

Cherokee Treaty Party Moves West



The Bell-Deas Overland Journey, 1838–1839

*By Wayne Dell Gibson**

In late August, 1838, the Cherokee Nation, having capitulated to the wills of both President Andrew Jackson and the state of Georgia, was preparing for a westward trek to what is now eastern Oklahoma. Major General Winfield Scott had been placed in charge of the relocation operation. The general's aides estimated that about 12,000 of the tribe were assembled for removal; the Cherokees' principal chief, John Ross, counted nearly 13,000.¹ The tribe was formed into detachments for the journey. Each de-

tachment, with one exception, was led and conducted by men of the Ross Party. On August 28, 1838, the first of the detachments began its forced trek west.² Twelve wagon trains would follow in stages. One detachment, made up principally of those endorsing the treaty requiring tribal relocation, left the Cherokee Agency East on October 11, 1838. John Adair Bell's detachment was fifth in the line of departure.³

In 1835, more than one-fourth of the Cherokee people had already relocated to lands west of the Mississippi.⁴ The nearly 16,000 Cherokees who remained occupied lands in northern Georgia (8,946), southern Tennessee (2,528), northern Alabama (1,418), and western North Carolina (3,646).⁵ For the most part, those who remained in the eastern nation were resolutely opposed to relocation. The election of Andrew Jackson in 1828, the United States Indian removal policy of 1830, and Jackson's capacious cooperation with Georgia, fated the eastern tribes' removal. The Compact of 1802 called for the United States to extinguish the titles to all Indian land in Georgia.⁶ Jackson and Georgia used it to effectuate the western relocation of the Cherokees from Georgia. Even though the Cherokees had written and adopted a constitution in 1827, formed a system of courts, established an internal policing system, won an important Supreme Court case, and begun to publish a bilingual newspaper, the *Cherokee Phoenix*, they were marked for relocation.⁷ The promising gold deposits discovered on the Cherokee lands in 1828 whetted Georgia's avaricious appetite.⁸

At the beginning of the removal controversy, the Cherokee Nation East was united in its opposition to relocation. Principal Chief John Ross would not indulge any remark that might lead to the tribe's consideration of removal. He chose to lead by following the resolution of the dominant number of fullbloods to stay on their ancestral lands.⁹ An educated, acculturated minority of the people came to believe that Cherokee survival depended upon their relocation in the West. They would have the nation negotiate the best arrangement possible and relocate, thereby saving the tribe.¹⁰ The opposition, ably led by Ross, favored ceding a portion of their lands and allowing the people to become citizens and residents of the respective states where they then lived.¹¹ Georgia and Alabama, and later Tennessee, extended their states boundaries to encompass the Cherokee lands, thereby nullifying the young nation's laws and extending their own.¹²

To seek remedy, Ross and his supporters repeatedly journeyed to Washington. In 1835 the New England-educated intellectuals and



Cherokee Principal Chief John Ross obtained special provisions for emigration that stood at the center of the controversy between the factions led by Ross and John Adair Bell (Courtesy Oklahoma Historical Society, No. 20516.3.23).

their followers decided they must act alone and resolutely to save their people.¹³ The leading principals in the relocation treaty movement were John Walker, Jr., Major Ridge, his son John Ridge, and Elias Boudinot.¹⁴ Less prominent supporters were the brothers John A. and Samuel Bell, James and Ezekiel Starr, Stand and David Watie (brothers of Elias Boudinot), and Archilla Smith, George Chambers, and John Gunter. They had attempted to execute a treaty through the legitimate channels, but found their dissenting voices were not tolerated. Walker was shot from ambush, the Council impeached the Ridges for their advocacy of relocation, and Boudinot, the editor of *The Cherokee Phoenix*, was asked to resign because he wanted to air the removal question in a public forum.¹⁵ After many futile attempts to win the support of their recognized leaders, the relocation treaty advocates united in their own committee. This schismatic group, which became known as the Treaty Party, convened to achieve an agreement they believed would insure their tribe's survival. They signed a treaty at New Echota, Georgia, on December 29, 1835. The United States Senate ratified it on May 28, 1836.¹⁶ The treaty's terms provided the Cherokees two years to relocate voluntarily at the expense of the United States government to lands in the west already occupied by more than 5,000 of their brothers.

Cherokees remaining in the east after May 29, 1838, would be subject to forced expatriation. However, Ross counseled his people to wait and not enroll for removal. He told them he would somehow overturn the miscarriage of justice.¹⁷ When the day for the removal arrived, May 29, 1838, there were still more than 12,000 Cherokees living on lands they no longer possessed. On the appointed day, Gen. Winfield Scott ordered his command to gather the Cherokees and place them in holding pens. There they would wait until collected for transport, while their property was plundered and ravaged.¹⁸ Chief Ross, who was in Washington vainly striving to nullify the Treaty of New Echota, won one major governmental concession—\$1,047,067 for supplemental removal costs and the right for his followers to remove themselves. In an opinion drawn for the secretary of war, Attorney General Felix Grundy wrote:

There was a moral necessity, a high overruling policy, which demanded, that a removal of the Indians should be effected, if practicable without bloodshed or the destruction of those, who, however misguided, however great their errors, are entitled to the pastoral [pastoral?] care of the general government. This object could be accomplished, and as was believed could *only* be accomplished by the employment of John Ross, one of the Cherokee Chiefs as removing agent—A contract was accordingly made with him—and this of course cancelled all preceding contracts. . . .

I have examined the treaty with the Cherokees, of the 29th December 1835, the 15th article of which is as follows,—

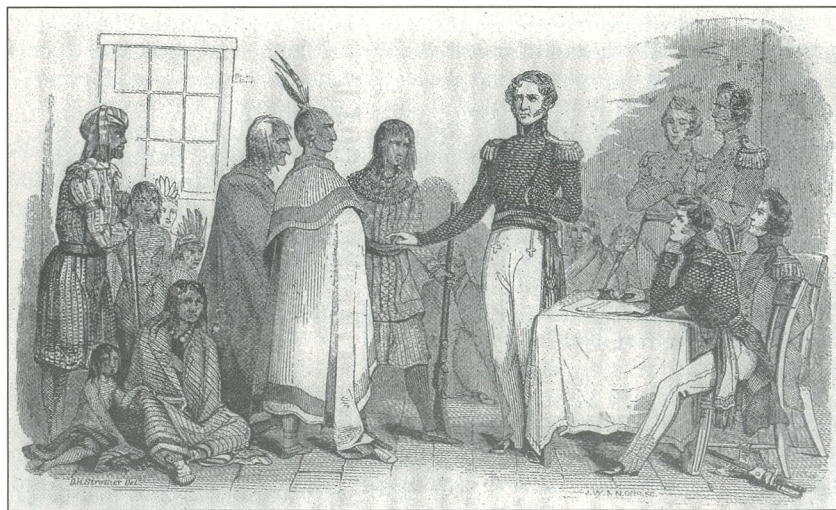
"It is expressly understood and agreed between the parties to this treaty, that after deducting the amount which shall be actually expended for the payment for improvements, ferries, claims for spoiliations, removal, subsistence, and debts, and claims upon the Cherokee nation, and for the additional quantity of lands and goods for the poorer class of Cherokees, and the several sums to be invested for the general national funds, provided for in the several articles of this treaty; the balance, whatever the same may be, shall be equally divided between all the people belonging to the Cherokee nation East," &c. The 3rd supplemental article of the treaty gives the Cherokees \$600,000, "to include the expense of their removal, and all claims of every nature and description, not herein otherwise provided for," &c. The 2nd section of the act of 12th June 1838 adds the further sum of \$1,047,067, for the "same purpose as the 3rd supplementary article above cited with the further object of subsisting them for one year after their removal west."¹⁹

The roundup of the tribe began promptly in Georgia. In June nearly 3,000 of the people were loaded into boats to begin the trip west. They formed three detachments, each led by a military officer. Lt. Edward Deas, the first to leave, completed the removal without

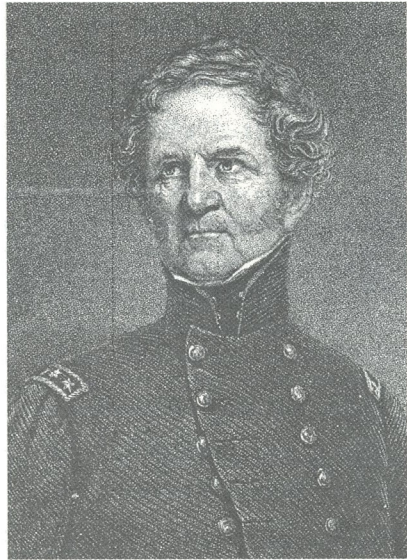
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fatalities; the detachments led by Lieutenant Whitely and Captain Drane were not as successful. Death claimed 70 of Whitely's group and 146 of Drane's. As a consequence of the unusually severe drought of 1838 and these disasters, further removal by water was impossible. Removal in keelboats, towed by steamboats, promised the safest mode of transport. However, the Cherokees were terribly afraid of this manner of travel. More than 600 ran away in the first three expeditions, either to escape or in fear of the water. "Actual force was necessary to get the emigrating parties from the camp to the boats, the Indians manifesting the greatest abhorrence to be taken by water." "The [Cherokee] mountaineers were still wild men, but little on this side of their primordial condition."²⁰ On July 23, 1838, Ross returned to his nation with orders for General Scott. When Scott perceived the content of his orders, his relief must have been enormous.²¹ He would not have to execute the final phase of the removal. The secretary of war allowed him to turn the whole removal process over to Ross.²² To insure Ross's cooperation, the government gave him control of more than \$1 million in additional funds to be used for his people's removal as well as permission to administer their removal.²³ The orders did not mention removal conditions for the Treaty Party.

The Treaty Party, of which about 600 were still in Tennessee awaiting emigration, was principally represented by John Adair Bell.²⁴ The committee established under the Treaty of New Echota received the news of Ross's ascension to the superintendency of



*General Winfield Scott (right) had the unhappy assignment of bringing in the Cherokees (opposite) and turning them over to the removal agent for emigration. For most of the Cherokees, the journey to the West was fraught with misery and death, evident in "Trail of Tears," a 1957 painting by Brummett Echohawk in the collections of the Gilcrease Museum (p. 314) (Taken from Edward D. Mansfield, *The Life of General Winfield Scott* [New York: A. S. Barnes and Company, 1846], right and opposite; Brummett Echohawk painting, p. 314, used with permission of Brummett Echohawk and Gilcrease Museum).*



Indian removal with some apprehension.²⁵ The Treaty Party was very much opposed to living under what they considered the tyranny of Ross and his followers. They also feared that the lavish expenditure allowance granted Ross for removal would significantly deplete the per capita distribution of surplus moneys. Eventually, John Adair Bell would conduct about 660 of the émigrés to the Cherokee Nation West.

On August 10, 1838, the committee members sent General Scott a message. They believed they were entitled to treatment equal that awarded Ross's group:

[W]e have made up a detachment consisting of about two thousand persons, most of whom are capable of removing themselves, and desire to do so, in preference to removing under the direction of Mr. Ross. . . . [Y]et we have supposed from your promise, that we should be placed up on the same footing with Mr. Ross and his friends, that you would pay over to us the money and take our receipts in the same manner you did Mr. Ross', upon our giving sufficient security for the faithful disbursement of the money so paid. We regret to learn that this cannot be done. . . . Having made that treaty as we supposed for the good of the people, and at the peril of our lives, we are resolved to stand or fall with it, and shall not complain, be the consequences that they may. The faith of the Government, as you are aware, stands pledged to protect and defend us. We shall soon see how far it extends. Still, however, we had not supposed that the act of Congress making the additional

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appropriation of *one million of dollars*, intended it for the *special* benefits of Mr. Ross and his friends. We had supposed that treaty men, as well as anti treaty men were to participate equally in its benefits, by adhering to the provisions of the treaty.²⁶

On August 11, 1838, General Scott replied:

The families so excepted [not anti treaty] . . . are invited to organize themselves at once into parties for emigration, and to set out by land any time after the 20th instant, and before the 20th October ensuing, or to wait until the end of that time and take the chance of a rise in the river and steamboats. And in as much as the twenty dollars each to the individuals removing themselves, allowed by the treaty, is not enough to defray all expenses by land, each party shall be placed on a footing of perfect equality with the parties of Mr. John Ross and his associates, in respect to the number of *per diem* of wagons for every twenty souls; the choice and pay of conductors, physicians, wagon masters, and drivers, as also in respect to the goodness of the rations required on the road . . . and an officer of the army will be sent with each party with funds for all necessary disbursements.²⁷

Scott explained the modification that required an army officer to accompany Bell's Treaty Party contingent and not those of Ross:

I considered [an accompanying army officer] necessary as the receipts for advances, given by the committee, or their leaders of this detachment, might not be sufficient vouchers to charge the money advances against the appropriations made for the emigration.²⁸

When Bell's committee on August 20, 1838, sought to modify what it believed was an exorbitant subsistence allowance for carrying out the emigration, Scott said:

[U]nder the arrangement with me by the delegation (Mr. J. Ross and his associates) for carrying on the emigration, the committee (of which Mr. J. A. Bell is chairman) being still desirous of obliterating party distinctions, offered, through me to remove in a body under that arrangement, if the delegation, with my sanction would advance them at the rate of \$40 each (instead of the \$66 of the estimate) in full of all expenses on the road. This overture, not withstanding the expectation to the contrary, given to me by Mr. J. Ross and communicated to Mr. Bell was finally rejected by the delegation.²⁹

After the Ross delegation's rejection of their offer to remove for forty dollars per capita, John A. Bell, Ellis Harlin, and eight others of the committee presented on August 20, 1838, a vehement protest to Scott.³⁰ They expressed four major points of contention: (1) The \$400,000 Ross contract for subsistence and forage was not put out to bid; (2) The Ross ration rate for persons and horses was too high; (3) There were already persons in Tennessee ready to supply the

emigrants; and (4) The nation's surplus per capita return would be diminished by \$100,000 because of the high allowance for rations.³¹ They reminded Scott that "monies [were] provided by the treaty of new Echota and a recent act of Congress in furtherance of the treaty . . . the surplus of which monies, after many deductions, is to be distributed per capita."³²

Winfield Scott conveyed the Bell committee's concerns to John Ross.³³ Ross's reply, received on August 25, 1838, read in part, "The persons who signed the *protest* presented to you, as on 'behalf of themselves and their whole Nation,' are not recognized by our people. They do, in no respect, represent their views, nor consult their interests, and their protest can only be considered as the utterance of the dissatisfaction of disappointed men."³⁴

Scott was cautious. He feared upsetting Ross, but it was clear to him that Washington wanted to expedite the removal. He wrote:

The amount of such savings or profits, either under the general estimate or the contract that you have entered into, depend however, on so many items and contingencies as to render very doubtful any calculations which can be made at this place and time. I profess myself wholly incapable of coming to any satisfactory conclusions on the very different results which (varying from \$30,000 to \$150,000) have been laid before me. In this state of uncertainty, and not questioning the good faith of the parties to the contract, whatever error of judgment may have been committed by one of them, and being moreover extremely unwilling to delay the emigration now nearly ready to commence under your immediate direction, I withdraw, on the part of the U. States, the objections intimated in my letter of the 22nd instant to the contract in question.³⁵

Scott tried to mollify the "hostile feelings" the parties had for each other and to effect reconciliation. He wrote, "[S]uccess would have attended my efforts . . . if the liberal conduct of the treaty party had been reciprocated by their opponents."³⁶ He also voiced his concern for the future safety of the members of the Treaty Party:

The rejection, by the delegation of the two propositions made by the Committee . . . has alarmed me for the safety of the leading friends of the treaty already in the Cherokee country west, or who are about to emigrate thither. . . . I have seen nothing in the conduct of the Ross party to induce a belief that individuals will be prevented from taking (if indeed, not stimulated to take) *off* the signers and principal supporters of the treaty. I have already stated to the delegation, in pretty strong terms, this apprehension, together with the probable consequences to themselves and I shall not fail, after the emigration shall have advanced to a certain point, to go farther, and to say to the heads of the majority, that the President will hold them responsible for the

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personal safety of their leading opponents and demand of the nation
any *assassins* of the latter.³⁷

Bell and his committee then sought to change the ratio of wagons to people. He wrote the principal disbursing officer, Capt. John E. Page, on October 2, 1838:

Having understood from you . . . that you intended ordering only one wagon with five horses for ever 20 persons in a detachment I have concluded to trouble you with this letter in the hope that I shall be able to convince you that something more than that ought to be done for us. You must be aware that 20 persons cannot be removed in comfort and safety in a single wagon as it would force us to put our women and children on foot and at the present and during the approaching season, such a course could not but be attended with sickness and great want of comfort. Mr. Ross' parties seem to have been well aware of this, and much better terms have been extended to them. I have understood that they are allowed a wagon and five horses besides five extra horses, for each 20 persons—and even under these circumstances the increased allowance to them would put it in their power to increase the number of wagons in the parties to any number they pleased. From my knowledge of such matters, I feel satisfied that 20 persons are altogether too many for one wagon, without extra horses and that if we are to be held to that number, our march to Arkansas will be attended with sickness, great fatigue, delay, and distress. I therefore earnestly request an additional number of wagons for my detachment. I respectfully suggest to you that 12 or 15 persons at most, are as many as one wagon ought to take—and we will be satisfied with the latter number, (say 15 persons to a wagon and five horses, without any extra horses.) Should you agree to this proposition, it will require 33 wagons with five horses, or equivalent to that number in small wagons and carryalls.

By reference to the treaty, you will see that the government binds itself to furnish a sufficient number of wagons to remove us comfortably, without endangering our health, and at this season of the year and the still more inclement season approaching, this cannot be accomplished if 20 persons are only entitled to one wagon.³⁸

On the same day, October 2, Page forwarded Bell's letter to Scott, who replied:

Captain Page will refer to the original estimated cost of emigrating the Cherokees, made by the Delegation and approved by me, and place, in all respects, the detachment of the Treaty party, now to be emigrated, according to numbers, on the same footing in respect to the conductor, physician, petty officers, wagons and horses.

In lieu of saddle horses, I have no objection that a proportionate number of wagons should be allowed and in lieu of large wagons, with five or six horses each, I have in like manner no objection that a proportionate number of smaller two horse wagons should be substituted provided that, in no case, the cost of the large and small wag-

ons, together, shall exceed the estimated cost of saddle horses and large wagons, under the said estimated cost—according to the numbers of persons of the treaty party to be removed. My reasoning is that the means of transporting (say) five hundred of the Treaty party of Cherokees, shall not cost the nation more than the means of transporting a like number of Indians under the arrangement made with the delegation.³⁹

When the Treaty Party's call for economies in emigration expenses were ignored, they resorted to public attacks on Scott's judgment and circulated forms of propaganda that caused dissent among the Ross emigrant parties.⁴⁰ Because they would not monetarily profit if the size of their detachment increased, a possible reason for their sowing of dissension could have been to increase the size of their constituency. Their public questioning of Scott's judgment resulted in a thirty-two-page letter from Scott to Secretary of War Joel Poinsett explaining his position. A column very critical of Scott in a Savannah newspaper read as if Bell wrote it.⁴¹ Scott rejoiced when the Treaty Party began their journey; however, he did not forgive their criticism:

The fifth detachment of emigrants, about 600 individuals (the treaty-party) . . . have at length taken the road for the west. . . . [T]his detachment contains most of the persons used by the white machinations here to render the North Carolina Indians discontented and to delay, if not, to defeat the emigration. . . .⁴²

One of the outgrowths of the Treaty Party's propaganda was, in Scott's opinion, most effective among the North Carolina emigrants. He noted:

Mr. Bushyhead's detachment, consisting of North Carolina Indians, is the one that was most tampered with at this place by designing men heretofore alluded to and the leader of the fifty fugitives is the brother of Watcheper. . . .⁴³

I had supposed that when the treaty detachment had marched, there would no longer be tools at hand with which to obstruct the movement of the other Indians. But it seems that the Committee, attached to the Commissioners, was re-organized, by filling up vacancies, and the members are again busily employed in trying to sow dissension in the detachments yet to be put in march. I have already given one admonition, and am about to send a second message to this Committee, to say that if it does not instantly desist from exciting the wishes of their white factions, I will send off the guilty members, under a guard, to the Arkansas. . . .⁴⁴

Fourteen detachments of Cherokees departed that fall. Bell's was the only one to be accompanied by a military officer. Lieutenant Edward Deas, a twenty-six-year-old veteran of many Indian removals,

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not all of which were Cherokee, was officially along as the detachment's disbursing officer.⁴⁵ The route of the Bell-Deas contingent extended almost due west from the Cherokee Agency near Calhoun, Tennessee, to Memphis, then at an angle to the southwest to Little Rock, and finally more or less along the Arkansas River to the terminus near Vineyard (Evansville), Arkansas. The journey took eighty-nine days.⁴⁶ In the report *Removal of the Cherokees*, T. Hartley Crawford, commissioner of Indian affairs, wrote:

The distance, upon an examination of the journal transmitted by Lieutenant Deas, of the army of the United States, who was disbursing agent of the Treaty Party conducted by John A. Bell, appears to be, by the route they took, but 707 miles which they performed in 89 days, from 11th October to 7th January, 1839, both inclusive. They traveled very leisurely, making for one day only 18 miles; for three days only 15 miles each: for five, respectively, 13 miles; for one 14; for fifteen days, severally, 12 miles; and for the residue of the travel, various distances, running from 4 to 11 miles. They were six days stationary, and spent eleven days in crossing the several rivers in their way . . . at a fraction less than \$61.70 [per capita].⁴⁷

From Hamilton County, Tennessee, just opposite Ross's Landing, Deas sent back his first report to his military commander, Maj. Gen. Winfield Scott. On October 18, 1838, after seven days on the road, he reported:

The day before yesterday, and the forenoon of today, were consumed in ferrying the Tennessee; but on attempting to start the party after crossing, I found many of the people unwilling to proceed in consequence of the absence of the conductor Mr. John Bell. It is astonishing to me, that he should be absent, at the time, of all others, that his presence is most required here, and I have no hope of being able to proceed until he rejoins the party and I therefore write that you may know the cause of our delay at this point; which, although extremely unsatisfactory to myself, I have no means of preventing. Unless Mr. Bell, on his arrival, shall be able to infuse a more reasonable spirit into many of the emigrants composing this party, I am entirely of the opinion that nothing but force, will be able to make them consult their own interest and proceed quietly upon the Route to the West. I have wagons, and teams, and agents, lying here at this time, at a heavy expense, in idleness, without the shadow of a good excuse for the delay, at the same time wasting the very best season for Emigration.⁴⁸

The general's response was swift:

Instructions will go to Lieut. Col. [William?] Gates, who is near you, with this reply, to send a party of mounted men, to be placed under your orders, as a guard to your detachment of emigrants should you, on the arrival of the guard, deem its services necessary. In that case you will keep it and cross the Cumberland Mountains, when, if you

deem the continuance of a guard indispensable, you will halt at some suitable place, and advise me on the subject by express, in order that I may send a company of the 4th Infantry to relieve the mounted men.

Immediately on the receipt of this, should you foresee clearly that a guard will be wanted beyond the Cumberland Mountains, you will write through Lt. Col. Gates to that effect in order that I may lose no time in putting the company of the 4th Infantry in march to relieve the mounted men of the 3rd Artillery.

I hope it may have been found, on the arrival of Mr. John Bell, who must have joined you by last night, that no guard was, or will be needed as it will be extremely inconvenient to detach the company of the 4th.

[I wish] you great success with your party and entertain . . . a high confidence in your judgment and discretion. . . .⁴⁹

Deas soon had the Bell detachment rolling again. From near Jasper, Tennessee, on October 22, 1838, he wrote to Scott:

I am happy to be able to say, that circumstances had so much changed for the better, relative to the progress of the Party under my charge, that in my opinion the presence of a guard had become unnecessary. I have no doubt, however, that the knowledge of a detachment of Troops having been ordered to attend the Party, has produced a salutary effect and I trust that hereafter no further unnecessary delays will occur.

Every thing at present is going on well, and all appear satisfied, and no exertions shall be spared on my part, to render their journey to the West as comfortable and expeditious as possible.

It having been necessary, by the route we travel, to cross the Tennessee R[iver] three times, our progress thus far has been slow, but after crossing the Cumberland Mountains our rate of traveling will be very different.

This Party being small, and taking into due consideration the number of Indians passing over the Missouri route—the dryness of the past season as affecting the roads—the probability of ready supplies, and all other circumstances; I have concluded that we had better pursue the route by Memphis, provided the people themselves are willing to do so. The latter must be more than 150 miles shorter, than the route through Missouri, and the cost thus saved would far more than pay the extra expense of running around the Mississippi swamp by water, to Rock-Row on White River, should the road through the swamp be found in a bad state for wagons, upon our arrival at Memphis, which I can scarcely believe will be the case.⁵⁰

The Deas-Bell party had chosen a route significantly shorter than those of the twelve Ross companies that also traveled by land. According to the records contained in Emmet Starr's *History of the Cherokee Indians*, the Bell party was the second of the fourteen companies to reach trail's end. From Winchester, Tennessee,

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on October 27, 1838, Deas wrote to Commissioner of Indian Affairs C. A. Harris:

I left the vicinity of the Cherokee agency on the 11th instant in charge of this party, but up to this time our progress has been necessarily slow, in consequence of the obstructions in the roads over which we have passed.

This Party being comparatively small, and taking into due consideration the various circumstances that would affect our progress upon the different routes of emigration, I have come to the conclusion, that, this Party had better pursue the road leading through to Memphis. The upper route through Missouri is no doubt the best for the main body of the Cherokees to pursue, but the circumstances of so many having to go over that road, will probably render supplies very scarce, and at the same time the past season having been dry, the Mississippi Bottoms west of Memphis, will probably not be in a very bad condition for wagonning on our arrival there.

The Party—under my charge numbers between 650 and 700 persons, and is composed for the most part of highly respectable and intelligent families, and there are but very few who have not made very considerable advancement in civilization. I am instructed by General Scott to place this Party on the same footing as to allowances of transportation, subsistence, etc., as those that emigrate under the direction of Mr. Ross. . . . Everything relative to our movements is at present going on well and the people appear to be satisfied in all aspects.⁵¹

From two miles west of Pulaski, Tennessee, on November 3, 1838, Deas reported to Harris:

Since [October 27] we have pursued the direct road through Fayetteville and Pulaski leading to Memphis, part of which we found very rough, but our rate of traveling has averaged between 10 and 12 miles a day.

Nothing of much importance has taken place since I last wrote. Some of the Indians have lost a number of their oxen from eating poisonous weeds, but the progress of the Party was not interrupted on that account. The people have been generally healthy and everything relative to our movements is at present going on well. . . . I have determined . . . to furnish the Party by purchasing the provisions on the road, which plan I have thus far found to answer very well, by sending an Agent a little in advance for that purpose.

In this way I have been able, by employing a very experienced and efficient purchasing agent, to procure supplies at the ordinary market price in the country through which we have passed, and I will therefore continue to pursue the same plan, so long as I find that economy may thereby be consulted.

I take it for granted that the Department is well informed of the great difference in the circumstances of this Emigration from those which have preceded it, and in which I have been concerned. I have reference to the increase in the allowances of transportation, subsistence, and contingencies made to the Cherokees, no doubt in

consideration of their great advancement in civilization, and which is undoubtedly in accordance with the humane and liberal policy exercised towards these people. The expense attending their removal will therefore be much increased over that of the ordinary Indian Tribes, but which the Terms of the Treaty are complied with, in removing them *comfortably* to the new country, where this Party is concerned, I shall continue to see, so far as it is within my powers, that a due regard is paid in conducting its Removal, to economy and dispatch.⁵²

From near Memphis, Tennessee, on November 24, 1838, Deas wrote Commissioner Harris:

The Party of Cherokees emigrating under my superintendence, has just finished the crossing of the Mississippi, and we shall set out again tomorrow morning in the direction of Little Rock.

Nothing of particular importance has occurred worthy of being mentioned since I last had the honor to address you upon this subject. . . .

Everything relating to our progress has gone on well since that time, excepting some delay in the crossing of the river at this place, caused by the breaking of the Steam Ferry-Boat.

Yesterday I shipped up the Arkansas River a considerable quantity of the baggage, pot-ware and etc., on very low terms, which I think will result in a good deal of saving, in time and expense.⁵³

I hear . . . that the roads west of this through the Mississippi and White River Bottoms, are in very good order for the present season, and I therefore hope we shall be able to proceed on our journey with as much rapidity as we have hitherto been able to travel; and unless great changes should take place we shall have every cause to congratulate ourselves on having taken the lower route. . . .⁵⁴

Further reports from Deas are missing or have been misplaced in the National Archives; however, the remainder of the Treaty Party's journey can be pieced together from the records of accounts that Deas maintained. His notations indicate the places where provisions were issued at five-day intervals:⁵⁵

Ross' Landing	East Tennessee	October 16, 1838
Marion County	Tennessee	October 21, 1838
Cumberland Mountain	Tennessee	October 26, 1838
Near Fayetteville	Tennessee	October 31, 1838
Near Lawrenceburg	Tennessee	November 5, 1838
Near Savannah	Tennessee	November 10, 1838
Near Purdy	Tennessee	November 15, 1838
Near Raleigh	Tennessee	November 20, 1838
Near Memphis	Tennessee	November 25, 1838
Saint Francis County	Arkansas	November 30, 1838
Munroe [Monroe] County	Arkansas	December 5, 1838
Munroe [Monroe] County	Arkansas	December 10, 1838
Near Little Rock ⁵⁶	Arkansas	December 15, 1838

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Pulaski County	Arkansas	December 20, 1838
Near Point Remove	Arkansas	December 25, 1838
Near Horse Head	Arkansas	December 30, 1838
Crawford County	Arkansas	January 4, 1839

Their eighty-nine-day journey ended on January 7, 1839, just inside the Cherokee Nation's border with Arkansas and west of present-day Evansville.⁵⁷

Deas kept meticulous account records. The Treaty Party lost twenty-three of its members while on the march. Benjamin Ragsdale, a member of the detachment, provided burial arrangements for twenty-one of the deceased. For each coffin he built and for his assistance in interment, he received three dollars. Relatively early in the journey, November 12, 1838, at Savannah, Tennessee, Arch Campbell received seven dollars and fifty cents "for the hire of 2 horses and his services for 3 days returning to the main party to bring up 3 sick Cherokees left on that account and burying two infants at \$2.50 per day." The expense for the cumulative burial of seventeen of the party was recorded and paid on December 4, 1838, in Monroe County, Arkansas. It was probably in Monroe County that they spent six days in camp. Deas recorded the names of the deceased in a Journal of Occurrences.⁵⁸

In Little Rock on December 17 Bell hired Roderick L. Dodge, M.D., to replace Dr. J. W. Edington, who had tended the expedition. Dodge, Dartmouth-trained, was a missionary-physician on his way to the Cherokee Nation West.⁵⁹ Dodge joined the party at its camp in Monroe County, Arkansas, shortly after the recording of the party's seventeen deaths. Six vials of laudanum were among the new physician's first purchases.⁶⁰ A special interpreter, John Sanders, was hired to assist Dodge. One death was recorded after Dodge signed on. John A. Bell provided the doctor's board and transportation for \$51.50.⁶¹

At the time approximating the majority of the party's fatalities, the weather was extremely cold. Around the middle of December the Arkansas and Canadian Rivers were reported frozen over. The *Little Rock Gazette* noted:

The weather at the north, at the last accounts, was intensely cold. The Ohio river is obstructed by ice, and unnavigable to below the mouth, and the Mississippi is in the same situation, as far as the mouth of the Ohio. Many steam and flatboats are fast in the ice, laden with provisions for the lower country. The Arkansas at this place, on Monday [December 24], was covered with a thin coat of floating ice. At Ft. Gibson, both the Arkansas and the Canadian were frozen over about two weeks ago, but since then we understand the ice has disappeared. The

weather here, at present, is cold enough to make great coats and large fires necessary.⁶²

Provisions for both man and beast were purchased for the most part while on the trail. The provisions abstract maintained by Deas shows the food ration for 660 Cherokees consisted of corn meal, corn, flour, bacon, fresh pork, fresh beef, coffee, and sugar with an occasional issue of salt, soap, and beans. The recorded number of rations issued never varied, despite the recorded deaths among the band. The forage for the 318 horses consisted of fodder and corn. The total cost for human provisions was \$5,640.395. Flour was purchased for six cents a pound, corn for one dollar and thirty-eight cents per bushel, a bunch or ration of fodder for two cents, corn meal for one dollar per bushel, fresh beef and fresh pork both about six cents per pound, bacon for twelve cents per pound, and a pound of sugar cost about the same as bacon. Coffee was much more dear at about twenty-two cents a pound. Prices varied a little from town to town, in part due to the distance from the Mississippi and Arkansas Rivers.⁶³

The total cost of what Deas termed contingencies was \$5,738.38. In this category of expense was a voucher for payment to John A. Bell, who received \$445 (five dollars per day for eighty-nine days for his services as conductor). The assistant conductors, D. S. Walker, D. M. Foreman, Ellis Harlin, and Luther Rankin, received three dollars per day. The interpreters, Watt Foster, W. M. Borling, and John Sanders, received two dollars and fifty cents per day. They paid their physicians five dollars per day. The indigent Cherokees in the group, in accordance with treaty provisions, received \$1,000 worth of shoes and blankets.

At trail's end, the assistant conductor held a public auction. The money chest and pad locks, steelyards, twelve sacks acquired for carrying flour and corn meal, and three common tents brought twenty-three dollars.⁶⁴

The real price of the emigration was twenty-three lives and uncountable tears of anguish and pain. However, in six months the Treaty Party's actual trial would begin when the Cherokee Nation West erupted in intratribal warfare and killings of vengeance and retribution. There would be more widows and orphans and massive suffering before a semblance of tribal accord was achieved in August, 1846, with an act of union.

ENDNOTES

* Wayne Dell Gibson, who lives in Orange, California, is the great-great-grandson of John Adair Bell. He is the author of two published books about Orange County, California, local history.

¹ Captain John E. Page showed a total of 11,813 Cherokees on his muster rolls; Chief Ross's conductors counted 13,149. See Emmett Starr, *History of the Cherokee Indians and Their Legends and Folk Lore* (Tulsa: Oklahoma Yesterday Publications, 1993), 103. See also Gary E. Moulton, ed., *The Papers of John Ross* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), 690. Neither of those counts reflects the official count of 660 in the Treaty Party contingent led by John A. Bell.

John Adair Bell (Jack Bell), one-half Cherokee, was born on January 1, 1806, near New Echota, Georgia. His early education was probably at the Moravian school at Spring Place. He was a merchant and farmer. His first wife, Jennie Martin, and a young son died shortly after arriving in the western nation. He signed both the treaties of 1835 and 1846. Bell was Stand Watie's confidante and brother-in-law. Opinion on his abilities and character is divided—Bell was either a scoundrel or a saint. He died in a Texas exile on May 1, 1860. He was married three times. His brother, James Madison Bell, and his son, Lucian (Hoolie) Burr Bell, served the Cherokee Nation as well as the state of Oklahoma. The assassination of the Ridges and Boudinot left the Treaty Party without great leaders. Morris L. Wardell in *A Political History of the Cherokees* wrote: "Stand Watie was brave but lacked qualities of statesmanship and John A. Bell was too embittered to see any good in the new government; others were even less capable."

² The removal dates are from Starr, *History of the Cherokee Indians*. General Winfield Scott on October 12, 1838, in a letter to J. R. Poinsett stated that the Bell party was the fifth detachment in line of departure. Bell departed on October 11, 1838. The departure dates listed in Starr placed Bell's group twelfth in line of departure.

³ Winfield Scott to J. R. Poinsett, October 12, 1838, Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs: Cherokee Emigration, 1838, M234, roll 115, Record Group 75, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (hereafter cited as LR-OIA, RG, and NA). See also Moulton, *Papers of John Ross*, 690.

⁴ There were an estimated 5,000 Cherokees in the west and approximately 16,000 still in the eastern nation. Of the eastern population, more than 53 percent lived in Georgia. Russell Thornton, "The Demography of the Trail of Tears Period: A New Estimate of Cherokee Population Losses," in *Cherokee Removal Before and After*, ed. William L. Anderson (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1991), 88. The Cherokees then living in Texas and Mexico were not enumerated.

⁵ Census Roll of the Cherokee Indians East of the Mississippi and Index to the Roll, 1835, T496, RG75, NA.

⁶ Carl J. Vipperman, "'Forcibly if We Must': The Georgia Case for Removal 1802–1803," *Journal of Cherokee Studies*, 3 (2, 1978): 103–110.

⁷ Rachel Caroline Eaton, *John Ross and the Cherokee Indians* (Menasha, Wisconsin: George Banta Publishing Company, 1914), 37, 52–59.

⁸ The major deposits of gold were found on Ward's Creek, Georgia, near the present location of Dahlonega, Georgia. George Ellison, ed., *James Mooney's History, Myths, and Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees* (1900; reprint, Asheville, North Carolina: Historical Images, 1992), 220.

⁹ Samuel A. Worcester, *New Echota Letters*, ed. F. Kilpatrick and A. G. Kilpatrick (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1968), 81.

¹⁰ John Ridge wrote a concise justification of the Treaty Party's rationale in 1838 while in New York. The *Arkansas State Gazette* on June 26, 1838, reprinted the letter that had first appeared in the *New York Journal Commercial*.

¹¹ John Ross and his delegation submitted a proposal to President Martin Van Buren on April 13, 1838. The proposal was turned over to Secretary of War Joel R. Poinsett for a reply dictated by the president. In the reply, Poinsett quoted the body of the proposal, which read in part: "[O]ur ardent desire to have settled the differences between the United States and our nation, by retaining a portion of our territory, and becoming citizens of the United States with all the privileges of citizens, has been entirely rejected." Joel R. Poinsett to John Ross et al., April 14, 1838, *Letters Sent by the Secretary of War Relating to Military Affairs, 1800–1889*, M6, roll 19, frame 63, RG 107, NA (hereafter cited as LS-SW-MA).

¹² Mary B. Warren and Eve B. Weeks, eds., *Whites Among The Cherokees – Georgia 1828–1838* (Athens, Georgia: Heritage Papers, 1987), 17.

¹³ Elias Boudinot to Stand Watie, February 28, 1835, in *Cherokee Cavaliers: Forty Years of Cherokee History, as told in the Correspondence of the Ridge-Watie-Boudinot Family*, ed. Edward E. Dale and Gaston Litton (1939; reprint, with a foreword by James W. Parins, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995), 10.

¹⁴ Clearly, for whatever reason Boudinot expected the worst from John Ross. His concern is evident in a letter to his brother, Stand Watie, written from Washington. The letter read in part: "Mr. Ross has given no obligation to abide by the decision of the Senate and take the gross amount they propose to give, and he soon would go out of the limits of the U. S. with it. The Senate said \$5,000,000 . . . will the Cherokees take that and go buy a country in Mexico and remove themselves—or will they take \$4,500,000 and a most valuable country. That is the question. It is to our people to know what Ross is to them. Take possession of the press, (I tell you this confidentially) and be ready to print what may be necessary. I will send you, in Cherokee the substance of the arrangement proposed. . . ." Elias Boudinot to Stand Watie, March 8, 1835, "Letters to and from Stand Watie," vol. 1, typescripts, Special Collections, Northeastern State University Library, Tahlequah, Oklahoma.

¹⁵ Duane H. King and E. Raymond Evans, "The Death of John Walker, Jr.: Political Assassination or Personal Vengeance?" *Journal of Cherokees Studies*, 1 (1, 1976): 4–16; Thurman Wilkins, *Cherokee Tragedy: The Ridge Family and the Decimation of a People*, 2d ed. rev. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986), 263. The Cherokee National Council sent a letter signed by its president, John Smith, to missionary Samuel Austin Worcester. It read in part: "It is understood by the council that [Boudinot's] name is very unpopular, that his services as printer [translator] to you or his name upon the book you print will cause very unpleasant feelings to exist among the people of the Cherokee. . . . The national council ask [you] not to use his services or his name in your print in order that nothing unpleasant may occur upon the subject referred to." Cherokee National Council to Samuel Austin Worcester, January 11, 1838, John Ross Papers, Gilcrease Institute, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

¹⁶ The Senate cast a two-thirds vote, with one vote to spare, to accept the Treaty of New Echota. This action was taken despite the most ardent efforts of John Ross and his entourage. A later ill-fated appeal to the Senate to abrogate their earlier decision failed, despite a last-minute presentation of a petition, signed or bearing the marks of more than 14,000 Cherokee citizens, asking that the treaty of 1835 be abrogated.

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¹⁷ Nat Smith, Superintendent of Removal, to C. A. Harris, February 14, 1838: "I have been just informed that letters have lately been received here from Mr. Ross and others of the Delegation at Washington advising the Cherokees not to receive their money under this Treaty but to hold on [,] that none would be forced to remove west but those who received money from the United States." Nat Smith to C. A. Harris, March 10, 1838: "I have the honor to enclose herewith a translated copy of a letter written in Cherokee and purporting to be from White Path, to Thomas Manning. . . . White Paths a very old man, and can neither read nor write Cherokee. This is another plan invented by the Delegation at Washington to keep the Indians here. . . . [H]aving [it] copied and [then] sent through the Nation by runners to leading men in all the towns, who called meetings and read it, it has had considerable effect in stopping emigration."

A translation of the alleged letter from White Path read in part: "I write these words to let you hear of your delegation at Washington. They tell you they will drive you off by force, it is very doubtful about us being drove. No more." Nat Smith to C. A. Harris, February 14, March 10, 1838, LR-OIA, M234, roll 115, frame 407, RG75, NA.

¹⁸ (Little Rock) *Arkansas State Gazette*, July 25, 1838: "The Columbus (Ga.) Enquirer of 5 inst., says that Gen. Charles Floyd has reported to the Executive, the removal of all the Cherokees within the borders of that state. We have therefore, we hope, heard the last of the troubles between the Georgians and the Cherokees. The latter are wending their way to the far west, where we trust there is more peace and happiness in store for them than they have enjoyed in the Land of their father for years past. . . . Gen. Scott, in a letter to the Governor of Tennessee, states that the removal of the Cherokees has been suspended, until the first of September. They will remain encamped, until that date, at the Eastern Agency and at Ross' and Gunter's Landings in Alabama. About 3,000 started for the west between the 1st and the 17th June (before the suspension of removal was determined on), and we presume they may be looked for in Arkansas in a short time."

¹⁹ Felix Grundy to J. R. Poinsett, March 20, 1839, Special Files of the Office of Indian Affairs, 1807–1904, M574, file 31, roll 4, frame 408, RG75, NA (hereafter cited as SF-OIA).

²⁰ Col. Lindsay to Gen. W. Scott, June 6, 1838, Correspondence of the Eastern Division Pertaining to Cherokee Removal, M1475, roll 1, frame 680, RG 75, NA; Winfield Scott, *Memoirs of Lieut-General Scott, LLD* (New York: Sheldon and Company, 1864), 1: 318. At Little Rock, Arkansas, the river was extremely low. *Arkansas State Gazette*, August 1, 1838: "Between 700 and 800 Cherokee Indians arrived here on Wednesday evening last, and were landed about a mile above town on the opposite bank—the river being too low to proceed farther by water. Teams have since been provided, and they are about resuming their journey by land. The summer (or bowel) complaint, we understand is prevailing among them to a considerable extent particularly among the children and a good many deaths have occurred."

²¹ Poinsett sent Scott a message that read in part: "John Ross . . . will return in a few days to his people. . . . [T]urn over the whole business of emigration to them if in your judgment it will not retard the removal." J. R. Poinsett to Gen. Winfield Scott, June 27, 1838, LS-SW-MA, M6, roll 19, frame 134, RG 75, NA.

²² A copy of the removal contract given to Lewis Ross by John Ross can be found in SF-OIA, M574, file 31, roll 4, frame 358, RG75, NA.

²³ In June J. R. Poinsett wrote to General Scott: "The presence in this City of the Chiefs and head men, who alone possess the necessary influence to induce their people to yield a ready submission to the wishes of government, and their positive

refusal to return to the nations, rendered it unavoidable to treat with them here." J. R. Poinsett to Gen. W. Scott, June 1, 1838, LS-SW-MA, M6, roll 19, RG75, NA.

²⁴ Most of the Treaty Party chose to emigrate by steamboat. Gerald A. Reed, "The Ross-Watie Conflict: Factionalism in the Cherokee Nation, 1838–1865," (Ph.D. diss., University of Oklahoma, 1967), 49.

²⁵ John A. Bell cited the stipulation of the twelfth article of the Treaty of 1835 as the provision for the establishment of the committee. For a time Bell retained the chairmanship of the committee even in the Cherokee Nation West. As committee chair in April, 1839, he requested that Secretary of War Poinsett remove the outspoken Ross supporter, missionary Evan Jones, from the Cherokee Nation West. William G. McLoughlin, *Champions of the Cherokees: Evan and John B. Jones* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1990), 195.

²⁶ J. K. Rogers to Gen. Winfield Scott, August 10, 1838, LR-OIA, M234, roll 115, frames 920–921, RG, NA.

²⁷ Gen. Winfield Scott to J. K. Rogers, August 11, 1838, LR- OIA, M234, roll 115, RG75, NA.

²⁸ Gen. Winfield Scott to J. R. Poinsett, August 28, 1838, LR-OIA, M234, roll 115, frame 878, RG75, NA.

²⁹ John A. Bell et al. to Gen. Winfield Scott, August 20, 1838, LR-OIA, M234, roll 115, frames 881–895, RG75, NA; Gen. Winfield Scott to J. R. Poinsett, August 28, 1838, LR-OIA, M234, roll 115, frame 875, RG75, NA.

³⁰ John A. Bell et al. to Gen. Winfield Scott, August 20, 1838, LR-OIA, M234, roll 115, RG75, frames 881–895, NA.

³¹ Gen. Winfield Scott to John Ross et al., August 22, 1838, LR-OIA, M234, roll 115, frames 897–903, RG75, NA.

³² Gen. Winfield Scott to John Ross et al., August 22, 1838, LR-OIA, M234, roll 115, frame 899, RG75, NA.

³³ Gen. Winfield Scott to John Ross et al., August 22, 1838, LR-OIA, M234, roll 115, frames 897–903, RG75, NA.

³⁴ John Ross et al. to Gen. Winfield Scott, August 25, 1838, LR-OIA, M234, roll 115, RG75, NA. See also Moulton, *Papers of John Ross*, 662–665.

³⁵ Gen. Winfield Scott to John Ross et al., August 28, 1838, LR-OIA, M234, roll 115, frames 917–918, RG75, NA.

³⁶ Gen. Winfield Scott to J. R. Poinsett., August 28, 1838, LR-OIA, M234, roll 115, RG75, NA.

³⁷ Ibid. General Scott clearly perceived the destinies of Boudinot and the Ridges. They were assassinated on June 22, 1839. The leadership of the Treaty Party then devolved on Stand Watie and John Adair Bell.

³⁸ John A. Bell to Capt. John E. Page, Principal Dispersing Agent, October 2, 1838, LR-OIA, M234, roll 115, frames 154–155, RG75, NA.

³⁹ Gen. Winfield Scott to Capt. John E. Page, October 2, 1838, LR-OIA, M234, roll 115, frame 256, RG75, NA.

⁴⁰ Moulton, *Papers of John Ross*, 675. One reason the Treaty Party may have attempted to draw emigrants to their group would have been to add the savings in cost of emigrating with them to the surplus, which was to be distributed on a per capita basis. In the final tally of cost, Bell's group cost about forty dollars per capita less than the anti-Treaty Party. The Treaty Party could not directly monetarily profit from an increase in the numbers emigrating in their detachment.

⁴¹ "The Cherokees," (Savannah) *Georgian*, September 3, 1838, clipping in SF-OIA, M574, file 31, roll 4, RG75, NA.

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⁴² Gen. Winfield Scott to J. R. Poinsett, October 12, 1838, LR-OIA, M234, roll 115, RG75, NA.

⁴³ See also general. Winfield Scott to Circuit Court Judge C. F. Keith, September 7, 1838, LR-OIA, M234, roll 115, RG75, NA. The court asked why the man was held. Scott wrote Poinsett, "The anti treaty party, to which the prisoner belongs, were almost as anxious as myself to defeat the attempt to release the man." To the judge he wrote in part, "[T]he prisoner had been for some time before engaged, with other Indians and designing white men, in persuading many of his tribe to remain in the mountains of North Carolina, and further in seducing others to the tribe, already collected in camps for emigration to run away to the same mountains." A loss of fifty emigrating Cherokees would have cost the Ross group more than \$3,000.

⁴⁴ Gen. Winfield Scott to J. R. Poinsett, October 23, 1838, LR-OIA, M234, roll 115, frame 868, RG75, NA. See also Moulton, *Papers of John Ross*, 670, 675, 679.

⁴⁵ Lieutenant Edward Deas, a native of South Carolina, was the son of William Deas and Anne J. Deas nee Garerd. His father died in 1827. Col. Eustis, a family friend, wrote in his appeal for the boy's acceptance as a candidate at West Point: "The father, having squandered an ample fortune, is dead. The mother with half a dozen children is reduced from affluence to absolute penury, and not one of her relations is able, if willing, to afford her assistance. The lad himself possesses extraordinary merit." Anne's eighty-year-old mother took them in. Edward, Anne's second son, was accepted at West Point for the class that began July 1, 1828. He was sixteen years old. Deas finished fifteenth in the class of forty-five. Among his duty assignments was transferring Indians from May 24, 1835, to June 28, 1836, and from April 20, 1837, to April 15, 1839. Grant Foreman, in *Indian Removal: The Emigration of the Five Civilized Tribes of Indians* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1932), 285 n 7, quoting from the *Army Navy Chronicles*, wrote, "Deas so impressed the Indians by his humane consideration and intelligent attention to their welfare and comfort that they presented him with a sword as a token of their gratitude." Deas was promoted to captain on February 16, 1847. He fought in Mexico from 1846 to 1848 and was engaged in the battle of Monterey. Deas drowned in the Rio Grande River, Texas, on May 16, 1849. He was thirty-seven years old. This information is drawn from two sources: United States Military Academy, *U. S. Military Cadet Application Papers, 1805-1866* (Westpoint, New York: United States Military Academy, 1805-1866), and George W. Cullum, *Biographical Register of the Officers and Graduates of the U. S. Military Academy at West Point, N. Y. from its Establishment to 1890*, 3d ed. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1891) 1: 513.

⁴⁶ It is instructive to compare the Bell journey to that of a party of Cherokees conducted by B. B. Cannon. Cannon's party followed the northern route, like most of the Ross detachments. It took Cannon's group seventy-seven days to reach a point in the Cherokee Nation West that was very close to Bell's stopping place. B. B. Cannon, "An Overland Journey to the West (October-December 1837)," trans. and ed. E. Raymond Evans, *Journal of Cherokee Studies*, 3 (3, 1978): 36-43.

⁴⁷ (Van Buren) *Arkansas Intelligencer*, July 1, 1843.

⁴⁸ Lt. Edward Deas to Gen. Winfield Scott, October 18, 1838, LR-OIA, M234, roll 115, frames 857-959, RG75, NA.

⁴⁹ Gen. Winfield Scott to Lt. Edward Deas, October 19, 1938, LR-OIA, M234, roll 115, frames 860-861, RG75, NA.

⁵⁰ Lt. Edward Deas to Gen. Winfield Scott, October 22, 1838, LR-OIA, M234, roll 115, RG75, NA.

⁵¹ Lt. Edward Deas to C. A. Harris, October 27, 1838, LR-OIA, M234, roll 115, frames 86–88, RG75, NA.

⁵² Lt. Edward Deas to C. A. Harris, November 3, 1838, LR-OIA, M234, roll 115, frames 90–93, RG75, NA.

⁵³ George W. Long was paid sixty-seven dollars and fifty cents for “his services as an agent and taking charge of, and accompanying Indian baggage, whilst being transported from Memphis, Tennessee to Little Rock, Arkansas by water commencing on the 23 November and ending on the 15 December. . . . W. S. Woodruff received \$10.00 for storage of Indian baggage and for handling same from steam boat to store house.” General Accounting Office (Treasury Department—Second Auditor), Indian Accounts, 1817–1922, file 1839–3594 (Lt. Edward Deas), RG217, NA (hereafter cited as GAO, Indian Accounts).

⁵⁴ Lt. Edward Deas to C. A. Harris, November 24, 1838, LR-OIA, M234, roll 115, frames 95–97, RG75, NA.

⁵⁵ References to the Bell-Deas emigration, other than Deas’ and Scott’s letters, come from GAO, Indian Accounts.

⁵⁶ *Arkansas State Gazette*, December 19, 1838: “Emigrating Cherokees—A party of between 7 and 800 Cherokees arrived opposite this place, a few days since, where they have remained encamped. We understand they proceed on their way to west tomorrow.”

⁵⁷ In a way, the conclusion of the nation’s trek is reflected in this squib from the *Arkansas State Gazette*, February 6, 1839: “The steam boat Victoria arrived here on Saturday last, having on board 228 Cherokees, the last of the nation to be removed from the east of the Mississippi. They are mostly those who had been prevented by sickness from emigrating by land, with the main body of the nation. Some few are still scattered in the mountains of North Carolina, resisting all persuasions to join their brethren in their exodus from their fatherland.

“Among those on board the Victoria were John Ross and his family. Mr. Ross’ wife we regret to state, died shortly before reaching Little Rock and was buried in the cemetery of this city.”

⁵⁸ GAO, Indian Accounts.

⁵⁹ Dodge had earned his medical degree at Dartmouth in 1834. Of his hiring he wrote: “Myself, wife, and a little girl . . . came on with a company of Cherokees. I was employed a physician and received pay which was very fortunate for me as I had but eighteen dollars when I left Little [R]ock.” R. L. Dodge to David Green, February 7, 1839, Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Houghton Library, Harvard University.

⁶⁰ Doctor Dodge was reimbursed fifty cents for the cost of ferrying him across the Arkansas River at Little Rock. The ferrying fee for his carriage was \$1.875. GAO, Indian Accounts.

⁶¹ GAO, Indian Accounts.

⁶² *Arkansas State Gazette*, December 26, 1838.

⁶³ GAO, Indian Accounts.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*