In 1838 and 1839, as part of Andrew Jackson's Indian removal policy, the Cherokee nation was forced to give up its lands east of the Mississippi River and to migrate to an area in present-day Oklahoma. This series of relocations is commonly referred to as the Trail of Tears. See the fact file below for more information.

- The forced relocation of American Indians began with the Indian Removal Act of 1830.
- In 1838, the Cherokee Indians became the fifth major tribe to experience forced relocation to Indian Territory. The Cherokee Nation moved from its ancestral homeland in parts of North Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama to land set aside for them in what is now the state of Oklahoma.
- More than 15,000 Cherokee Indians were removed by the U.S. Army.
- The Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, and Seminole tribes were the other tribes that were forced to relocate. Over 100,000 Native Americans from the five tribes were forced to move.
• These people were held in concentration-like camps through the summer, then they were then forced to travel over 1,000 miles, under very hard conditions to Indian Territory.
• Along the trail, nearly 4,000 Cherokee died of starvation, exposure, or disease.
• The Cherokees came to call this forced move "Nunahi-Duna-Dlo-Hilu-I" or "Trail Where They Cried".
• The result of the U.S. Government’s American Indian Removal Policy devastated American Indian cultures. The Native Americans had been a strong and vibrant part of North American history, but what the government did to these people is difficult to understand and accept.
• In 1987, Congress passed Public Law 100-192, designating two of the routes taken by the Cherokee people in their removal as a National Historic Trail within the National Trails System. Today, it is best known as "The Trail of Tears".
• The forced removal of the Indians remains a black mark on American history, and reminds those who desire freedom, that all people deserve a life of liberty regardless of race, religion, or ethnicity.