



NATIVE AMERICAN

Heroes & Legends

President Andrew Jackson was elected into office in 1828; Jackson's time in office is sometimes referred to as the Jacksonian Era. During the Jacksonian Era, Native Americans were being forcibly removed from their native lands. In May of 1830, under the leadership of President Jackson, Congress passed the Indian Removal Act.



The Indian Removal Act authorized President Jackson to grant tribal lands east of the Mississippi River that fell within existing state borders to American settlers. This act indicated that tribes willing to relocate voluntarily were to be compensated for their land, their future homesteads and given a year's worth of sustenance. Most were never compensated. Despite the fact that the Indian Removal Act insinuated that Native Americans would only be relocated voluntarily, the act led to the forcible removal of thousands of Native Americans.

In 1831, Chief John Ross of the Cherokee Nation, hired former Attorney General William Wirt to represent the Cherokee Nation in a U.S. Supreme Court Case, Cherokee Nation vs. Georgia. This court case sought sovereignty, the ability to have their own governing entity, for the Cherokee Tribe. The ruling, in favor of the Cherokee Nation, determined that the state of Georgia could not legally create and enforce laws on behalf of the Cherokee people. However, despite this ruling, the Cherokee people were still forcibly removed from their lands under the Treaty of New Echota signed in 1835. The forced removal of the Cherokee people led to the deaths of over 4,000 members of the Cherokee Nation; their forced removal would come to be known as the "Trail of Tears".

STUDENT ACTIVITY - CREATE A POWERPOINT PRESENTATION THAT OFFERS AN OVERVIEW OF THE FOLLOWING:

Research Chief John Ross (Cherokee name Koo-wi-s-gu-wi).

- 1) What was life like for John Ross growing up? (Family, work, school, etc.)
- 2) Aside from his involvement in the Cherokee Nation vs. Georgia Supreme Court Case, what other major contributions did Ross make during his leadership of the Cherokee Nation?



Research the Trail of Tears (you will need to locate a map indicating the path that the Cherokee Nation was forced to follow)

- 1) Where did the trail begin? Where did the trail end?
- 2) We know that over 4,000 members of the Cherokee Nation died on the Trail of Tears, how did these people die?

Newspapers for this educational program provided by:



NEWSPAPERS IN EDUCATION
THE OKLAHOMAN

Oklahoma's future begins in the classroom.

