
Pushmataha, Warrior and Statesman

Pushmataha, one of the greatest chiefs of the Choctaws, was born about 1764. As a boy he was quiet, but his constant hard work brought him success as a hunter. Often Choctaw hunting parties crossed the Mississippi to hunt bear and deer on the western side. During one of these trips, Caddo Indians attacked, and Pushmataha was separated from the other Choctaw hunters. He pushed on to the south, finally coming to the Spanish settlements on the Red River.

He stayed with the Spanish for several years. Working as a guide and scout, he explored much of Oklahoma and Northern Texas. When he returned to the Choctaws around 1800, he organized and led several war parties against the Caddoes and Osages, until in 1805 they made peace.

By this time, Pushmataha was a respected leader. He could speak four languages: Choctaw, Spanish, French, and English. He was chosen chief of a tribal district and became a leader in dealings with the United States. He fought with United States troops against the Creeks and later the British. For his leadership, the federal government made him a brigadier general.

After the War of 1812, Pushmataha continued his allegiance to the United States while he tried to get a fair treaty. At Doak's Stand in 1820, his knowledge of the West served the Choctaws well. Andrew Jackson planned to give the Choctaws land in what is now Southern Oklahoma. The western boundary was to run south from the headwaters of the Canadian River to the Red. Pushmataha pointed out that such a line would never meet the Red River but would go off into Mexico. The line was changed.

On Christmas Eve, 1824, after leading a delegation of Choctaw leaders to Washington, D.C., to settle further land disputes, Pushmataha died. He was buried there with full military honors. His name lives on as the name of a county in Southern Oklahoma, where many of his people still live.

Similarly, Levi Colbert led a party of Chickasaw leaders in 1826 to look at the Western land the Americans wanted the Chickasaws to settle on. He reported:

They have represented it as a country suited to the convenience of Indians and one in which all the wants and necessities of life could easily be secured. But this we doubt. The country in which we now live is one that pleases us.

Pushmataha in his general's uniform.



From 1800 on, knowing the United States in war, the Choctaws consciously tried to adopt the government like theirs, but they would respect the Choctaw culture. They became Christians, built a national government. But they wanted to make in their culture changes and leaders, divisions wh

The Politics of Removal

By the 1820s, the lands of the Choctaws were entirely surrounded by white settlements. There was a real push to remove the Choctaws from the Mississippi at all. It came

In Georgia the Cherokee people had a remarkable acculturation. They had developed a written alphabet and changed their form of government after the United States. But when the Cherokee people realized that the Cherokee people were the new American culture, they stayed. Yet white Georgians

Therefore, in 1827, Georgia extended state rule over the Cherokee lands. It would tribal courts and disputes must be settled in the same time Cherokeees were appearing in court!

The Cherokeees protest to the United States Supreme Court. Citizens of the United States in the Southwest, wanted the President Andrew Jackson to discontinue association with Indians with the idea of removing them. Congress passed the Indian