

## My trail of tears

My name is John Ross, I am 75 years old. During my childhood, I took part in “the trail of tears” in 1838 when I was 14 years old.

Before the arrival of the settlers, I lived in a peaceful farm with my father Derick, my mother Victoria, my grandfather Josh and my sister Julie. In this time, I didn't go to school because I helped my family in the farm. Everything was good...

During a tormented night in October 1838, the settlers arrived in the farm and we were forced to move . Why ? Because we had a lot of gold in Georgia. If we refused, the soldiers dragged my family and then they put fire to the house. We were obliged ! My family and I, and approximately 17000 Cherokees were forced to move.

The journey took six months, it was terrible. First, the weather was not good. It was very cold, on the trail, there was a lot of sleet and we were barefoot. After two months we were very tired. In February we arrived in the hills region. It was very exhausting... During the first week my grandfather died because the exposure was very important. I was very sad but at this moment my only wish was the arrival in Oklahoma.

In the fifth month we didn't have a lot of food. But we had hope !

After six months, six terrible months we arrived in Oklahoma.

When we arrived the Indian tribe there wasn't very happy because they had to share the food ! In the beginning to adapt was very complicated because the life was different, but after more and more months we became Apachees !

Today I am the leader of the Apachees. My tribe and I created associations for the civil rights of the citizens. We have hope !

**Tom G.**