



# National Archives and Records Administration

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## ***Eastern Cherokee Enrollments and Census Enumerations, 1835–1940***

The Eastern Band of Cherokees originated in 1838, when more than 1,000 Cherokees, resisting efforts by the Federal Government to forcibly relocate the nation to reservations west of the Mississippi River, fled to the mountains of Tennessee and North Carolina. Approximately 300 Cherokees were living on tribal lands in 1838 and claimed U.S. citizenship. By 1848, the U.S. Congress agreed to recognize the Eastern Cherokees as long as North Carolina also recognized them as permanent residents. North Carolina did not do so until almost 20 years later. In 1882 the Eastern Cherokee Reservation was established on approximately 56,668 acres in Cherokee, Graham, Jackson, Macon, and Swain Counties, North Carolina.

### **Special Enrollment and Claims Records, 1906–1910**

Pursuant to an act of 1902, the Eastern Cherokees filed three suits in the U.S. Court of Claims for funds due them under their treaties of 1835, 1836, and 1845 with the United States. The court awarded over \$1 million to be distributed to all Cherokees living on May 28, 1906, who could prove that they were members of the Eastern Cherokee nation at the time of the treaties, or descended from members who did not subsequently claim affiliation with another tribe.

### **Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (RG 75)**

\_\_\_M685, *Records Relating to the Enrollment of Eastern Cherokees by Guion Miller, 1908–1910*. 12 rolls. DP. In 1906, the U.S. Court of Claims appointed Guion Miller to be Special Commissioner to determine who was eligible to participate in the 1906 award. This publication reproduces the roll of Eastern Cherokees, Miller's reports, an index to findings on individual applications, and related testimony Miller and his staff took from applicants in 1908 and 1909. **Roll 1** contains a name index that provides application numbers. **Rolls 2–6** contain enrollment cards in numerical order by application number. The cards indicate whether the application was accepted or rejected. Volume and page notations on the numerical cards usually refer to information located in the miscellaneous testimony on **rolls 7–11**. **Roll 12** contains copies of earlier enrollments of Eastern Cherokees from 1851 (the Chapman, Drennen, and Old Settler Rolls), 1854 (a supplement to the Siler Roll), and 1884 (the Hester Roll).

### **Records of the U.S. Court of Claims (RG 123)**

\_\_\_M1104, *Eastern Cherokee Applications of the U.S. Court of Claims, 1906–1909*. 348 rolls. DP. This publication contains applications filed by individuals who wished to participate in the 1906 Court of Claims award. The applications include the applicant's English and Indian names, residence, age, place of birth, name of spouse, names of children, place of birth and date of death of parents and grandparents, names and ages of brothers and sisters, and names of uncles and aunts. The records are arranged by application number. **Roll 1** contains the index to the applications.

### **Office of Indian Affairs Census Rolls (RG 75)**

\_\_\_T496, *Census Roll of Cherokee Indians East of the Mississippi and Index to the Roll, 1835*. 1 Roll. This publication contains the Henderson Roll (named for Daniel Henderson, who directed the census), an enumeration of Cherokees living in Alabama, Georgia, and Tennessee who registered to

participate in the removal to Indian Territory under the terms of the New Echota Treaty (although not all registrants actually went). It lists heads of households and gives information concerning each family and its property.

\_\_\_1773, *Eastern Cherokee Census Rolls, 1835–1884*. 3 rolls. DP. This publication includes several historical Eastern Cherokee census rolls, each compiled for different administrative reasons, with different formats, and containing different amounts of information. Most of the rolls were made to determine eligibility for payments due under provisions of the 1835 treaty, or were receipt rolls for per capita payments made to tribal members. Some of the rolls are copies that were used by enrolling agents to assist them in their work. Most of the rolls are arranged by geographical location of residence, and most include alphabetical indexes of the names of persons enrolled. There are extra copies of some rolls (some annotated by later enrolling agents) and name indexes for most (but not all) of the census rolls. The rolls include the 1835 Henderson Roll; 1848 Mullay Roll (with 1868, 1871, and 1884 copies); 1851 Siler Roll; 1852 Chapman Roll; 1854 Act of Congress Roll; 1867 Powell Roll; 1869 Swetland Roll; and 1884 Hester Roll.

\_\_\_M595, *Indian Census Rolls, 1885–1940*. 692 rolls. DP. The records are arranged by Indian agency, sub-agency, or other jurisdiction; then chronologically by census year. There is no index. Agents or superintendents in charge of Indian reservations usually submitted census rolls each year, as required by an act of July 4, 1884 (23 Stat. 98). The data on the rolls vary, but usually gives the individual's English name, Indian name, or both; roll number; age or date of birth; sex; and relationship to the head of the family. Beginning in 1930, the rolls also show the degree of Indian blood, marital status, ward status, and place of residence. For certain years, including 1935, 1936, 1938, and 1939, only supplemental rolls of additions and deletions were compiled. Eastern Cherokee censuses are located on the following rolls: **roll 22** (1898–99, 1904, 1906, 1909–12, 1914); **roll 23** (1915–22); **roll 24** (1923–29); **roll 25** (1930–32); and **roll 26** (1933–39).

### **The Federal Decennial Census, 1870–1930**

It is rare to find Eastern Cherokees enumerated in the early Federal decennial censuses from 1790 to 1860. Beginning in 1870, however, the Eastern Cherokees were counted among the populations of Cherokee, Graham (established 1872), Jackson, Macon, and Swain (established 1871) Counties, North Carolina. In 1900 and 1910, Eastern Cherokees were enumerated on special "Indian Population" schedules, which contained additional information such as the degree of Indian blood. In 1880, 1920, and 1930, they were included on the general population schedules (but the latter also gave the degree of Indian blood).

### **Related Records**

\_\_\_M1059, *Selected Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs Relating to the Cherokees of North Carolina, 1851–1905*. 7 Rolls. DP. This publication contains sporadic correspondence about the Cherokees in North Carolina, including administrative matters such as the establishment of their reserves and related litigation. Letters received during 1851–1875 are arranged by year, then alphabetically by the correspondent's surname or the name of the organization, and then numerically by register number. Letters received after 1875 are arranged by year, then alphabetically by author or subject, and then chronologically by date of receipt.

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