

Lesson 4 Keywords and Phrases

1. John Ridge-

A son of Major Ridge, he was a prominent member of the Cherokee Nation aristocracy. Born in 1802, Ridge was well educated, having attended the Foreign Mission School in Cornwall, Connecticut in 1819, where he excelled as a student. His connections and talents allowed him to become a leading member of the National Committee along with his cousin Elias Boudinot and his father's protégé John Ross, as well as highly respected for his abilities and faithfulness to Indian welfare by all the tribes across the southern United States. Yet though he worked tirelessly to avoid removal, when he worked in Washington during the period when Jackson was trumpeting removal legislation, he witnessed first hand the measure of the President's resolve. He and his family were largely responsible for the treaty negotiations that ceded the Cherokee territory; a fact that cost them their lives.

2. John Ross-

With a combination of unflinching tenacity and a soft diplomatic touch, John Ross was Principal Chief of the Cherokee Native American Nation for nearly forty years, leading the Nation through tumultuous years of development, relocation to Oklahoma, and the American Civil War. Only an eighth Cherokee, Ross, unlike the Ridge family but very much

like his foe, Andrew Jackson, was not born into a wealthy aristocratic family. Through marriage and skillful business practices, he rose socially and politically, becoming the Principal Chief of the Nation at a very young age. He tried as hard as he could to avoid removal, ultimately was powerless to save his nation after being subverted by the Ridge Clan and the will of Andrew Jackson.

3. The Treaty of New Echota-

Signed on December 29, 1835, in New Echota, Georgia by officials of the U.S. government and representatives of a minority Cherokee political faction. Signed against the wishes of the Cherokee people lead by John Ross, the treaty established terms under which the entire Cherokee Nation was expected to move west to the Indian Territory. Although the Cherokee National Council approved it, it was ratified by the U.S. Senate and became the legal basis for the forcible removal known as the Trail of Tears. For their part in the treaty making process, John Ridge, Major Ridge, and Elias Boudinot, were murdered on the same day in 1839.

4. The Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek

Signed on September 27, 1830, having been made between the Choctaw Nation and the U.S.

government. This was the first removal treaty carried into effect under the Indian Removal Act of 1830 and ceded about 11 million acres of the Choctaw Nation (now Mississippi) in exchange for about 15 million acres in the Indian Territory (now Oklahoma). The treaty was the last major land secession treaty the Choctaws signed and it is important to recognize, as other tribes besides the Cherokee, like the Choctaw, Chickasaw, etc. chose other paths in negotiating their removal after the act was signed by Andrew Jackson.

5. The Grattan Massacre-

Occurred on August 19, 1854, east of Fort Laramie in Nebraska Territory, in present day Wyoming. After arresting a Native man named High Forehead, who was accused of taking and killing a Mormon migrant's cow (who was by accounts lame and soon for death), a conflict ensued and one of the soldiers shot a Lakota chief named Conquering Bear. The Lakota warriors returned fire and killed a number of soldiers, including young lieutenant John Grattan, who had been sent from the fort to make an arrest. The massacre is considered an early and significant event in the violent history of the Plains as many Lakota remember this as the time when the Americans were "the first to make the ground bloody."

6. The Trail of Tears-

Beginning in 1831 with the removal of the Choctaw from Mississippi from Oklahoma, a