

Broken Treaties

To help reduce tension and conflicts between Indians and settlers, Europeans negotiated and signed treaties with the tribes who lived in the Americas. The idea was to keep the two factions apart so there would be less conflict. What happened was the land belonging to Indians slowly disappeared with the Indians pushed farther and farther west.

Before 1770, the land which makes up Tennessee today belonged to American Indian tribes, primarily the Cherokee and the Chickasaw. This was confirmed in 1763 by a proclamation by British King George III restricting white settlement west of the Appalachian Mountains

Tennessee was west of the line. The first map, 1770, shows most of the state in orange or belonging to Indians. The land ceded by the Indians in each treaty is shown as green. In the 1775 map, former treaty land, now owned by settlers is colored blue.

By going through the maps one-by-one, you can see how the Indian land shrunk with each treaty and settler land increased. By the last treaty in 1835, most of Tennessee is now colored blue, belonging to the settlers.

1770 **Treaty of Lochabar** that ceded land north and east of a line running through Long Island on the Holston River (now Kingsport). In 1771, the Cherokees agreed to modify the line allowing area around the Holston, where settlers already lived, to be a legal settlement area.

1775 **Treaty of Sycamore Shoals** (around Elizabethton) gave land in central Kentucky and north central Tennessee to the Transylvania Land Company for 10,000 British pounds worth of trading goods. At the same meeting, areas around Watauga and Nolichucky were transferred to the white settlers. This treaty was illegal under British law, but still influential.

1777 **Treaty of Long Island of Holston** transferred most of upper East Tennessee to settlers.

1785 **Treaty of New Hopewell** officially ended fighting between the Cherokees, who had fought with the British during the Revolutionary War, and the United States government. The Cherokees also gave up land south of the Cumberland River in return for protection of other tribal lands.

1791 **Treaty of Holston** signed in Knoxville. Cherokees gave up all claims to area east of the Clinch River and north of a line drawn through Kingston to the North Carolina border.

1798 **First Treaty of Tellico** granted land to settlers between the Clinch River and the Cumberland Plateau and between the Tennessee and Little Tennessee rivers.

1805 **Third Treaty of Tellico & Chickasaw Cession** gave all land north of the Duck River all the way east to the Tennessee River. This included all of the Cumberland Plateau. It also transferred land at Kingston to be the state capital. The legislature met here for one day only in 1807 to fulfill the state's obligation.

1806 **Treaty of Washington** with the Cherokees and a treaty with the Creeks for land south of the Duck River to the southern border of the state. The Creeks received \$14,000 while

the Cherokees received \$10,000, a gristmill, a cotton gin, and a \$100 yearly payment to Chief Black Fox.

1817 **Jackson and McMinn Treaty** transferred lands along the Sequatchie River to white control in return for lands in Arkansas.

1818 **Jackson Purchase**, negotiated by Andrew Jackson and Isaac Shelby, paid the Chickasaws \$300,000, to be paid over 20 years, for 10,700 square miles of land between the Mississippi River and the Tennessee River (West Tennessee).

1819 **Calhoun Treaty** purchased land between the Little Tennessee and the Hiwassee Rivers from the Cherokees. After this treaty, the only area left in the state that belonged to the Cherokees was the southeastern corner of the state that now makes up Monroe, Polk, and Bradley and Hamilton counties.

1835 **Treaty of New Echota** signed by Cherokee leaders who represented only 10 percent of the tribe. It gave up all the Cherokee lands in Tennessee in exchange for land in Oklahoma. The treaty gave a two-year time limit for the Cherokees to move. The resistance to this move by the rest of the Cherokees led by John Ross resulted in the forced removal of Cherokees from Tennessee, called the Trail of Tears.