

The agreement, nonetheless, was approved on March 3, 1891, and each Cheyenne and Arapaho on the rolls was allotted one hundred and sixty acres of land which was to remain in trust for twenty-five years. The surplus lands were purchased by the federal government for one and one half million dollars. One million of this sum was deposited in the United States Treasury to bear five per cent interest, and the remainder was distributed among these Indians on a per capita basis in two separate payments.²³

Even while the allotting process was taking place, the press of Oklahoma Territory demanded that the allotting agents reserve some of the more fertile agricultural land for White occupation.²⁴ Pressure was applied to speed up the allotting of lands so that the Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation could be thrown open to settlement.²⁵ Indian allotments were not selected with reference to their value for agricultural purposes.²⁶ Some Indians preferred to take their allotments at or near the sites of their old tribal camps, and thus were assigned lands which could not be adapted to agriculture. Few of the Indians locating in the western portion of the reservation possessed lands which could support an Indian family by agricultural pursuits. Those Indians, however, residing in the more fertile eastern portion of the reservation still retained enough land to support a family unit if the land was fully utilized.

With the destruction of the institution of communal property, an integral factor in the Indians' culture, and the taking of land in severalty, a critical point in the history of the tribes was reached. By legislative enactment and "mutual agreement" the Indian was forced to assume one of the basic institutions of western civilization—that of private property. This institution demands, however, certain conditions if it is to operate for the benefit of the individual concerned. First, the property owner must have the ability to protect the rights inherent in the possession of private property. Second, he must have the desire and needed knowledge to profit by the ownership of his property. Third, he must either enjoy sufficient cultural similarity to comprehend and attain the ultimate objectives of the surrounding community or he must enjoy a toleration