



# CHEROKEE GENEALOGY

**This guide contains a sample of The Newberry Library resources on this topic. Consult a reference librarian, the library web site, or catalog for more details.**

The Newberry holds one of the country's foremost collections for the study of American Indians. In addition to consulting this sheet, check the catalog under the subject heading "Cherokee Indians."

If you or current family members are not presently on the tribal rolls, its best to first research the family in the same fashion you would any other American family from the late 19th century to the present (obtain copies of death certificates, seek out cemetery information, identify families in the 1900, 1910, and 1920 census, etc). Then begin searching Cherokee sources.

Much of Cherokee genealogical research is based on tribal rolls compiled during the 19th and early 20th centuries. The researcher should know the reasons for their creation in order to make the best use of them.

Cherokee names can take three forms on the rolls: a transliteration from the Cherokee language (for example, "Oo-ta-tie"), a translation from the Cherokee language (for example, "Sleeping Rabbit"), an English name (both first and last). There can also be combinations of the three.

The major division to bear in mind is that of Eastern Cherokee and Western Cherokee. Residing in the southeastern United States, most Cherokees were transported in 1838-39 to "Indian Territory" in what is now northeastern Oklahoma, although some Cherokees, known as "Old Settlers," had preceded them by several years.

Those west of the Mississippi became the "Western Cherokee", while those who avoided removal were the nucleus of the "Eastern Cherokee" in western North Carolina and adjacent areas. There were probably people with Cherokee blood who never made it onto any of the rolls. Rolls for Cherokees prior to the general removal are also referred to as Eastern Cherokee rolls.

## BIBLIOGRAPHIES AND GUIDES

**American Indians: A Select Catalog of National Archives Microfilm Publications.** Washington: National Archives, 1995. Call No. Local History Ref Z1209.2.U5 U52 (2nd floor open shelf).

Kirkham, E. Kay. **Our Native Americans and Their Records of Genealogical Value.** Logan, UT: Everton, 1980-1984. Call No. Local History Ref Z1209.2.N67 K57 (2nd floor open shelf). 2 vols.

## ROLLS

Indexing and cross-referencing for various rolls in books compiled by Bob Blankenship. Call No. range: Local History Ref E99.C5 (2nd floor open shelf).

### **Enrollment Cards of the Five Civilized Tribes.**

Call No. Microfilm 1083.

These are the final rolls from the early 20th century. First consult the index on Reel 1 for a card number. The table of contents at the beginning of Reel 1 will tell you which microfilm reel you need for that card number. It is important to note the various categories, such as Cherokee by blood, Cherokee by marriage, Cherokee freedmen (African-American), etc.

**Dawes Rolls.** Consult the Enrollment cards.

### **Guion Miller Rolls.**

Call No. Microfilm 1181.

Identifies those who were alive in 1906 that were members of the Eastern Cherokee or descendants of Eastern Cherokee at the time of the treaties of 1835/36 or 1845. Includes later Western Cherokee. Index and table of contents on reel 1. Accepted and rejected claims intermixed. Some documentary material included, although the full applications are found in another microfilm set not held by the Newberry.

You may also wish to consult the transcriptions in Jerry W. Jordan's series **Cherokee By Blood**, Call No. Local History Ref E99.C5 J63 (2nd floor open shelf), which, though incomplete, is comprehensively indexed, and includes some, of the relevant miscellaneous testimony found on reels 7-11. Reel 12 includes various other rolls (including Chapman, Drennan, and Hester) plus indexing.

**Old Settler Rolls.** Cross referencing with descendants between 1851 Old Settler roll and 1896 roll found in David K. Hampton's **Cherokee Old Settlers: the 1896 Old Settler payroll and the 1851 Old Settler payroll.** Call No. Ayer folio E9.C5 H35 in Special Collections on 4th floor).

## MISCELLANEOUS

Starr, Emmet. **History of the Cherokee Indians.** Call No. Local History Ref E99.C5S8 (2nd floor open shelf). Originally published 1921, contains much genealogy and biography.

Tyner, James W and Alice Tyner Timmons. **Our People and Where They Rest.** 12 vols. Call No. Ayer folio E99.C5 T97 (Special Collections on 4th floor). Oklahoma cemetery data.

Wever, Orpha J. **Probate Records, Northern District Cherokee Nation.** Call No. Ayer folio F693.W48 (Special Collections on 4th floor). Vol. 1 1893-1904. Vol. 2 1904-1908.