

Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek Help us improve Wikipedia by supporting it financially.

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The **Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek** was a treaty signed on September 27, 1830 (and proclaimed on 24 February 1831) between the Choctaw (an American Indian tribe) and the United States Government.

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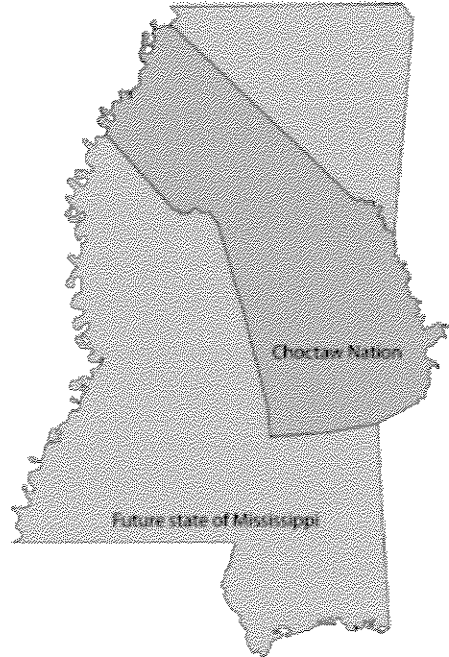
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Overview

This was the first removal treaty carried into effect under the Indian Removal Act. The treaty ceded about 11 million acres (45,000 km²) in Mississippi in exchange for about 15 million acres (61,000 km²) in the Indian territory (now the state of Oklahoma). The principal Choctaw negotiators was Chief Greenwood LeFlore, Musholatubbee, and Nittucachee; U.S. negotiators were Colonel John Coffee and Secretary of War John Eaton. Site of the signing of this treaty is located in the south west corner of Noxubee County. This treaty was the last in a series of such treaties which the Choctaws signed.

The Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek was one of the largest ever signed between the United States Government and American Indians in time of peace. The treaty signed away the remaining traditional homeland of the Choctaw to the United States. Article 14 of that treaty allowed for some Choctaws to remain in the state of Mississippi:

"ART. XIV. Each Choctaw head of a family being desirous to remain and become a citizen of the States, shall be permitted to do so, by signifying his intention to the Agent within six months from the ratification of this Treaty, and he or she shall thereupon be entitled to a reservation of one section of six hundred and forty acres of land, to be bounded by sectional lines of survey; in like manner shall be entitled to one half that quantity for each unmarried child which is living with him over ten years of age; and a quarter section to such child as may be under 10 years of age, to adjoin the location of the parent. If they reside upon said lands intending to become citizens of the States for five years after the ratification of this Treaty, in that case a grant in fee simple shall issue; said reservation shall include the present improvement of the head of the family, or a portion of it. Persons who claim under this article shall not lose the privilege of a Choctaw citizen. but if they ever remove are not to be entitled to any portion of the Choctaw annuity." ^[1]



The approximate area that the treaty defined shaded in blue in relation to the future U.S. state of Mississippi.

The Choctaw would become the first of the "Five Civilized Tribes" to be removed from the southeastern United States, as the federal and state government desired Indian lands to accommodate a growing agrarian Anglo society. Along with the Creek, Cherokee, Chickasaw, and Seminole, the Choctaw attempted to resurrect their traditional lifestyle and government in their new homeland. In 1831, tens of thousands of Choctaw walked the 800km journey to Oklahoma and many died.

The Choctaw at this crucial time became two distinct groups-- the Nation in Oklahoma and the Tribe in Mississippi. The nation retained its autonomy to regulate itself, but the tribe left in Mississippi had to submit to state and U.S. laws. Under article XIV, Mississippi Choctaws would become the first major non-european ethnic group to become U.S. citizens in 1830.^{[2][3]} The Choctaws also sought to put a representative in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Terms



Mosholatubbee, painted in 1834
George Catlin.

The preamble begins with,

“ *A treaty of perpetual, friendship, cession and limits, entered into by John H. Eaton and John Coffee, for and in behalf of the Government of the United States, and the Mingoes, Chiefs, Captains and Warriors of the Choctaw Nation, begun and held at Dancing Rabbit Creek, on the fifteenth of September, in the year eighteen hundred and thirty. WHEREAS the General Assembly of the State of Mississippi has extended the laws of said State to persons and property within the chartered limits of the same, and the President of the United States has said that he cannot protect the Choctaw people from the operation of these laws; Now therefore that the Choctaw may live under their own laws in peace with the United States and the State of Mississippi they have determined to sell their lands east of the Mississippi and have accordingly agreed to the following articles of treaty ...*

—Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek, 1830

The following terms of the treaty were:

1. Perpetual peace and friendship.
2. Lands (in what is now Oklahoma) west of the Mississippi River to be conveyed to the Choctaw Nation.
3. Lands east of the Mississippi River to be ceded and removal to begin in 1831 and end in 1833.
4. Autonomy of the Choctaw Nation (in Oklahoma) and descendants to be secured from laws of U.S. states and territories forever.
5. U.S. will serve as protectorate of the Choctaw Nation.

6. Choctaw or party of Choctaws part of violent acts againts the U.S. citizens or property will be delivered to the U.S. authorities.
7. Offenses against Choctaws and their property by U.S. citizens and other tribes will be examined and every possible degree of justice applied.
8. No harboring of U.S. fugitives with all expenses to capture him or her paid by the U.S.
9. Persons ordered from Choctaw Nation.
10. Traders require a written permit.
11. Navigable streams will be free for Choctaws, U.S. post-offices will be established in the Choctaw Nation, and U.S. military posts and roads may be created.
12. Intruders will be removed from the Choctaw Nation. U.S. citizens stealing Choctaw property shall be returned and offender punished. Choctaw offending U.S. laws shall be given a fair and impartial trial.
13. U.S. agent appointed to the Choctaws every four years.
14. Choctaws may become U.S. citizens and are entitled to 640 acres (2.6 km²) of land (in Mississippi) with additional land for children.
15. Lands granted to the Choctaw chiefs (Greenwood LeFlore, Musholatubbee, and Nittucachee) with annuities granted to each of them.
16. Transportation in wagons and steamboats will be provided at the costs of the U.S. Ample food will be provided during the removal and 12 months after reaching the new homes. Reimbursements will be provided for cattle left in Mississippi Territory.
17. Annuities to Choctaws to continue from other treaties. Additional payments after removal.
18. Choctaw Country to be surveyed
19. Lands granted to I. Garland, Colonel Robert Cole, Tuppanahomer, John Pytchlynn, Charles Juzan, Johokebetubbe, Eaychahobia, and Ofehoma.
20. Improve the Choctaw condition with Education. Provide tools, weapons, and steel.
21. Choctaw Warriors who fought with U.S. General Wayne during the American Revolution and Northwest Indian War will receive an annuity.
22. Choctaw delegate on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives.

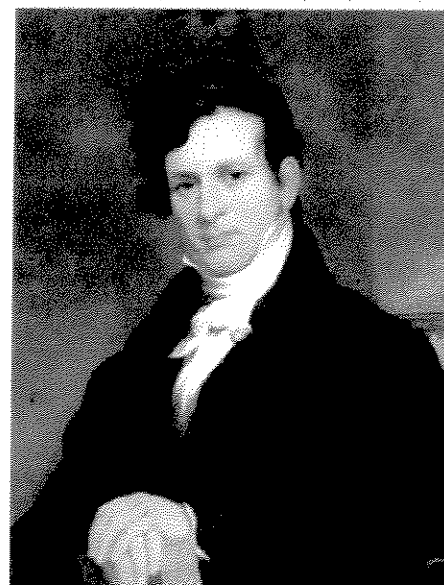
Signatories

The main signatories included John Eaton, John Coffee, Greenwood Leflore, Musholatubbee, and Nittucachee. Nearly 200 other signatures are on the treaty.

Aftermath

After ceding nearly 11,000,000 acres (45,000 km²), the Choctaw emigrated in three stages: the first in the fall of 1831, the second in 1832 and the last in 1833.^[4] The Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek was ratified by the U.S. Senate on February 25, 1831, and the President was anxious to make it a model of removal.^[4] George W. Harkins wrote a letter to the American people before the removals began.

“*It is with considerable diffidence that I attempt to address the American people, knowing and feeling sensibly my incompetency; and believing*



that your highly and well improved minds would not be well entertained by the address of a Choctaw. But having determined to emigrate west of the Mississippi river this fall, I have thought proper in bidding you farewell to make a few remarks expressive of my views, and the feelings that actuate me on the subject of our removal ... We as Choctaws rather chose to suffer and be free, than live under the degrading influence of laws, which our voice could not be heard in their formation ... Much as the state of Mississippi has wronged us, I cannot find in my heart any other sentiment than an ardent wish for her prosperity and happiness.

John Eaton, Secretary of War, painted 1873 by Robert Weir

—George W. Harkins, *George W. Harkins to the American People* ^[5]

Around 15,000 Choctaws left the old Choctaw Nation for the lands in what is called Oklahoma today.^[6] The Choctaw word "Oklahoma" means red people. Between 5,000–6,000 Choctaws remained in Mississippi in 1831 after the initial removal efforts.^{[3][6]} For the next ten years they were objects of increasing legal conflict, harassment, and intimidation. The Choctaws describe their situation in 1849, "we have had our habitations torn down and burned, our fences destroyed, cattle turned into our fields and we ourselves have been scourged, manacled, fettered and otherwise personally abused, until by such treatment some of our best men have died."^[6] Joseph B. Cobb, who moved to Mississippi from Georgia, described Choctaws as having "no nobility or virtue at all, and in some respect he found blacks, especially native Africans, more interesting and admirable, the red man's superior in every way. The Choctaw and Chickasaw, the tribes he knew best, were beneath contempt, that is, even worse than black slaves."^[7] The removals continued well into the early 20th century. In 1903, three hundred Mississippi Choctaws were persuaded to move to the Nation in Oklahoma.



John R Coffee

The Choctaw Nation continued to thrive until Oklahoma was created as a state. The descendants of the Choctaws who stayed in their ancient homeland in Mississippi re-organized themselves as the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians in 1945.

See also

- List of Choctaw Treaties
 - Treaty of Hopewell
 - Treaty of Fort Adams
 - Treaty of Fort Confederation
 - Treaty of Hoe Buckintoopa
 - Treaty of Mount Dexter
 - Treaty of Fort St. Stephens
- Treaty of Doak's Stand
- Treaty of Washington City
- List of treaties

Citations

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- [^] ^{*a*} ^{*b*} Baird, David [1973]. "The Choctaws Meet the Americans, 1783 to 1843", *The Choctaw People*. United States: Indian Tribal Series, 36. Library of Congress 73-80708.
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- [^] Hudson, Charles [1971]. "The Ante-Bellum Elite", *Red, White, and Black: Symposium on Indians in the Old South*. University of Georgia Press, 80. SBN 820303089.

External links

- Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties (Treaty with the Choctaw, 1830) (<http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/Vol2/treaties/cho0310.htm>)
- Article about the treaty from *Encyclopedia of North American Indians* (http://college.hmco.com/history/readerscomp/naind/html/na_040300_treatyofdanc.htm)
- 1929 account of the treaty (<http://digital.library.okstate.edu/Chronicles/v007/v007p323.html>)



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