alabama, in 1813, the army sent Andrew Jackson to stop them. Many loyal Creeks and others of the southeastern tribes fought with Jackson

### **THE DEATH OF TECUMSEH**

Battle of the Thames, War of 1812.

Tecumseh, a leader of the Shawnee, was outraged by the continued loss of land to the Americans, and he began to travel around the southern Great Lakes region. He visited village leaders and urged them to stop cooperating with Americans. He threatened to kill chiefs who continued to work with the Americans.

His goal was to create a pan-tribal confederacy, powerful enough to counter and resist the United States. His travels caused the largest growth yet in the confederacy as numerous villages agreed to join in his resistance. At the height of his influence, Tecumseh had possibly as many as 5,000 warriors at his disposal; they were scattered across the northwest.

Tecumseh joined forces with the British in the War of 1812, and he died at the Battle of Thames in 1813. His confederacy surrendered to William Henry Harrison, the governor of the Northwest Territories. Tribes of his confederacy – Shawnee, Potawatomi, Kickapoo, Sac, Fox, Miami, Seneca, Ottawa, Peoria and related tribes — were forced to cede their lands and were eventually removed to lands in the Indian Territories along with the Five Civilized Tribes.



**WILLIAM MCINTOSH**  
A CHIEF OF THE LOWER CREEK

Between the turn of the nineteenth century and the time of Creek removal to Indian Territory, William McIntosh was one of the most prominent chiefs in the Lower Towns of the Creek Nation.

The Creek Nation struggled with internal tensions after the American Revolutionary War and during the War of 1812, when both sides tried to engage them as allies. The Lower Towns, which comprised the majority, were adopting European-American ways and tools, including education in English. To show they were equally “civilized,” some adopted forms of European dress and housing. They expanded their farms and purchased African slaves to work their plantations.

McIntosh fought with General Andrew Jackson and state militias in the Battle of Horseshoe Bend, marking the defeat of the Red Sticks and the end of the Creek War.

Under pressure from the United States and the state of Georgia, McIntosh and eight other chiefs signed the Treaty of Indian Springs, ceding all the Creek land in Georgia to the United States. The ruling by the Upper Creek Council, which made ceding land a capital offense, resulted in his death.

against the Red Sticks. Nevertheless, when he defeated the Red Sticks, the entire Creek tribe suffered. Tribal leaders signed the Treaty of Fort Jackson in August 1814, and it required the tribe to cede much of its land in Alabama and southern Georgia.

### *Why was William McIntosh executed by Creek warriors?*

William McIntosh had helped pass the 1811 law requiring the death of anyone who sold tribal lands. Over time, he became convinced that the only chance for the survival of the tribe was to sell their remaining Creek lands and move west. After he became sole tribal chief, McIntosh led his followers in signing the Treaty of Indian Springs on February 12, 1825. Although the Indian commissioners knew that the treaty did not represent the body of the tribe, they presented it to the President. He sent it to Congress for ratification. The treaty called for the exchange of Creek lands in Georgia and Alabama for land in Indian Territory.

The Creek Council met and passed judgment against McIntosh. On April 30, 1825, approximately 150 Creek warriors surrounded and set fire to his home. McIntosh, already wounded by gunfire, was dragged outside, stabbed in the heart, and shot multiple times.

### *How did President John Quincy Adams deal with Creek hostilities?*

The President at this time was John Quincy Adams. When he heard of the Creek hostility against the treaty, he invited tribal chiefs to Washington to draft another agreement. They declared the Indian Springs Treaty **invalid**. The new agreement called for the ceding of Creek lands only in Georgia and arranged for McIntosh’s followers to go to Indian Territory.

But pressure continued for removal. In March 1832, Opothleyahola and six other chiefs signed a new agreement, ceding all their tribal lands east of the Mississippi River. They agreed to leave Alabama as soon as possible, and the government agreed to pay removal expense. The government further agreed that no Creeks would be forced to leave the state. This no-force clause allowed the Creek to select an **allotment** from former tribal lands and live there as state citizens.

## Why were the Creek forcibly removed?

The next few years were chaotic. Division intensified as certain groups prepared to move west while others were determined to stay in the East. Still others wanted to abandon Indian Territory and move into Texas. The government did not restrain whites from moving onto Creek lands, and there was fighting between Indians and settlers. The Seminole were engaged in a war with the United States, and some groups of Creek warriors joined the Seminole.

The U.S. Army called upon Brigadier General Winfield Scott to end the “Creek War.” The government ignored the no-force clause of the treaty. Scott’s troops rounded up some fifteen thousand Creeks and moved them west, with 2,500 of them in chains. When the first group reached Montgomery, Alabama, in July 1836, the *Advertiser* reported, “To see the remnant of a once mighty people, fettered and chained together — forced to depart from the land of their Fathers into a country unknown to them — is of itself sufficient to move the stoutest heart.”

The Creek lost many of their people on the trip west. They arrived at Fort Gibson in the spring of 1837, where officials were not prepared to care for them. Another 3,500 Creeks died there from exposure and disease.

Furthermore, when the newcomers arrived in Indian Territory, the McIntosh group had already been there several years. Initially, they disagreed over leadership, but soon the eastern Creek submitted to the leadership of the western group under Principal Chief Roley McIntosh. Old wounds were slow to heal, and members of the two groups seldom mixed socially. Despite these problems, the tribe managed to live peacefully for the rest of its self-governing days.

## What were the differences in the way white people dealt with the Chickasaw?

Of all the tribes in the Southeast, the Chickasaw were the most prosperous. They had been the first to adjust to white ways, making a living by farming and raising livestock. Men directed the farm work. Women handled spinning, weaving, and other household duties. Many of them owned slaves, lived in beautiful homes, and dressed in the style of the whites.

Most Chickasaw tribe members had turned to farming only



**OPOTHEYAHOLA**  
PRINCIPAL CHIEF  
OF THE UPPER CREEK

Opothleyahola was an influential and eloquent speaker for his people. He was selected as a speaker for the chiefs, which was a distinct political role on the National Council. He became a wealthy trader and owned a 2,000-acre plantation near North Fork Town. Opothleyahola accepted Christianity and became a Baptist.

Alarmed by land cessions made by chiefs of the Lower Towns without tribal consensus, the National Council of the Creek Confederacy enacted a law that made further land cessions a capital offense. In 1825, William McIntosh and several Lower Creek chiefs signed the Treaty of Indian Springs with the US, which gave up most of the remaining Creek lands in Georgia for payment and removal to the west of the Mississippi River.

Opothleyahola supported the death sentence passed by the National Council against McIntosh and other signatories of the 1825 Treaty. The chief, Menawa, led approximately 150 warriors to attack McIntosh at his plantation. They killed him and another signatory chief and burned down the McIntosh mansion.



**JOHN QUINCY ADAMS**  
SIXTH U.S. PRESIDENT

John Quincy Adams was the sixth President of the United States (1825–29). He served as American diplomat, Senator, and Congressional representative. Adams was the son of former President John Adams and Abigail Adams. As a diplomat, Adams played an important role in negotiating many international treaties, most notably the Treaty of Ghent, which ended the War of 1812. As Secretary of State, he negotiated with the United Kingdom over the United States' northern border with Canada, negotiated with Spain the annexation of Florida, and authored the Monroe Doctrine.

Adams' generous policy toward Native Americans caused him trouble. Settlers on the frontier, who were constantly seeking to move westward, cried for a more expansionist policy. When the federal government tried to assert authority on behalf of the Cherokees, the governor of Georgia took up arms. In contrast, Andrew Jackson and Martin Van Buren, who were presidents after him, favored the policy of Indian removal to the west.

after the reduction of tribal lands had made hunting unprofitable. Since 1786, when they signed a treaty allowing a trading post at Muscle Shoals on the Tennessee River, every treaty had sought tribal lands.

In 1802, the federal government set up “factories,” or trading posts, through which tribes could buy goods on credit. Officials encouraged the Chickasaw to use the credit to build up debts, and then pressured them to cede their lands in payment of those debts. Within three years, the Chickasaw owed \$12,000. In 1805, the Chickasaw ceded all their lands north of the Tennessee River to pay their debts.

By 1826, after forty years of treaties, they had given up lands in Tennessee and Kentucky. They were reduced to an area in northern Mississippi and northwestern Alabama. This last area was the tribal homeland where the Ancients, their ancestors, were buried. They honored the land and vowed to sell no more of it.

### *How did Chickasaw tribal leadership change?*

Many full-blooded Chickasaw could not adjust to farming, which they considered women's work. Now, they were idle warriors and often turned to drinking. In some cases, the government supplied the liquor and said it was a “gift” to secure their goodwill. Otherwise, the liquor was bought from **unscrupulous** traders.

More and more full-bloods withdrew into the hills and turned to old customs for comfort. They saw the ease with which the mixed-blood members carried on their new lifestyle, however, and looked to them for guidance.

Thus, the tribe gradually yielded leadership to the mixed-bloods. They had attended white schools and adopted white culture. They kept full-blood leaders in their positions and observed traditional ceremonies, but these actions were mainly a show of respect. The real leadership was in the hands of the mixed-bloods, and they managed to save their homelands for a while.

The Chickasaw passed tribal laws to improve law **enforcement** and to give greater protection to private property. Large numbers of tribesmen turned to Christianity, and some became skilled in commerce. They started large farming ventures, producing cotton and other crops with slave labor. They allowed the government to build roads through their lands and then created inns, ferries,



**SIGNING THE TREATY OF PONTOTOC** BY CHICKASAW ARTIST ANN SHEFFIELD

and other services for travelers.

Perhaps their most profitable and successful endeavor was in the trading business. The mixed-blood councils eliminated permanent trading posts not operated by members of their nation. Further, they demanded that treaty payments be made in “**specie**,” or money, rather than in blankets, tools, or other goods. Then, when individuals received their portions of the money, they took it to a Chickasaw-operated business to buy goods. This kept the money in circulation in the Chickasaw Nation rather than profiting outside suppliers.

### ***Why did whites resent the Chickasaw?***

Whites resented the success of the Chickasaw. They wrote letters to Washington complaining that when they traveled through Chickasaw lands, there were only Chickasaws with whom to do business. In the minds of many whites, Indians should have

been educated sufficiently to do **menial** tasks and to handle their everyday business by spending their money with white traders. They should never have been given enough education to go into business. They should never have been able to take white money into that business.

The Chickasaw had tried to assimilate. Their plan failed, just as plans of other tribes had failed. Even though whites had insisted that this was the answer to the “Indian problem,” they found the Indians even less acceptable as competitors. The cry for removal grew louder and louder.

At first, Chickasaw leaders tried to avoid it by ignoring it, saying simply that the Chickasaw Nation would not leave its homeland. Gradually, they began to see the inevitability of it, especially when state laws voided their sovereignty. Then they tried to postpone the date of removal by signing treaties which required Chickasaw leaders to explore the western lands and find a place suitable for the tribe.

### What was the Treaty of Pontotoc?

The Treaty of Pontotoc was first signed in 1832 and amended in 1834. It ceded all Chickasaw lands east of the Mississippi River in exchange for lands in the West. More than six million acres of Chickasaw land were to be sold. The first of it went on the auction block in 1836, even before tribesmen had located a suitable new home in the West. The government moved the Chickasaw to temporary locations on their former lands while it sold their property to eager white buyers.

### What was the Treaty at Doaksville?

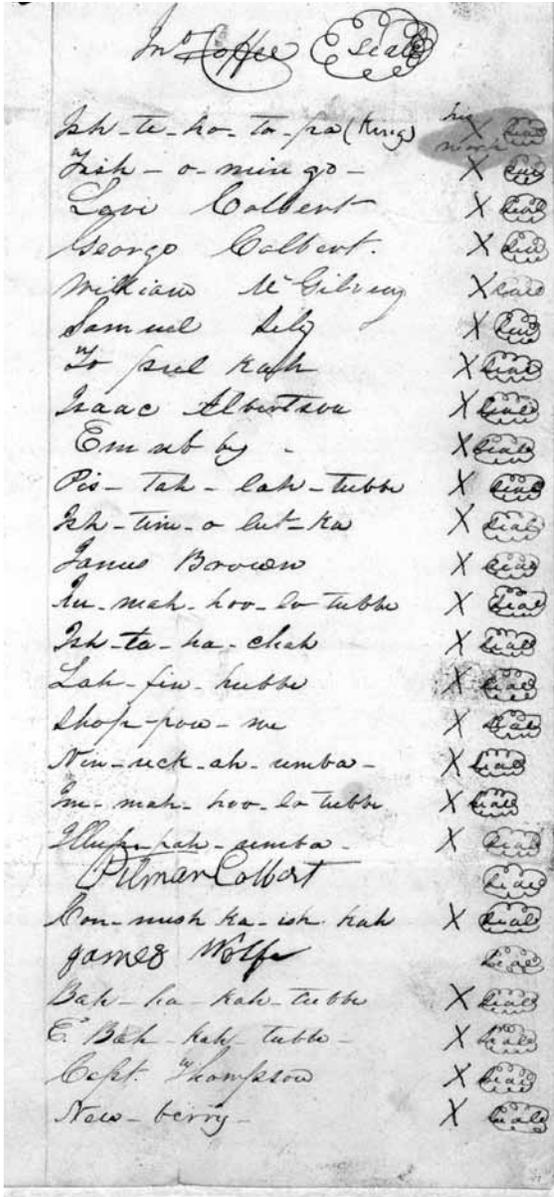
Finally, on January 17, 1837, Chickasaw leaders signed an agreement with Choctaw leaders in the West. At Doaksville, Choctaw Nation, the Choctaw agreed to sell a portion of the central and western areas of their nation in southern Indian Territory to the Chickasaw for \$530,000.

Meanwhile, in the East, the federal government abandoned all semblance of protection. One official remarked that an “alarming **influx** of disreputable whites” had made their way into the tribal lands and were mixing with the Indians, with **disastrous** results.

James Colbert, a mixed-blood leader, petitioned the President for help in forcing whites to cooperate with the treaties until the Indians were removed. He related that “speculators scoured the countryside . . . lying to the hapless Indians, telling them they must sign a blank deed to their property for \$5 or less immediately and making promises they never intended to fulfill.” President Jackson ignored the plea.

Within a month of the Treaty at Doaksville, preparations were being made for the first emigration. The government decreed that each emigrating Indian have daily rations of one pound of fresh beef or pork, three-fourths of a pound of salt pork or bacon, three cups of corn or cornmeal or one pound of wheat flour, and 1/100th of a gallon of salt.

Contractors were to arrange to have rations deposited at various locations along the way, specifically at Memphis, Little Rock, and Fort Coffee. Each group was also to be assigned a conductor to lead the way; a physician; and a disbursement officer to account for supplies at each depot and issue rations.



SIGNERS OF THE TREATY OF PONTOTOC

### *What happened during the first Chickasaw removal?*

In late June 1837, the first group of 450 Chickasaws moved out of Chief Sealy's district behind conductor John M. Millard. They crossed the Mississippi River from Memphis into Arkansas on July 4. Almost immediately, they met drenching rains that completely washed out the roads in many places. Camps were wet and fires were impossible. Dysentery and fever began to take their toll. The physician blamed these medical problems on Indian "dissipation" rather than on the conditions of travel.

In addition to poor weather, the Indians were given bad rations. A number of suppliers dumped rations on open docks or beside the road to rot in the sun. By the time the Indians picked them up, the food had spoiled.

Millard's party divided into three groups. The ill and those in need went from Memphis to Fort Coffee by riverboat, arriving there in a matter of days. The second group, after finding dry land and meeting no more rains, traveled at an amazing rate of thirteen miles per day. They arrived at Fort Coffee a few days later. The third group, however, chose not to eat the spoiled rations and loitered in hunting camps. They moved three miles per day at most. It seemed the more government officials urged them to hurry, the slower they moved. The men hunted deer, while the women and children worked in the camps and took care of the sick. Finally, threatened with troops to drive them onward, they continued their journey at a normal pace. They arrived at Fort Coffee on September 5, 1837.

### *What happened during the second Chickasaw removal?*

The superintendent of the Chickasaw removal was A.M.M. Upshaw of Pulaski, Tennessee. While Millard conducted his charges through the wilderness, Upshaw was busy readying for the

second phase. He moved four thousand Chickasaws to emigration camps and marched them from there to Memphis. Upshaw planned to move them to Fort Coffee on six riverboats. He wanted to load their livestock on barges and have the boats tow the barges downriver.

The tribe, however, heard about the riverboat boiler that had exploded in 1833. That accident had killed Indians and subjected the survivors to more exposure and illness. One thousand Chickasaws refused to board the boats at Memphis. Upshaw pleaded and cajoled to no avail. When he threatened to stop their rations, a Chickasaw leader reminded him that they were paying for their own rations from the sale of their eastern lands. Upshaw could not force those thousand to board. They would go on land. He did carry the three thousand other Chickasaws and their slaves on the riverboats. It took eight days to reach Fort Coffee. Six weeks later, the survivors of the one thousand walking tribesmen arrived. The heat, muddy swamps, unsanitary conditions, and spoiled rations had been terrible.

Early in 1838, Superintendent Upshaw dismissed his conductors and other contractors. He reported to the government that his job was finished, and that only about twenty families remained in the East, most of them slaves. He felt they were capable of moving themselves. Actually, more than five hundred Chickasaws remained in the East. Later, the government offered \$30 for the removal of each Indian or slave.

### *What happened during the third Chickasaw removal?*

Certain leaders had waited to **emigrate**, hoping to get a better price for their temporary homesteads. These leaders — the Colberts, the Loves, and the Overtons among them — bought wagons and began moving their tribesmen west. They managed some of the most successful removals.



Comanches butchering a longhorn.  
CHICKASAW HOLISSO RESEARCH CENTER

Some historians have criticized these mixed-blood leaders because they made a profit while “helping” their tribesmen. Without these businessmen, however, many widows, orphans, and **destitute** Chickasaws would have found the journey impossible. They would have suffered at the hands of people who wanted to steal their allotments and their money.

Even after the later trips were made, Chickasaws continued to move west. Some of those hidden in the hills of their homelands did not move west until 1850.

### *How was life for the Chickasaw in Indian Territory?*

The troubles of the Chickasaw didn’t end when they arrived in Indian Territory. They had bought a portion of Choctaw land, but now bands of Kiowas, Comanches, and other western tribes considered them poachers and harassed them. A good number of Chickasaws remained in camps around Fort Coffee and near the Choctaw towns, where contractors continued to supply spoiled food. Many Indians believed this was an effort by the whites to destroy them. Many squandered their government payments in frustration and hopelessness.



Smallpox and other diseases killed more than five hundred Chickasaws as well as the Choctaw who had come into contact with them. The Choctaw began to resent them. Gradually, however, the government controlled the western tribes and curbed their hostility so the Chickasaw could settle their new lands. Like the other tribes, they established towns, schools, and farms. They had agreed to live under Choctaw governance, but eventually they made their own government and lived on friendly terms with those around them.

Among the Five Civilized Tribes, the Chickasaw had shown great foresight in adapting to, and succeeding at, white culture. They were the wealthiest and proudest of all the eastern Indian nations. Yet their success would not guarantee acceptance. Even though they had the lowest mortality rate on their western journeys, they lost the most in terms of spirit and finance. They were perhaps the slowest of the five nations to recover.

Tishomingo, the Chickasaw Capital in Indian Territory, was a thriving business center by the late 1800s.

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## Chapter Summary

The removal of the Choctaw, Creek, and Chickasaw was the first in the long process of transplanting Native Americans from the east to what would be Oklahoma. The Treaty of Doak's Stand began the Choctaw removal, which progressed in several unorganized drawn out trips across the southern United States. The Creek removal followed and was made even more difficult due to conflict within the tribe about whether or not to fight to keep their land. Despite the fighting, the Creek were removed as well. Last of the early removals was that of the Chickasaw. Even though they were the most assimilated tribe in the east, the continuing population pressure forced them to sign removal treaties. While better prepared than some tribes, there was significant suffering on all the removal journeys.

### VOCABULARY

Write a short definition of each word below.

abolish

intrusion

confiscate

impractical

dissension

annuity

inevitable

restrain

Name the Five Civilized Tribes.

Name three reasons the white Americans called these tribes "civilized."

### REMEMBER THE DETAILS

1. What treaties were involved in the removal of the Choctaw?
2. Describe the Choctaw process of removal.
3. What treaties were involved in the removal of the Creek?
4. Describe the Creek removal process.
5. What treaties were involved in the removal of the Chickasaw?
6. Describe the Chickasaw removal process.
7. What was the Treaty of Fort Gibson?
8. What issues divided the Creek tribe?
9. Why was Andrew Jackson important in the removal process?
10. How was John Quincy Adams involved in the removal process?

### THINKING AND ASKING QUESTIONS

1. Do you think that the removal process was inevitable? Why or why not?
2. How were the lives of the people removed from the East impacted by the process?
3. Compare and contrast the three early removals.
4. Which early removal do you think was the worst? Explain why?
5. What government organization was important to the survival of the removed tribes in Oklahoma; what problems did it also create?

REMOVAL

**MATCH PEOPLE AND ROLES**

Match the name to the description. Use one letter twice.

- A. Pushmataha    B. Tecumseh    C. John C. Calhoun    D. Andrew Jackson
- E. William McIntosh    F. John Quincy Adams

1. Government leader who decided to concentrate on the Choctaw for the first removal (see end of Chapter 3).
2. A Shawnee chief who visited the Creek.
3. President who declared Treaty of Indian Springs invalid.
4. A Creek who was the victim of a death penalty he had helped to pass.
5. Principal Chief of the Choctaw who persuaded tribe to accept Treaty of Doak’s Stand.
6. President who was dedicated to Indian removal.

**COMPARE**

Pretend that you are Indian Commissioners dealing with the Choctaw in 1831. The tribe is divided and the Commissioners must make a report to Washington about it. Students may describe the contrasting views by using a chart similar to the one given below.

PRO-REMOVAL

ANTI-REMOVAL


**SOLVE PROBLEMS**

If you were being removed from your home and had to “travel light,” what would you take with you? Think about what you would need to start a new life in Indian Territory. What would your first priorities be for creating a home when you arrived there? In groups compare your responses and come up with a plan for this situation. Write your responses.