Chapter 6: 
Clash of Cultures 
Section 2
The Five Tribes

- Five major tribes of the southeastern U.S.:
  - Choctaw, Creek, Chickasaw, Cherokee, and Seminole
- "assimilation program"
  - The U.S. government and various churches plan to educate and Christianize the Indians
- Became known as the "civilized tribes"
  - because many had adopted the ways of the European-Americans in an attempt to save their tribe
- Not all tribal members adopted European ways
  - many chose to retain their traditional Indian lifestyle and refused to inter-marry with whites
- Under traditional Indian culture, all education was passed down orally and none of the tribes had a written language
The Five Tribes

- Sequoyah invented the Cherokee syllabary – an alphabet based on syllables of the Cherokee language to help the Cherokee children learn to read and write.
- Cherokee developed a written constitution based on U.S. Constitution – capital at New Echota, GA.
- Whites became jealous of the Indians’ ability to compete in a white business world and greed for land led to state laws being passed taking away rights and lands of the Indians – This violated Federal Treaties that had been signed with the Tribes.
- *Worcester v. Georgia* – Supreme Court sided with Cherokee ruling that their lands were protected, but President Jackson refused to enforce the ruling.
Choctaw Removal

- 1st treaty with Choctaw was *Treaty of Doak’s Stand (1820)* – Only a few Choctaw moved because whites were already living on land sold to Choctaw
- State laws which were in violation of Federal treaties and a U.S. Gov’t unwilling to help Choctaws caused life to be so unbearable for the Choctaws that tribal leaders realized the only hope for survival was removal
- Choctaw leaders signed *Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek (1830)* to officially remove Choctaw tribe
- Choctaws who wanted to stay in Mississippi would be subject to state laws
- 1/3 of Choctaws to be removed each year for 3 years
- 1st removal – November 1, 1831, tribe gathered along Mississippi River at Memphis
Choctaw Removal

- Lack of organization, bad weather (winter), shortage of food and clothing, and a gov’t that did not care, led to complete disaster on the removal trip.
- Roads became impassable, steamboats were delayed, food ran out, Choctaws were unloaded in a blizzard at Arkansas Post which was unprepared to provide food and shelter.
- Choctaw were loaded in wagons at Arkansas Post and headed towards Little Rock – finally arriving in Indian Territory (present-day southeastern Oklahoma).
- About 30% of Choctaws died as a result of removal.
- Choctaw removal of 1832 was very similar to 1st removal.
- Due to pressure placed on gov’t, Choctaw removal of 1833 was more organized and time of year (weather) was taken into consideration.
- By 1834, nearly 8,000 Choctaw were living in Indian Territory.
Creek Removal

- Muscogee (Creek) was a confederacy of tribes from Georgia and Alabama.
- Creeks divided into 2 main factions: *(Upper = Full Bloods) and (Lower = Mixed Bloods)*
- 1811, Creek Council passed "Blood Law" forbidding sale of Creek lands without Council approval under penalty of death.
- Creeks subjected to constant abuse by state policies and citizens with no regard for the law – Creeks received no help from Federal Gov.
- Lower Creeks (William McIntosh – mixed bloods) met with Creek Council to get them to understand consequences to their tribe if they did not sell and move.
- Upper Creeks (Opothleyahola – full bloods) did not trust whites and vetoed proposal to sell lands and go west.
- William McIntosh signed Treaty of Indian Springs 1825 giving up all Lower Creek lands in attempt to save his people knowing he had signed his own death warrant.
- William McIntosh was executed for violating Blood Law.
- Upper Creeks convinced Gov’t to cancel Treaty of Indian Springs.
- Chilly McIntosh (son of William), signed another treaty 1826, and voluntarily removed his dad’s followers (about 700) to Indian Territory in 1828 (Moved into area west of Grand River and North of Arkansas River).
Creek Removal

- By 1830, about 3,000 Lower Creeks had moved to Indian Territory.
- Gov’t did not fulfill promise of food and supplies causing many hardships on Creeks in Indian Territory.
- Creeks also had to deal with raids from Osage and Delaware who resented presence of Creeks in Indian Territory.
- Upper Creeks, still in Alabama, signed treaty in 1832 giving up large portion of land in Alabama in exchange for protection by state if Creeks submitted to state laws and accepted allotment creating personal ownership of land.
- Land speculators began to cheat Creeks out of land – when Creeks tried to defend their land, Alabama called in army (1836) to put down the *Creek Rebellion* causing forced removal of Upper Creeks.
- Thousands died from exposure and disease on their way to Fort Gibson in 1837.
- Upper Creeks were reunited with Lower Creeks in Indian Territory, but betrayal wounds were too deep and the two factions of Creeks remained apart for years.
Chickasaw Removal

- Chickasaw located in northern Mississippi
- Chickasaw, very successful traders, were encouraged by Gov’t to purchase supplies on credit knowing they would not be able to pay – land would be taken as payment of debt
- 1818 treaty reduced their lands in Mississippi and the Treaty of Pontotoc Creek (1836) ceded the remainder
- Suitable land could not be found for the Chickasaw, so they agreed to purchase lands from the Choctaw (Treaty of Doaksville 1837)
- This was the smoothest removal with most able to take their personal property and limited loss of life in comparison to other tribes
- By 1838, about 5,000 Chickasaw in Indian Territory
Cherokee Removal

- One group of Cherokees known as “The Old Settlers or The Western Cherokees” had been removed to Arkansas because of their involvement with the French during the French/Indian War during the mid-1700’s
- By late 1820’s, Cherokees living in Georgia had become very prosperous because they had assimilated into white man’s culture
- Cherokee capital, New Echota, was a bustling town and Cherokees had a written constitution patterned after U.S. constitution
- Cherokee children were attending eastern colleges
- 1828: Georgia refused to recognize the Cherokee borders and sovereignty of the Cherokee nation and about that time gold was discovered on Cherokee lands
- State of Georgia passed law saying in was illegal for any Cherokee to look for or possess gold even if it was on their own land
- Cherokees, very educated in white man’s law, appealed to the Supreme Court for help since state of Georgia was violating federal treaty
Cherokee Removal

- Though they won their Supreme Court case *Worcester v. Georgia*, the President refused to enforce the law.
- State of Georgia passed a law forcing all whites on Cherokee lands to sign *Oath of Allegiance* to state of Georgia – if they did not sign – they would be put in jail (this would stop any help offered to Cherokees by whites).
- *Samuel Worcester, Elizur Butler*, and other missionaries were imprisoned for refusal to sign oath of allegiance.
- A lottery was held to offer the land to white settlers.
- One group of Cherokee, led by Major Ridge, signed the *Treaty of New Echota (1835)* and took money in exchange for land and began move west (This band of Cherokees, about 2,000 members, were referred to as “Treaty Party”) Removal was voluntary and went well.
- Chief John Ross refused to sign the treaty and warned anyone signing the treaty they were in violation of the “Blood Law”.
- Chief John Ross and most Cherokees, who chose to stay and fight for their land, were subjected to a lot of abuse.
- 1838, Troops given orders to “round up” Cherokees and move them west.
Cherokee Removal

- Cherokees were rounded up and held in stockades until it was determined most had been captured.
- A few were able to escape to the mountains and avoided the removal trip and were later referred to as the “Eastern Band of Cherokees”.
- Those who were forced to be removed (referred to as “Ross Party”) were subjected to bad weather and disease which claimed about 4,000 Cherokee lives in this “Trail of Tears”.
- After all 3 bands of Cherokees were in Indian Territory, a power struggle ensued for control of the tribe.
- 1839: Major Ridge, John Ridge, Elias Boudinot, and other leaders were assassinated for violating the blood law.
- To stop the violence among the 3 factions (Old Settlers, Treaty Party, Ross Party) the Cherokee adopted what was called an “Act of Union” and became one nation, forgiving each other and adopted a written constitution in 1840.
Seminole Removal

- Seminole, once a part of the Creek nation, moved to Florida and were the last tribe removed.
- Many runaway slaves were living with the Seminole which angered slave owners.
- Raids by both sides very common for many years.
- Treaty of Moultrie Creek (1823) moved Seminole to central Florida swampland but raids continued.
- **1832 Treaty of Payne’s Landing** called for Seminole to move on to Creek lands in Indian Territory – for most Seminole that was not acceptable.
- By 1836, continued pressure caused some Seminole to move peacefully to Indian Territory.
- Osceola and his followers resisted and continued to fight.
- Second Seminole War was fought from 1835-1842.
- 3,000 Seminoles were removed at a cost of $20 million and 1,500 soldiers lost their life causing this to be the most expensive removal of all of the tribes.
Other Removals

- As more tribes arrived in the Oklahoma area, space for them became more scarce.
- Seneca, Euchee, Cayuga, and Kickapoo were among those joining existing tribes.
- If possible, they joined or moved near to tribes that were of similar background.
- The Kickapoo eventually moved to Mexico.
The Stokes Commission

- As tribes were moved to Indian Territory problems between tribes over property boundaries became a huge problem and fighting among tribes was an issue that had to be dealt with.
- **Federal Indian Commission (1832)** created to work out problems related to removal and boundaries.
- Montfort Stokes was first chairman and worked hard for the Indian tribes helping them to adapt to their new territory (Commission became known as the Stokes Commission).
- Stokes who grew fond of the territory and the Indians, decided to remain in Indian Territory the rest of his life.
- Population grew as tribes adapted to the environment.
- Washington Irving, Charles Latrobe, and Count Albert-Alexandre de Pourtales accompanied the Commission and wrote popular accounts of their travels to the region.