

The Modoc Tribe of Oklahoma

(Oklahoma Social Studies Standards, OSDE)

Tribe: Modoc Tribe of Oklahoma

Tribal website(s): www.modoctribe.net

Modoc Main Office/Tribal Administration

418 G Street SE
Miami, OK 74354
918-542-1190
modoctribe@cableone.net



The Modoc Tribe of Oklahoma is a federally recognized Indian Tribe organized under the Oklahoma Indian Welfare Act of 1936 with a constitution and bylaws approved by the United States Secretary of the Interior on July 27, 1990.

1. Migration/movement/forced removal

Oklahoma History C3 Standard 2.3 *“Integrate visual and textual evidence to explain the reasons for and trace the migrations of Native American peoples including the Five Tribes into present-day Oklahoma, the Indian Removal Act of 1830, and tribal resistance to the forced relocations.”*

Oklahoma History C3 Standard 2.7 *“Compare and contrast multiple points of view to evaluate the impact of the Dawes Act which resulted in the loss of tribal communal lands and the redistribution of lands by various means including land runs as typified by the Unassigned Lands and the Cherokee Outlet, lotteries, and tribal allotments.”*

As more and more settlers arrived each year, more and more land was needed to farm and to graze. As a result of the enormous pressure of white infiltration into Indian lands in California and Oregon, the Modoc, Klamath and Yahooskin Band of Snake tribes ceded their lands in the United States government and signed a joint reservation treaty in 1864. The Modoc agreed to live alongside the Klamath Indians, their traditional enemy.

The treaty signed in 1864 was finally ratified in 1870. For the following two years Captain Jack refused to return to the reservation, requesting instead a separate Modoc

reservation on Lost River. But after living in violation of the Treaty ratified in 1870 for more than two years, the U.S. Army became determined to capture the wandering Modoc and return them to the Klamath reservation in Oregon. An attempt to return them to the reservation fueled the explosive Modoc War.

On October 12, 1873, 155 Modoc, 42 men, 59 women, and 54 children were loaded on 27 wagons and departed Fort Klamath, Oregon under the guard of Captain H.C. Hasbrouck and soldiers of Battery B, 4th Artillery. The Commissioner of Indian Affairs had decided to place them at the Quapaw Agency in Indian Territory; however, strict orders had been given not to reveal their destination.

The terrible 2,000-mile winter ride in railroad cars intended for hauling cattle finally ended on November 16, 1873 when 153 Modoc men, women, and children arrived in Baxter Springs, Kansas cold and hungry.

In Baxter Springs, Captain Wilkinson conferred with Hiram W. Jones, Indian Agent at the Quapaw Agency as to where to place the Modoc. It was decided to locate them on Eastern Shawnee land where they would be under the direct supervision of Agent Jones. But Jones' Quapaw Agency was little prepared to care for 153 persons with little but loose blankets on their backs. With Scarfaced Charley in command and only one day's help from three non-Indians, the Modoc built their own temporary wood barracks two hundred yards from the agency headquarters. Some were housed in tents. These accommodations were to be their home until June of 1874 when 4,000 acres were purchased for them from the Eastern Shawnee.

The Quapaw Agency was located on Eastern Shawnee land in the northeast corner of Indian Territory now Ottawa County, Oklahoma. It was bounded on the north by the Kansas state line and on the east by the Missouri line. The Cherokee Nation formed its western and southern boundaries. The agency had been a sub-agency of the Neosho Agency until 1871 when they were jurisdictionally separated. The tribes constituting the Quapaw Agency were the Confederated Peoria, Eastern Shawnee, Miami, Ottawa, Quapaw, Seneca, and Wyandotte.

Original Homelands

The ancestral home of the Modoc Tribe of Oklahoma consisted of some 5,000 square miles along what is now the California-Oregon border. While their tribal territory encompassed only a small area, it was one of panoramic diversity. On the west loomed the perennially snow-capped peaks of the majestic Cascade Mountains; to the east was a barren wasteland of alkali flats; towering forests of Ponderosa pines were to the north while the Lava Beds, now a National Park, formed their southern boundary.

Location in Oklahoma

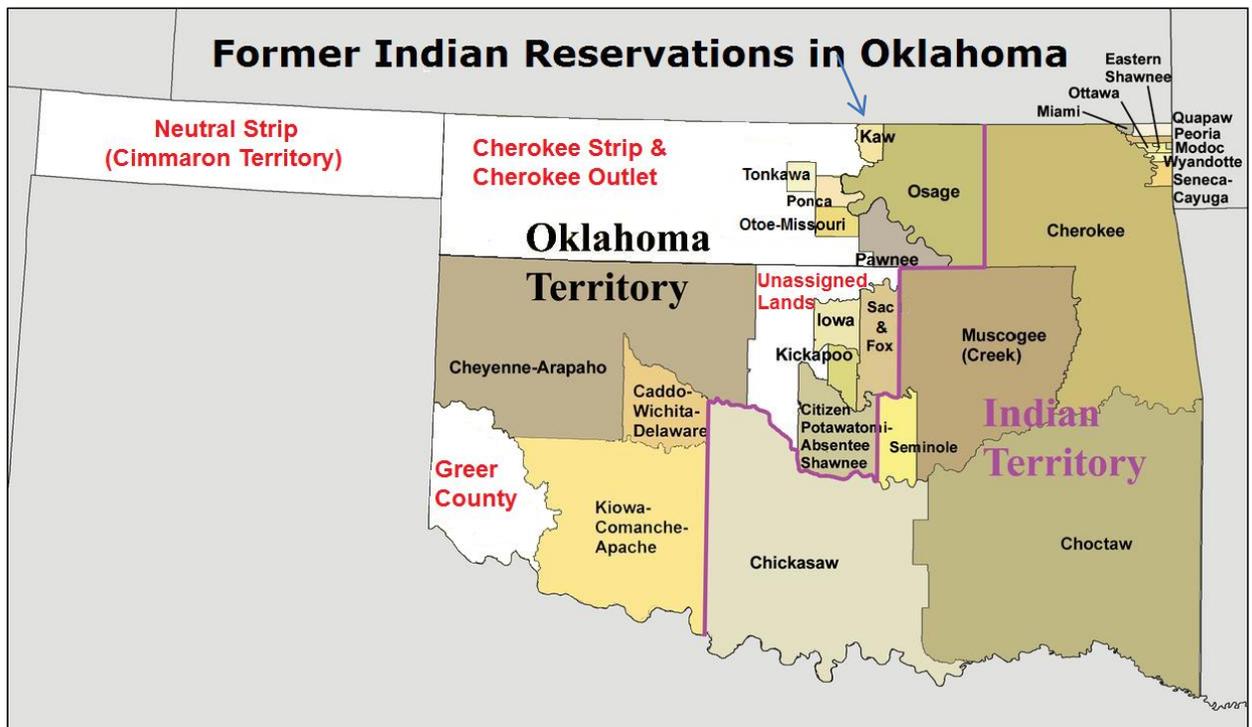
The Quapaw Agency was located on Eastern Shawnee land in the northeast corner of Indian Territory now Ottawa County, Oklahoma. It was bounded on the north by the

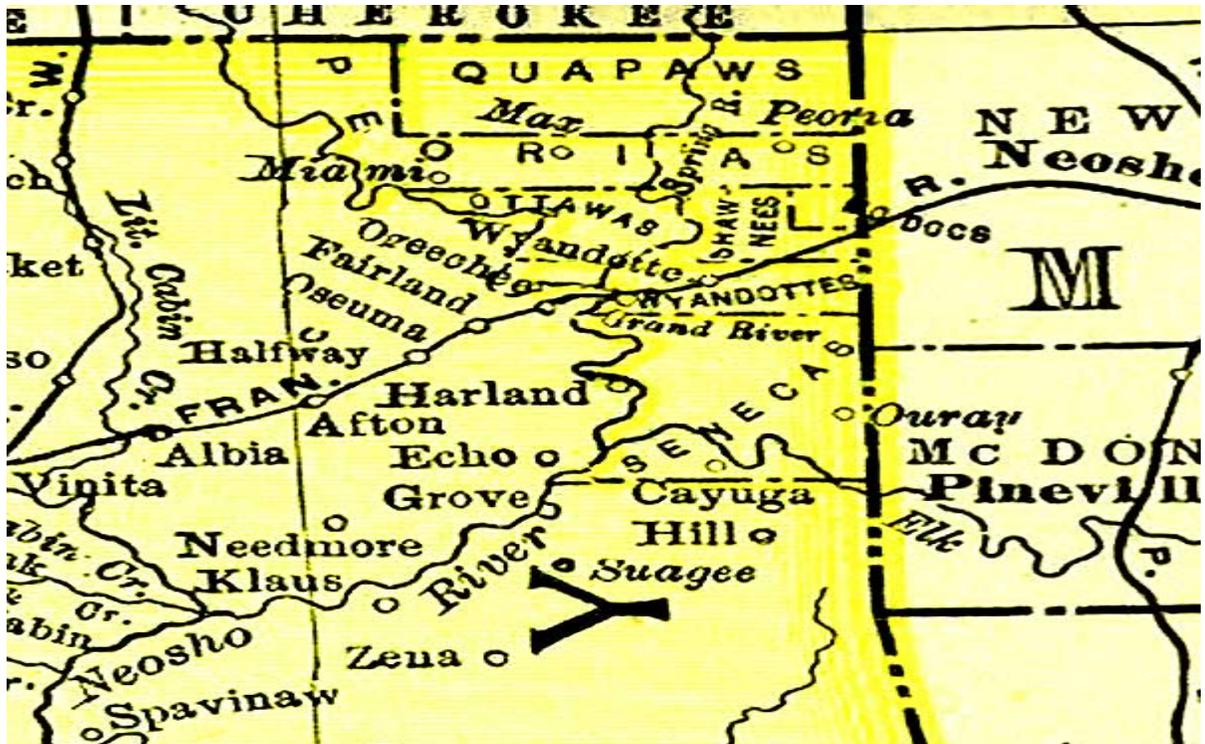
Kansas state line and on the east by the Missouri line. The Cherokee Nation formed its western and southern boundaries. The agency had been a sub-agency of the Neosho Agency until 1871 when they were jurisdictionally separated. The tribes constituting the Quapaw Agency were the Confederated Peoria, Eastern Shawnee, Miami, Ottawa, Quapaw, Seneca, and Wyandotte.

2. Maps

Oklahoma History C3 Standard 2.3 *“Integrate visual and textual evidence to explain the reasons for and trace the migrations of Native American peoples including the Five Tribes into present-day Oklahoma, the Indian Removal Act of 1830, and tribal resistance to the forced relocations.”* Maps of tribal hometowns before 1830; original homeland map

Tribal lands after 1830





3. Population Past/Present

- Total Tribal enrollment – 600 to 800
- Tribal enrollment in Oklahoma -
- Membership Criteria - Anyone applying for enrollment in the Modoc Tribe must meet the following qualifications:

"An applicant for membership by enrollment shall furnish the tribal registrar with documented proof of ancestry tracing the individual back to a person listed on the current roll or the 1878 Quapaw Agency Modoc Census of Subsistence and Ration list.

Proof of ancestry shall include tribal enrollment cards, certified birth, death, marriage or baptismal certificates; church records; court records; census records or a roll or historical record of the Modoc Tribe of Oklahoma."

Persons, not already on the Modoc Roll, that are or have been enrolled with another Federal Recognized Tribe shall be ineligible for membership in the

Modoc Tribe of Oklahoma. This Section shall be interpreted to prohibit dual enrollment and membership transfers"

4. Government; Chiefs vs Chairman; Elected or Paternal

US Government C3 Standard 3.4 *“Summarize and explain the relationships and the responsibilities between national and state governments including tribal and local governments.*

Oklahoma History C3 Standard *“The student will analyze the formation and development of constitutional government in Oklahoma. 1) Compare and contrast the development of governments among the Native American tribes, the movement for the state of Sequoyah. 2) Describe and summarize attempts to create a state constitution joining Indian and Oklahoma Territories including the impact of the Progressive and Labor Movements resulting in statehood on November 16, 1907.”*

- Pursuant to the Act of March 3, 1909, the United States government allowed the Modoc to return to Oregon. Records indicate that 29 returned; however, several had gone back prior to 1909. Both the Modoc who returned and those who chose to remain in their land of exile were enrolled at the Klamath Agency. As the years passed, the Modoc language, customs and culture were forgotten.

The Modoc and Klamath tribes were terminated from federal supervision in 1956. Several years later all tribes in the northeastern corner of Oklahoma banded together to establish the Inter-Tribal Council, Inc. of Northeastern Oklahoma. At that time, the Modoc formed an unofficial tribal government. Bert Hayman, whose mother had been one of the youngest prisoners of war, became the first tribal chairman; followed by Vernon "Dutch" Walker, grandson of James Long, the "Youngest Modoc Warrior."

Bill G. Follis great grandson of James Long, became chairman in 1973. When the tribe was granted Federal Recognition in 1978, Chief Follis became the first federally recognized chief of the Modoc in Oklahoma since the death of Bogus Charley in 1880. There were several Modoc chiefs at the Quapaw Agency after Bogus but they were only recognized as such by the Modoc people.



Chief Follis, an avid horseman and rancher, continues to lead the Modoc Tribe of Oklahoma. He was responsible for obtaining federal recognition for the tribe and reestablishing a tribal land base. The Modoc Tribal Complex, located at 515 G Street, S.E., Miami, Oklahoma was completed in the early part of 1982. The complex houses tribal headquarters, tribal archives and library. The library is the only one in the area dedicated solely to native American history and genealogy. Chief Follis has also initiated numerous economic programs such as Red Cedar Recycling, opened to the community in 1996. In 1998, the Modoc and Miami tribes entered into a joint venture to establish The Stables; an off track betting and high stakes bingo establishment located next door to the Modoc Tribal Complex. Also, under Chief Follis' leadership, the tribe has reintroduced bison to the Modoc prairie with a thriving and ever growing herd. Today, the tribal office administration numerous federal and state programs that benefit tribal members, as well as other Native Americans in the area.



5. Language Group

Oklahoma History C3 Standard 4.1 *“Compare and contrast the successes and failures of the United States policy of assimilation of the Native Americans in Oklahoma including the passage of the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 and the effects of the Indian Boarding Schools (1880s-1940s) upon Native Americans’ identity, culture, traditions, and tribal government and sovereignty.”*

The Klamath-Modoc language is considered by most linguists to be part of the [Penutian](#) family of languages, possibly related most closely to the Sahaptian languages. Originally there were two dialects of the language, spoken by the Klamath and Modoc tribes of Oregon and Northern California. In the past, it was easy for the speakers of these two dialects to understand each other. Today only one truly fluent speaker (of the Klamath dialect) survives, with a few dozen other elders who remember something of the language. Although Klamath-Modoc is severely endangered, some young people are working to keep their ancestral tongue alive.

6. Cultural Identifiers - ie. Mound Builders; Plains

Oklahoma History C3 Standard 4.1 *“Compare and contrast the successes and failures of the United States policy of assimilation of the Native Americans in Oklahoma including the passage of the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 and the effects of the Indian Boarding Schools (1880s-1940s) upon Native Americans’ identity, culture, traditions, and tribal government and sovereignty.”*

When the Modoc War began, the Modoc warriors with their wives and children retreated to the nearby Lava Beds. The war was fought 130 years ago yet it stands out in American military history as one of the most incredible of Indian wars. Captain Jack did not muster more than 57 braves throughout the war but for almost six months he withstood an army that came to number over a 1,000 men with their small arms supported by mountain howitzers and cohorn mortars. He lost only six men by direct combat while the U.S. Army suffered 45 dead including E.R.S. Canby, the only general to lose his life in an Indian war. The Modoc War cost the United States government, at its lowest estimate, half a million dollars. Considering the number of the enemy, it was probably the costliest Indian war ever fought. In comparison, the reservation requested by the Modoc on Lost River would have cost, at most, \$10,000.



When the war finally ended on June 1, 1873, Captain Jack and five of his warriors, Schonchin John, Black Jim, Boston Charley, Barncho and Sioux proved to be the only Indians in American history tried by a military commission for war crimes. Gallows had been constructed even before the trial began, and it was evident the verdict would be death by hanging. The date set for the execution was October 3, 1873. But just before the executions were to take place, the sentences of Barncho and Sioux were changed to life imprisonment at Alcatraz Island. However, they were not informed of the change in their sentences until after they, along with the other Modoc men, women and children were forced to watch as their leaders were hanged. Captain Jack proved to be the only Indian leader executed for participation in one of our country's many Indian wars.

Oklahoma Historical Society source to consider for Boarding Schools:
<http://digital.library.okstate.edu/encyclopedia/entries/a/am012.html>

7. Fine arts

Oklahoma History C3 Standard 4.1 *“Compare and contrast the successes and failures of the United States policy of assimilation of the Native Americans in Oklahoma including the passage of the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 and the effects of the Indian Boarding Schools (1880s-1940s) upon Native Americans’ identity, culture, traditions, and tribal government and sovereignty.”*

8. Significant events (i.e. Massacres, Battles, Supreme Court cases...)

Oklahoma History C3 Standard 2.4C *“Summarize the impact of the Civil War and Reconstruction Treaties on Native American peoples, territories, and tribal sovereignty*

including the a) Required enrollment of the Freedmen, b) Second Indian Removal and the role of the Buffalo Soldiers, c) Significance of the Massacre at the Washita, d) Reasons for the reservation system, and e) Establishment of the western military posts of Fort Sill, Fort Supply, and Fort Reno.”

The treaty signed in 1864 was finally ratified in 1870. For the following two years Captain Jack refused to return to the reservation, requesting instead a separate Modoc reservation on Lost River. But after living in violation of the Treaty ratified in 1870 for more than two years, the U.S. Army became determined to capture the wandering Modoc and return them to the Klamath reservation in Oregon. An attempt to return them to the reservation fueled the explosive Modoc War.



Oklahoma Historical Society: <http://www.okhistory.org/research/indianrecs>

9. Current Information on tribe

While it is true tribal rolls no longer carry the name of a full blood Modoc, it is a tribute to their courage and determination and perhaps, ironic that despite General Sherman's efforts to wipe the Modoc from the face of the earth, they have survived. As their story continues to be written, the legacy of the Modoc will always be one of pride, strength and uncompromising desire to carry on.

10. Other information (i.e. Elder testimonials; Guest speakers; Literature; Famous Tribal members...)

Sources:

Oklahoma Historical Society source to consider for Indian Removal information:
<http://digital.library.okstate.edu/encyclopedia/entries/i/in015.html>

The Library of Congress: <http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/Indian.html>

Oklahoma Indian Country Guide, Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department
[NIE 2011 OK Indian Country Guide\[\[1\].pdf](#)

Oklahoma Historical Society

Oklahoma Indian Country Guide, Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department *One State Many Nations*

The Library of Congress

The Modoc Tribe, tribal website