

Background Information

President Mirabeau Lamar and Cherokee Relations

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The Cherokee Nation were an important and powerful group in the southeastern United States. Many Cherokees migrated west to Missouri, Arkansas, and Texas as a result of wars, epidemics, and food shortages. Cherokees settled in Texas near the Red River.

As a result of increased American settlement, a group of about sixty families under Chief Bowles (Duwali) settled in Rusk County near the Caddos. Distrust between American settlers and the Cherokees grew, especially after the Cherokees developed a relationship with the Mexican government in the hopes of gaining a legal title to their land. Attempts to secure this title from Mexico before 1832 were unsuccessful.

During the Texas Revolution, Texas officials promised the Cherokees title to their lands in return for neutrality. To protect their ability to gain title to their lands from either side, the Cherokee remained neutral between Texas and Mexico during the Texas Revolution.

Sam Houston was an adopted member of the Cherokee Nation, a personal friend of Chief Bowles, and an advocate for the Cherokee people. As President of the Republic of Texas, he negotiated a permanent reservation for the Cherokee in East Texas, but the treaty, never ratified by the Texas Congress, was declared null and void in 1837.