



1890 Census map of the Qualla Boundary from the NC Maps collection.

[15] Scott to round up Cherokees in North Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama and place them in various internment camps and stockades. The horrible conditions facing his people at these poorly planned facilities led Ross to appeal to the president for a delay in the removal until fall, when water and game would be more plentiful. Van Buren agreed, and between October 1838 and March 1839, the Cherokee moved west. The journey was mismanaged; there was a shortage of supplies; and the troops rushed the Indians onward, refusing to allow them to minister to their sick or bury their dead. Of the approximately 15,000 who began the trek, an estimated 4,000 perished.

Approximately 300 to 400 Cherokees remained in North Carolina, hiding in the mountains. One of their leaders, Tsali [16], was captured and executed for killing two federal soldiers pursuing him and his family, but some of his followers and other Cherokees (who had possibly aided in Tsali's capture) were allowed to remain. Between removal of the Cherokee Nation in 1838 and the end of the Civil War, many Cherokees gave their money to William Holland Thomas [17], their agent and later their only white chief, to purchase land for them. Thomas acquired many of the tracts that would make up the modern-day Qualla Boundary [18], the official name of the Cherokee Indian Reservation in North Carolina. These Cherokees—together with the hundreds who had hidden in the mountains, who already legally owned land through the Treaty of 1817, or who had escaped the Trail of Tears and returned--formed the nucleus of what would become the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

Keep reading - Part vi: Federal recognition and the fight for Cherokee rights [7] ➔ [7]

Image credits:

"Map of Trail of Tears National Historic Trail," 2009. National Park Service, U.S. Department of Interior. Online at: <https://www.nps.gov/trte/planyourvisit/directions.htm> [10]

U. S. Census Office. "Map of the Qualla Indian Reserve (Boundary) N.C.," 1890. ID: MC.183.C522.1876t North Carolina Maps [19]. Online at: <http://dc.lib.unc.edu/u/?/ncmaps.1055> [20]

Subjects:

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Indian removal [23]

Authors:

Anderson, William L. [24]

Wetmore, Ruth Y. [25]

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Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press. [26]

Source URL:<https://www.ncpedia.org/cherokee/trailoftears>

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