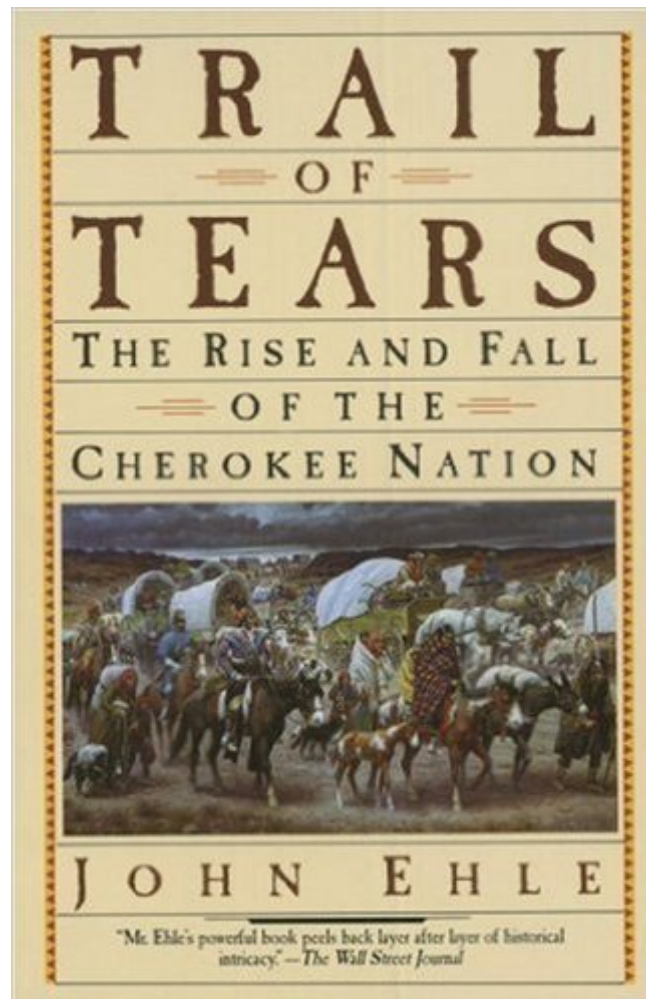


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Trail Of Tears: The Rise And Fall Of The Cherokee Nation



Synopsis

The fascinating portrayal of the Cherokee nation, filled with Native American legend, lore, and religion -- a gripping American drama of power, politics, betrayal, and ambition. B & W photographs

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars See all reviews (144 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

John Ehle, a native son of North Carolina, has dedicated most of his life toward using his pen to bring to life the rich history of his birthstate. With Trail of Tears, he has succeeded again where so many others, in this day and age of political correctness and historical revisionism, have failed. Ehle's work is factually rich, it is obvious Mr. Ehle spent many hours in archives thoroughly researching the book's subject matter. The book's narrative structure is compelling, focusing on the role of several prominent families within the Cherokee Nation to animate the hierarchical structure of Cherokee society and the stratification of power therein. Some readers will be shocked to discover how pervasive European culture was within significant elements of the Cherokee nation in North Carolina. The curiosity of most readers will be piqued again and again with the factually accurate exposure to the structure of the Cherokee's -- Christian churches, post office, town hall -- how they made a concerted effort to adapt to the European white world in an effort to integrate, and therefore survive, amidst a sea of change occurring during the 19th century. Mr. Ehle's work has been criticized for its depiction of wealthy, landed Cherokee's as slave owners. This evidence flies in the face of the more contemporary interpretation of the brotherhood of the oppressed alleged to exist

between persecuted American Indians and the African slave population. This notion is patently false. At the time, the Cherokees were neither persecuted nor advocates of slave rights. They were, as Mr. Ehle points out, consistently adapting the institutions of the white European settlers, good or bad, and slavery was one of those institutions the Cherokees adopted.

Trail of Tears: The Rise and Fall of the Cherokee Nation by John Ehle. Highly recommended. In Trail of Tears, John Ehle (who is, as far as I can tell, non-Native) sketches the people and events that led to the infamous Trail of Tears, the removal of the Cherokee Nation to "Indian Territory" (primarily Arkansas and Oklahoma) where they would "never" be bothered by whites again. The focus is on the "Treaty Party," consisting of Ridge, his son John Ridge, and his nephews Elias Boudinot and Stand Watie, along with Moravian, Methodist, and other missionaries sent to convert the Cherokees to Christianity and who are caught up in Cherokee/state/federal politics. Ehle's bias is evident in the title; the "rise" of the Cherokees is the effort, not wholly embraced by the Nation, of adapting to European-American culture, language, religion, and even livelihood (e.g., Cherokee hunting is uncivilized, whereas the adoption of American farming is preferable). The story begins with some background and the birth of a Cherokee man named Ridge not too long before the American Revolutionary War. The white impact has already begun to be felt, as one of Ridge's forebears is white, and he and his family are driven into the wilds by the war. After the war ends, the new Americans have one craving—land and more land. A gold strike in Georgia adds to the fever. The Cherokee, along with the Choctaw, Creek, and other southern tribes, are perceived as "wasting" land that their white counterparts should be entitled to. From this point on, it is clear that the juggernaut of American expansionism and greed will displace the Native peoples. The question is only how and when.

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