

## Last Land in Georgia Ceded by the Creeks

*The following paper was prepared under the direction of Dr. Jennifer Dickey at Kennesaw State University for an Introduction to Public History course.*

*“Last Land in Georgia Ceded by the Creeks” was chosen because of its important impact on the fate of the Creek (Muscogee) Confederacy. This essay explores how the land lottery in Georgia, removal of the remaining Creek tribes, and ceding of Creek lands helped develop the state of Georgia.*

The tract of land that would become Carroll County, Georgia's 31st county, was the subject of much controversy in the 1820s. The first Treaty of Washington (1805), the Treaty of Fort Jackson (1814), and the Treaty with the Creeks in 1818 had made official the cessation of all other Creek territories south and east of the tract that would become Carroll County.<sup>1</sup>

Conflict with the Creek nation was ongoing for over a century. In 1812 Major General Andrew Jackson, the Tennessee militia, and a group of Cherokees put down the Red Stick Uprising at Horseshoe Bend.<sup>2</sup> The victorious Jackson then brokered the Treaty of Fort Jackson that ceded much of Creek territory in South Georgia. One of Jackson's facilitators in the battle was Chief William McIntosh.<sup>3</sup> As head chief of the Lower towns and Speaker of the Nation, William McIntosh held much authority in the Creek Confederacy.<sup>4</sup> He and a handful of other Creek leaders signed the first Treaty of Indian Springs in 1821. This treaty ceded some of the remaining Creek territories in Georgia to the U.S. government. For McIntosh's facilitation in the brokering of the Treaty of Indian Springs he received title to several tracts of land, one of which hosts the historic McIntosh Inn located in Butts County.<sup>5</sup>

Again in 1825 William McIntosh would sign a new version of the Treaty of Indian

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1 All mentioned Treaties sourced from: Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties, Vol. 2 (Treaties), (Government Printing Office, Washington, 1904)

3 Hudson, Charles. *The Southeastern Indians.*, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1976) 427-472;.Saunt, Claudio. “Creek Indians” in New Georgia Encyclopedia [database online]. Last updated July 20, 2018.

4 American State Papers: Indian Affairs, Vol. II: 569-572

5 Stock, Melissa. “William McIntosh (ca. 1778-1825)” in New Georgia Encyclopedia [database online]. Last updated October 25, 2018.

Springs at the McIntosh Inn. The new Treaty of Indian Springs (1825) would cede all remaining Creek territory in Georgia including the land titled to McIntosh in the first Treaty of Indian Springs. This treaty was declared fraudulent by President John Quincy Adams based on the reality that William McIntosh did not represent the whole Creek nation.<sup>3</sup> Creek law was specific on the terms of land cessation, and since McIntosh had acted without full support of the Creek Nation, his punishment would be execution. On April 30, 1825, Chief William McIntosh was put to death by a contingent of Upper Creek warriors and Chief Menawa at the McIntosh plantation, Lockchau Talofau, in Carroll County.<sup>5</sup>

The death of Chief William McIntosh did not change the fate of the Creek territories in Georgia. Georgia Governor George Michael Troup, who was cousin to Chief William McIntosh, chose to uphold and execute the terms of the second Treaty of Indian Springs despite calls for its withdrawal by President John Quincy Adams. In May 1827 land surveyors began to survey the tract of land ceded in the second Indian Springs treaty where they found many Creeks still living on the land.<sup>6</sup> Governor Troup, still upholding the Treaty of Indian Springs (1825), began pressuring the remaining Creeks to vacate the land. One such pressure was the drawing of a land lottery in 1827 which doled out the ceded lands covered in the defunct Treaty of Indian Springs (1825).<sup>7</sup> In November 1827 the second Treaty of Washington was signed, which relinquished all Creek territory in Georgia to the US government. This new Treaty of Washington also rendered the Treaty of Indian Springs (1825) null and void, declared all land titles issued after treaty null and void, and guaranteed assistance to any Creeks choosing to immigrate to land west of the Mississippi.<sup>8</sup>

In 1829 Andrew Jackson assumed the office of President, and a year later in 1830 the

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5 Stock, Melissa. "William McIntosh (ca. 1778-1825)" in New Georgia Encyclopedia [database online]. Last updated October 25, 2018.

6 Hudson, Charles. *The Southeastern Indians.*, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1976) 427-472.

7 *Reprint of official register of land lottery of Georgia 1827*, 1967. Baltimore: The Genealogical Publishing Company.

8 Snyder, Christina. Second treaty of Washington (1826). in Encyclopedia of Alabama [database online]. Last updated October 27, 2014.

Indian Removal Act passed the Senate and the House of Representatives and was signed by Jackson. This bill forced all Native Americans in the Southeast to reservations in Oklahoma, an event now known as the Trail of Tears.<sup>9</sup>

**Marker Text:** Bowdon is near the geographical center of the last land in Georgia owned by the Creek Nation and ceded to the U.S. This tract approximately 550 sq. mi. in area is 80 mi long, and 10 mi. wide at the widest point. When Carroll County was surveyed in 1827, it was discovered that all of some districts and parts of others were actually still Creek Territory and till beyond the limits of the Treaties of Jan. 24 and March 31, 1826. An additional treaty, signed at the Creek Agency Nov. 15, 1817, ceded all remaining Creek lands lying in the charted limits of the State of Georgia – Tract 141.

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9 Hudson, Charles. *The Southeastern Indians.* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1976) 455.

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