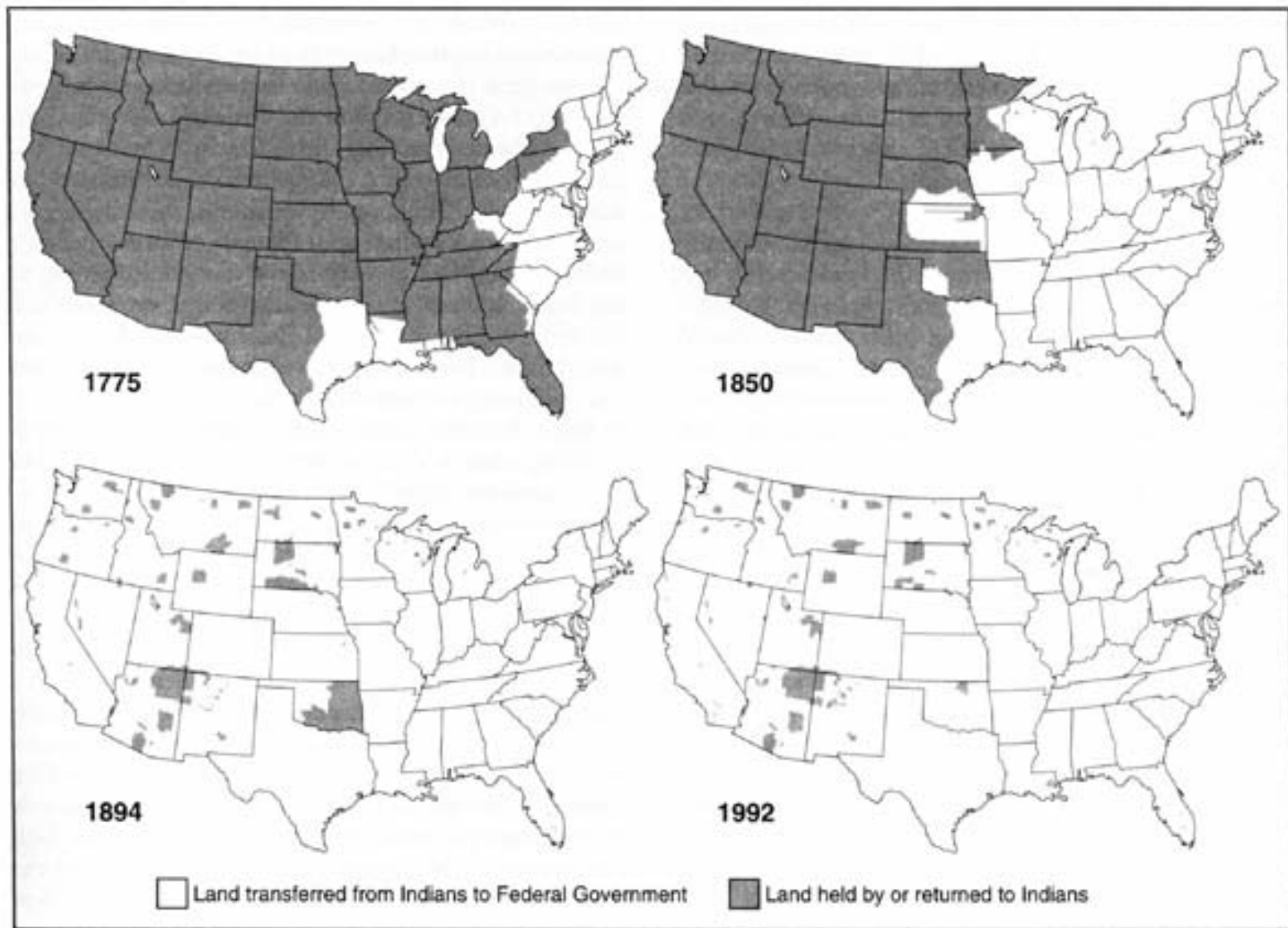


# The Trail of Tears

## The Exodus of the Cherokee to the West

In 1830 Andrew Jackson had forced the Indian Removal Act through Congress and then in 1835 Congress ratified the fraudulent Treaty of New Echota. One of the results of these two events was **"The Ethnic Cleansing of Georgia."** The Cherokee peacefully resisted with legal maneuvers all the way to the US Supreme Court. However, President Jackson refused to enforce the decision favorable to the Cherokee. Only after the Cherokee had been gathered up by the US Army and placed in "concentration camps" did Principal Chief John Ross accept responsibility for the removal to Indian Territory.

# The exodus of the Cherokee to the West is divided into two categories-- the Voluntary and the Forced removals.



## **Voluntary Removal**

In 1792, the first Cherokee under the leadership of Chief Bowl, moved to the Mouth of the St. Francis River, in what is now Arkansas. In 1809, Tahlontuskee arrived in the new Louisiana Purchase with 1130 Cherokee and settled in west central Arkansas on the North Bank of the Arkansas River. Nine years later, John Jolly, a relative arrived with 17 boats, to join the settlements. In 1811-12, when the New Madrid Earthquake occurred (8 on the Richter Scale), Bowl left the mouth of the St Francis River and settled near Ola, on the south bank of The Arkansas River. In 1818, when east and West boundaries of the Cherokee lands between the Arkansas and White Rivers were surveyed, Bowl was told he Must abandon the rich farmland the Cherokee had cleared and move across to the North side of the Arkansas River.

## **Voluntary Removal (continued)**

Bowl for the second time took his band of Cherokee and moved to Spanish Territory by migrating to Texas. Pressure began to develop to get the Cherokee, now assigned to this large area of land between the Arkansas and the White Rivers, to move further west. Finally, in 1828, an agreement was reached whereby the Arkansas Cherokee, known as the "Old Settlers", would move further west to what would become known as "Indian Territory." In 1836, when Arkansas became a state, there were about 6,000 Cherokee living in Indian Territory who had moved west voluntarily, while some 17,000 still resisted moving west and remained in the East.

## **Forced Removal**

US Congress ratified the Treaty of New Echota in 1835 and the forced removal of the Cherokee remaining in the East began. For three years the Cherokee peacefully resisted removal by appealing to public sentiment and waging the first legal battle between an Indian Tribe and the U.S. Government. After taking the case to the US Supreme Court and winning, President Jackson refused to enforce the decision with the statement, "that's John Marshall's decision; now let's see him enforce it." Their farms were confiscated by the State of Georgia and issued to whites by Lottery. The Cherokee were "rounded up" and driven into "concentration camps." In an effort to avoid unnecessary hardship and suffering, Principal Chief John Ross took the responsibility for removal. Leaders were appointed to supervisory positions and the Cherokee were divided into groups and pushed West.

# Every picture tells a story!

View the following two pictures of the Trail of Tears and answer the following questions

- Which of the following pictures best depicts the actual events Trail of Tears?
- Which version do you think the U.S. Government used to tell the American people about the Indian Removal Acts?



# Picture 1



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Painting by Robert Lindneux. Voolaroc Museum, Bartlesville, Oklahoma.

## Picture 2



R. Michelson Galleries

"The Trail of Tears"

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