

"The question now must be fairly met -- the policy of removal, except under peculiar circumstances, must necessarily be abandoned, and the only alternatives left are to civilize or exterminate them [the Indians]. We must adopt one or the other."

The first contingent of what is called "The Five Civilized Tribes" moved to the west during 1808. This was a Cherokee group of bands that was given the name "Chickamaugas".

This was during the administration of Thomas Jefferson and land that was assigned to the band was in Arkansas, with an understanding that they would have a hunting "outlet" to the west. The Chickamaugas had actually been preceded by a band led by the Bowl, a minor chief. Jefferson's quid-pro-quo for the move, and grant of territory, was a land swap of Cherokee eastern lands for a large tract of land on the White River - in what was then the Missouri Territory, now the State of Arkansas. This was incorporated into an 1817 Treaty with the Cherokees. A major Treaty problem was with the Arkansas land - it was occupied by the Osage Nation.

After the Cherokee-Osage wars the Chickamaugas, known then as the "Western Cherokees" met with the U.S. government in Washington and a new 1828 Treaty was drawn up in which the Arkansas lands were exchanged for seven million acres of land in what is now northeastern Oklahoma, except for part of Ottawa County. Included in the treaty were the "Cherokee Outlet" lands which extended west to the territorial border of the United States. This was the "hunting outlet". The language as to the Cherokee lands in Oklahoma was agreed to be carried over into future treaties with the main Cherokee Nation. The Western group completed their move to Oklahoma by the end of 1829. Meanwhile, back in the east the State of Georgia, aided and abetted by the White House, prepared to move all of the Indians to the "Indian Territory". With disregard for the Supreme Court dicta the conspiracy went ahead. Concerned citizens of the "City of Brotherly Love": Philadelphia offered a resolution to the National Congress:

" At this time [1838] when the liberties of a noble but unfortunate race are about to be closed down by the cupidity of an aviaricious people: when a stain is about to be cast upon our National Escutcheon which the tears and regrets of after ages will never be able to remove, it becomes the duty of all the friends of humanity to raise their voices against the measures and the men who would thus entail disgrace upon this country and ruin upon its original inhabitants."

In the Sovereign State of Oklahoma, in the "after ages", at least 150 years later, these words ring as true as the bell that sits at Independence Hall in that self-same city of Philadelphia!