



Military Service during the Cherokee Disturbances, 1836–1839

The New Echota Treaty of May 1836 required the Cherokee Indians to leave their land in Alabama and Georgia. If they would not leave voluntarily, the military would remove them by force. In 1838 the War Department issued orders for General Winfield Scott to remove the remaining 2,000 Cherokees to the Indian Territory (Oklahoma). This removal is often referred to as the “Trail of Tears.” The following microfilm publications contain information documenting the service of the soldiers and officers who fought during the Cherokee disturbances and participated in the removal between 1836 and 1839.

Compiled Military Service Records (CMSRs)

In the 1890s, the Department of War used numerous sources, such as muster rolls, descriptive rolls, and pay rolls to create compiled military service records. These records generally show when a soldier joined a unit and if he was present when the unit was mustered.

___M256, *Index to Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Soldiers Who Served During the Cherokee Disturbances and Removal in Organizations from the State of North Carolina*. 1 roll. DP. Arranged alphabetically by the soldier’s surname.

___M907, *Index to Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Soldiers Who Served During the Cherokee Disturbances and Removal in Organizations from the State of Georgia*. 1 roll. DP. Arranged alphabetically by the soldier’s surname.

___M243, *Index to Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Soldiers Who Served During the Cherokee Removal in Organizations from the State of Alabama*. 1 roll. DP. Arranged alphabetically by the soldier’s surname.

___M908, *Index to Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Soldiers Who Served During the Cherokee Disturbances and Removal in Organizations from the State of Tennessee and the Field and Staff of the Army of the Cherokee Nation*. 2 rolls. DP. Arranged alphabetically by the soldier’s surname.

Service in the Regular Army

For more information, see the following reference reports:

- *Officers in the Regular Army, 1789–1916*
- *Enlisted Service in the Regular Army, 1789–1914*

Pension Records

A veteran’s pension file can include his rank, place of residence, age or date of birth, and time of service. A widow’s application can also include her place of residence, her maiden name, the date and place of marriage, the date and place of her husband’s death, and the names of children under 16. A child’s or heir’s file contains information about both the veteran and the widow, as well as the child’s place of residence, date of birth, and the date and place of the widow’s death.

___T316, *Old War Index to Pension Files, 1815–1926*. 7 rolls. Arranged alphabetically by the claimant's surname. This series indexes claims based on disability or death for primarily regular army, navy, and marine corps service. The cards show the name of veteran; the name and type of dependent, if any; unit; application numbers, certificate numbers and in some cases file numbers; and the state from which the claim was made.

___T318, *Index to Indian War Pension Files, 1892–1926*. 12 rolls. Arranged alphabetically. This card index relates to service in the Indian campaigns, 1817–1898. It gives the name of the veteran, name and type of dependent, service dates, application numbers, certificate numbers for approved claims, and the state from were the claim was made.

___M1784, *Index to Pension Application Files of Remarried Widows Based on Service in the War of 1812, Indian Wars, Mexican War, and Regular Army before 1861*. 1 roll. DP. Arranged alphabetically by the widow's surname. Widows could draw pensions for the service of two or more soldiers.

For more information, see the following reference reports:

- *Bounty-Land Warrants for Military Service, 1775–1855*
- *Pensions for Service in the Regular Army, 1775–1865*

Records of Fort Gibson

Fort Gibson served as the primary military staging area in the west during the Cherokee emigration. The forces in this post helped shield the Cherokees from the hostile Osage tribe during their trek to the Indian Territory, administered supplies, and dealt with rivalries among the Cherokees.

___M1466, *Headquarters Records of Fort Gibson, Indian Territory, 1830–1857*. 6 rolls. DP. See roll 2 for letters sent from Fort Gibson during the Cherokee disturbances.

___M617, *Returns from U.S. Military Posts, 1800–1916*. 1,550 Rolls. DP. Arranged by post in two alphabetical subseries. Post returns usually show the units stationed at the post and their strength. They give the names and duties of officers, the number of officers present and absent, and a record of events. For returns from Ft. Gibson, see rolls 404 and 405.

For more information, see the following reference report: *Records Relating to the Cherokee Removal, 1836–1839*.

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