



## WHAT WAS THE CHEROKEE TRAIL OF TEARS?

in a few words?

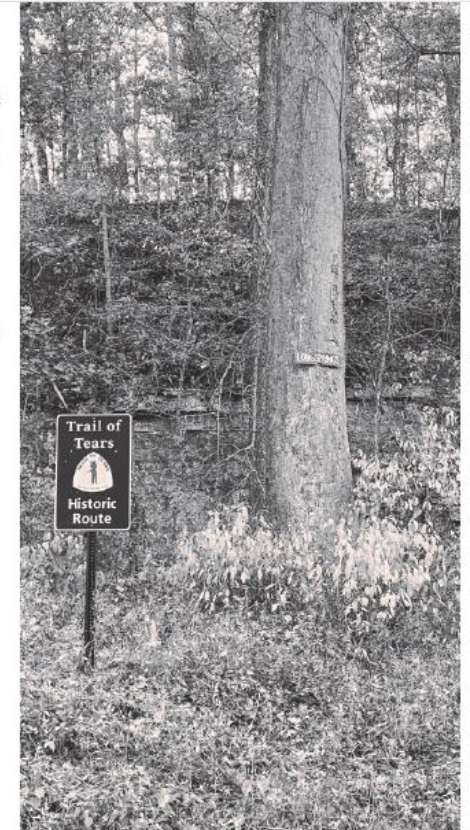
### ...It was Ethnic Cleansing

In 1835 representatives from the U.S. Government made a deal with a small, unelected segment of the Cherokee in the Southeastern United States. This deal said that for \$5,000,000 the Cherokee people would give up 7 million acres of sacred and ancestral lands in the Southeast for lands in Oklahoma. When the rest of the Cherokee heard about the deal they were horrified and pointed out that it hadn't gone through the proper channels to count as a legitimate agreement.

Cherokee leaders petitioned, sued, and made arguments to Congress for 3 years, trying to overturn the Treaty to no avail. The U.S. Government essentially shrugged. Then, in 1838, while Cherokee leadership was still trying to prevent this from happening, the U.S. Government sent troops to start rounding up the Cherokee (usually at night, so they wouldn't run) then placed them into detention camps.

They were held from May till the beginning of October, when the majority of the Cherokee people, under the leadership of their own leaders--who had begged the U.S. officials to be allowed to lead their own efforts--rightfully assuming they'd take more care with their people--were forced to leave their homelands forever.

After 800+ miles of walking, more than 4 in 10 Cherokee who had started life off in Cherokee Nation earlier in the year, had died (most of these were young children and older folks). At least 11 of the 13 overland detachments came through Steelville, as they walked West. Some of those who died, did so while in our area.



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