On this 44 acre site, a tradition of learning and the arts sent its taproot down on May 7, 1851 when the doors of the Cherokee Female Seminary opened to offer instruction in Latin, algebra, botany, vocal music, geography, grammar and other subjects. A similar school for boys opened the preceding day three miles northwest of here.

By establishing these seminaries for their young men and women the people of the Cherokee Nation affirmed their decision to spend a large portion of their sparse treasury upon an investment for the future... the culture and education of their youth.

A disastrous fire in 1887 left only columns from the original girl's school standing today. They serve to remind us here tonight that The Theatre at Tsa-la-gi is placed on grounds steeped in a tradition of culture and knowledge. Land that once heard the quick clash of shod horse hooves on gravel drives and soft voices in the still night.

Sometimes, it is said, you can hear them now. Listen.
The buildings and activities here at Tsa-la-gi have progressed from ideas to reality under the dynamic guidance of Cherokee leader, W. W. Keeler.

The Theatre at Tsa-la-gi

This outdoor amphitheater seats 1800 guests for each performance. The entire seating area and stage were excavated to give the play a suitable background. Providing the effects needed to present this production correctly required special lighting units. You can see that the forepart of the covered area above and behind the seats is a light gallery with 60 lights used during a performance. Unusual effects are created by the panels at stage rear where the mood of the moment is intensified by projecting shifting forms and shapes that vary in hue and brightness to match the scene's emotional content. The acoustic design and seating arrangement of this theatre assure every audience member that no word of the performance will be lost. In every detail, seeing, seating and sound, this new theatre is built to bring you into the drama. May you find it pleasing.
We are only now emerging from a period where history recorded this nation as agriculturally oriented. As a tide of immigration surged into this new country, we necessarily formed an agricultural economy where power is measured by land ownership. The play you see here in The Theatre at Tsa-la-gi describes the result of a power struggle.

The play should be placed in historical perspective. It is about a people and their land. Since the drama takes place on new ground, the players must represent the vanquished in a land cession. The path of the Cherokee's displacement is called, "The trail where they cried." What did they leave in the old land and why did they go?

Before colonization, the Cherokees controlled about 40,000 square miles in the southern Allegheny mountains. Today this area comprises southwest Virginia, the western portions of the Carolinas and parts of Tennessee, Georgia and Alabama.

The pressures on these people for this land can be measured by a series of treaties between the government and the Cherokee Nation between 1794 and 1819 involving land cessions which reduced the Indian holdings to about half their original size. This remaining land was the cause of great pressure from outside which created dissension within the Cherokee Nation. The forces closing in on the land were inexorable. President Jackson had no sympathy for the plight of these people. The tribe split over the questions of emigration to new lands and the value of their old.
The Trail of Tears
Westward Routes

- A group recognized by the U.S. Government signed a treaty of removal. They were opposed by many of the Indian people, led by John Ross; but the deed was done. Those who signed the treaty also signed a warrant for trouble because it was against the sacred law of the Cherokee Nation to sign away land without the common consent of the people.
- Now the remaining Cherokees had to move west and join some of their number, about 5,000, who had already gone to new lands on the sunset side of the Mississippi River.
- The journey was long and hard. Many cried in sorrow. Many died. The drama begins...
The beloved wife of John Ross, Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation, has died on the Trail of Tears when Scene 1 opens. Ross is comforted by the Cherokee statesman, Jesse, and his son, Dennis. At the trail’s end, in Scene 2, each contingent of new arrivals is issued rations in accordance with an agreement made between the U. S. Government and the Cherokees. The contractor for the rations is cheating the Cherokees, but is forced to stop by the courageous action of John Ross. Jesse and Ross, in Scene 3, discuss with foreseeing the reaction of the band of Cherokees who moved west several years earlier after signing the illegal Treaty of 1835. There is great resentment between the two factions. This is aggravated by the actions of some of the early westerners who had sold land to the white men in violation of the Cherokees’ sacred laws.

Following their conversation, we meet some of the western Cherokees. Major Ridge and his son, John, enter, accompanied by Elias Boudinot, his small son, and the commanding personality, Stand Watie. Sarah also enters. Dennis had journeyed over the Trail of Tears to join her. After the young lovers embrace, leaders of the opposing factions talk about the division which time and distance have caused among the Cherokees. The question of tribal leadership brings the threat of violence between the representatives of the eastern and western factions. Finally, John Ross calls on Sequoyah to act as leader of a council to settle the question. Sequoyah asks for speakers from the eastern and western bands. John Ross answers that there is only one Cherokee people. Stand Watie is irked by Ross’ statement and denounces him. The council threatens to become violent again, but Sequoyah restores order and Jesse proposes a solution. Unfortunately, there seems no way to placate both factions. The council ends on an angry note. While work begins on calling another council. Sarah and Dennis Ross continue their romance at the site of Ross Cottage, the new home John Ross is building. Jesse enters this lighthearted scene with news of a terrible tragedy.

Several leaders of the western band have been murdered in their signing the Treaty of 1835. Ross knows he will be accused of plotting these crimes. He acts quickly to disperse his family, Sarah and Dennis remain, and the scene ends with John Ross telling Dennis that a good government for the Cherokees will be established in these western lands. Sequoyah comes to John Ross in Scene 4 and tells him that he intends to leave. Ross pleads for him to remain, but the old leader will not stay. Scene 5 shifts to Washington, D. C. The continual efforts by Ross have finally borne fruit in an audience with President James K. Polk. We hear Secretary of War William Marcy and Senator Daniel Webster discussing the interview with President Polk. The Cherokee leaders enter. After discussion, they agree to a new treaty proposed by the President. A handshake between Ross and Stand Watie reunites the Cherokees into one nation. The reunion is celebrated in the victory dance and pageantry of Scene 6. Act I ends at the female seminary in the spring of 1861 as preparations are being made for the dance. Into this lighthearted scene comes the spectacle of the civil war which hangs over the United States. Stand Watie and John Ross position themselves on the question of aligning the Cherokee Nation with the North or the South. The division is made clear by a dialogue between Ross and Watie at the opening of Act II. A visit by Elias Boudinot to Stand Watie ends the act. Boudinot, in Scene 9, delivers a message from the Governor of Arkansas, asking that Stand Watie lead the Cherokees on the side of the Confederacy. He urges Watie to force John Ross into calling a tribal council to let the people vote on secession. Scene shifts to Ross Cottage where Superintendent Pike, Ross, Dennis and Stand Watie debate again the alliance of the Cherokees in this divided nation. Watie prevails. Then Scene 11 shows the effect of this action upon the lives of Dennis and his wife Sarah. Dennis is struck down, another victim of the hatred and division among the Cherokees. Entering the conflict on the side of the Confederacy, under the leadership of Watie, the Cherokees suffer. Scene 12 shows the result as Boudinot and Watie are confronted with bad news from every quarter. Finally, Watie, talking to Sarah, admits that he has been wrong. After the war, poverty again strikes down the proud Cherokees, and is described by Sarah in Scene 13. Gradually, they rebuild. Finally Oklahoma becomes a state. The play ends with scene 14 at Tahlequah in 1917 as Sarah and her great grandson Dennis attend the celebration which ends on a note of unity.
The theatre breaks its bounds when it leaves conventional buildings and finds new room in the outdoor night to flex its muscles with a production that builds in its viewers an emotional response as large as the environment.

Kermit Hunter has mastered this craft of bringing the theatre out of its chrysalis. Beginning with the celebrated UNTO THESE HILLS, followed by HORN IN THE WEST, HONEY IN THE ROCK and others, his work has received international recognition and acclaim.

Dr. Hunter comes from the land where the TRAIL OF TEARS began. This brings a special poignancy to his work reflected in tonight's drama. He is a native of West Virginia and has studied at Emory and Henry College, Ohio State University, The Juilliard School of Music and the University of North Carolina where he received his PhD.

Presently, Dr. Hunter is Dean of The School of the Arts at Southern Methodist University.
Director
ROBERT TELFORD

Musical staging and dancing
MARVIN GORDON

Music
DR. JACK KILPATRICK
The original score was envisioned by a Cherokee composer, Dr. Jack F. Kilpatrick whose work on the production was cut short by his untimely death. Portions of the music reflect extracts from some of Dr. Kilpatrick's previous work as incorporated into the play by its author.

Producer
MARTIN A. HAGERSTRAND
STAFF

Dr. David Weiss
Stage and Scene Designer

Dennis Schneider • Stage Manager

Wendell Cochran • Costumer

Bruce Miller • Technical Director

Jack Hagerstrand
Assistant Technical Director
CHARLES SEAT as John Ross, principal chief of the Cherokees

above, JOHN FERRIS as Dennis, Jessie’s

above left, GARLAND MCKINNEY as Rations Boss

left, ANGIE DAHMER as Talara, daughter of Dennis and Sarah

right, BETTY HAYNES as Mrs. Stand Wat

above, JOHN FERRIS as Dennis, Jessie’s

above left, GARLAND MCKINNEY as Rations Boss

left, ANGIE DAHMER as Talara, daughter of Dennis and Sarah

right, BETTY HAYNES as Mrs. Stand Wat
above, JOE SEARS as Daniel Webster

above right, JAMES MALONE as William Marcy, Secretary of War and Superintendent Pike

above, JOHN MANSFIELD as Stand Watie, a Cherokee patriot

left, LINDA THOMPSON as SARAH, niece of Stand Watie
DANCERS
1. Lana Kay Hart
2. Charles Gourd
3. Susan Duckworth
4. Danielle Glenn
5. Bill Clendenning

DAVID CUPP
Sequoyah and Dennis III

STEPHEN REYNOLDS
E. C. Boudinot

NOLA NOLEN
Dancer
VILLAGERS
1. Robyn Seat
2. Qualantah Chuleewah
3. Mikel Chuleewah
4. Toneh Chuleewah
5. Sylvia Napier
6. Karen Hawkins
7. Carol Guess
8. Susannah Chuleewah

PICTURES NOT AVAILABLE
ROBERT PLUMB
Jessie

EARL SQUIRES
President Polk

RON GURLEY
Reverend Worcester

JAMES SMYTHE
Jim Looney

BECKY BURROUGHGS
Amy

DANCERS
Frankie Drexelwater
Martha Drexelwater
Charles Ericson
Kim Jones
Paula Jones
Dennis Kianatobe
James Phillips
Danny Richardson
William Smith
Beverly Vecchio

VILLAGERS
Bessie Birdtail
Herman Birdtail
Johnny Birdtail
Richard Birdtail
Richard Birdtail Jr.
George Christie
Mike Devine
Sue Goard
Joe Haynes
Bobby Neugin
James Phillips
Danny Richardson
Roxie Smith
Charles Soap
Leroy Soap
THE PLAY

-ActOne-

SCENES

Time
1838-1907
Place-
here and
Washington, D.C.

Scene 1 - Along the Trail of Tears, winter 1838
Scene 2 - A field by the Illinois River near Tahlequah, June 1839
Scene 3 - Unfinished Ross home at Park Hill, June 1839
Scene 4 - same, two years later
Scene 5 - The White House, Washington, D.C., summer 1846
Scene 6 - Park Hill, a dressing room in the female academy. Evening of May 6, 1861
Scene 7 - The Public Square of Tahlequah, autumn 1846
Act Two

Scene 8 — Home of John Ross at Park Hill, summer 1861

Scene 9 — Home of Stand Watie south of Tahlequah, summer 1861

Scene 10 — Home of Ross, August 1861

Scene 11 — Home of Dennis Walking Horse, September 1861

Scene 12 — Home of Stand Watie, Spring 1865

Scene 13 — A cemetery near Tahlequah, Spring 1865

Scene 14 — The public square at Tahlequah, November 17, 1907
What was your mother’s name?

The Cherokees are a reserved people. They don’t easily communicate the rich store of legends and tales told among themselves to outsiders. The folk stories therefore are not easy to obtain. Especially since there is no person or clan now designated as story-tellers. A husband and wife team, of Cherokee descent, Dr. Jack F. Kilpatrick and Anna G. Kilpatrick was very successful in recording the Cherokee folk stories told by the people of these quiet hills and valleys. A wide selection of examples from their collection is covered in their book, “Friends of Thunder.”

When they obtained these stories, they often had to overcome a considerable diffidence in the people they were talking with. This reluctance to relate the old tales was often overcome by Mrs. Kilpatrick’s reply to the question, “What was your mother’s name?”

And so; these stories that may sound unusual until you remember they are translations from another language, another people and often, another time... from the Cherokees.
The Rabbit, The Bear and The Buzzard

The Rabbit and the Bear lived many years ago. The Bear was fat and the Rabbit was lean. One day they cooked beans. They decided that they needed some seasoning for the beans. Since the Bear was fat, he cut himself in the side and used some of his fat as a seasoning for the beans.

Later on, when the Bear was visiting the Rabbit, the Rabbit decided that he would try to get some fat off himself for his seasoning, but he nearly killed himself because he was so lean.

The Rabbit decided that he needed a doctor, so the Bear went for one.

He met the Crow first. "I'm not a doctor," said the Crow, "because I have black legs."

Later the Bear met the Terrapin. The Bear asked him if he could doctor.

The Terrapin said, "No, because I have red eyes."

Still later, the Bear met the Buzzard and asked if he could doctor.

"Yes, I'm a doctor," said the Buzzard.

Then the Bear said, "All right, come with me."

They went to the Rabbit's house and the Buzzard said, "When I doctor, all the doors must be closed."

When the Buzzard closed the door, he grabbed the Rabbit and began to eat him. While this was happening, the Rabbit of course, cried out in pain. The Bear said, "Why is the Rabbit making all those noises?"

"He is making those noises because every time I rub him, it hurts him," said the Buzzard.

That's all.

1. Kilpatrick, Jack G. and Anna F. Friends of Thunder. Dallas, 1964
Thunder and the Turtle were friends. One time they were talking to each other and the Turtle asked Thunder to be his fighting partner. Thunder asked the Turtle, “What can you do?”

The Turtle quickly ran and jumped over a small stick of wood and broke off a piece of the stick.

“This is what I can do,” he said proudly as he walked back to the side of Thunder, “What can you do?”

Thunder said, “I can do this,” and caused lightning to strike a nearby tree and shatter it into slivers.

Turtle was frightened and ran to a stream and jumped into the water. That’s when the Turtle began making his home in the water. The reason is because he’s afraid of Thunder and when it thunders and rains, he doesn’t come out of the water.

Thunder frightened him forever so they never became fighting partners.

Like the folk lore of many imaginative people, Cherokee stories tell the adventures of “The Little People” whom they often encounter. Here is a Cherokee story told by an elderly man that is being acted out here tonight in this excavated amphitheater.

THE LITTLE PEOPLE

“In the valley near my home there was a deep hole, and that is where these little people with magic powers lived. I sometimes went there and got together with them. They had a beautiful place to live. They used to have dances with music. Sometimes I would pass there at night and they were dancing and I could hear beautiful music. Sometimes I would just pass by, and at other times I would join them.”

What would the old man say if he passed by here tonight? Would he join us?
TO CATCH A GIRL

One of The Little People is reputed to have given this method to a young Cherokee. It may work.

"Say this when there is a young woman who ignores you. Sing this song and think of the young woman's name. When the sun comes up, early in the morning and is very large and red, face the sun and sing this song. You can't fail."

[Music notation]
The Crane has always been very clever. He was a fisherman and always rolled his pants-legs up to his knees while he was searching for crawdads and fish.

The Hummingbird was also living, even in those old times. He was very youthful and always wore a suit and a shiny necktie. His clothes were blue-black and also very shiny.

The young women all loved the Hummingbird. When they would see him coming they would begin to cheer and yell. These young women loved him very much because he was so good looking.

Their parents told them not to pay so much attention to the Hummingbird because it was only his good looks that were attracting them. He didn't work and wouldn't provide any food if they married him.

But the young women paid no attention to their parents. They didn't like the crane who worked and fished every day. The parents liked him because he always gave them some fish.

The Hummingbird married the prettiest of the young women. After they were married they had a good time all the time.

The Crane also asked for the hand of one of the young women, but was refused. He was told, “You are so ugly. You are not a good prospect,” by the young woman. Now this was the same young woman who later married the Hummingbird.

After a while, the beautiful young woman became hungry but the Hummingbird had never thought of any way to get food. She told him, “You don’t think about anything but your looks. I’m going to leave this hungry house.”

She left and went to the Crane’s house. There she said to the Crane, “Let’s get married and we can eat together then because you know how to get food. I see you carrying some every day.”

The Crane replied, “I tried to marry you once and you rejected me. Now you can just stay with the Hummingbird.” His feelings had been hurt.

Now the Hummingbird and Crane are not friends. They do not fly together and the Hummingbird pecks at the Crane when he finds him around the Hummingbird’s nesting place. They always fight.
MAGIC AND INCANTATIONS
Cherokee magic offers a way to accomplish almost anything you wish. These random examples should be interesting. You may even wish to give them a try.

HUNTING SUCCESS
This implies that you are as successful in seeking warm blooded game as the insects whose names you are invoking. Repeat it four times in as many multiples as you wish.
"HORSEFLY! MOSQUITO!
I AM AS WISE AS YOU!"

FISHING SUCCESS . . . Say this four times before putting your hook in the water.
"NOW! LISTEN! You seven clans come on!
We have just brought you food.
NOW! I throw it in.
Tsis! Tsis! Tsis! Tsis! It was the fishinghawk."

A SAFE JOURNEY AT NIGHT
"Listen! Ha! You have just come to hear, you provider who rests above.
Ha! Now you have just come to place my feet upon the brown stone.
Ha! Let them be keeping my fine attire out of sight.
Listen! From the Sunland where you rest, you have just come to hear, Red Man.
Ha! Arise now.
Ha! He has just brought your soul as high as the treetops. You have just come to alight on my right arm.
I have just come to trace your footsteps. Listen!"

A HAPPY MARRIAGE
Then let us quickly take away her soul.
This is her name
(now say her name aloud)
Then one half of it has just become greater.
We have just come to bear her away from beside the resting places of the white chairs.
She will live then in my home forever!"
Good Things To Eat

Indian food is plain fare, simply prepared. Some is declared delicious by everyone who samples it. A taste for other may need cultivation. You may wish to try these examples:

SQUAW BREAD
one pint sour milk
one tablespoon shortening
one-half teaspoon soda
three heaping teaspoons baking powder
one teaspoon salt
Add enough flour to make the dough easy to handle. Knead it smooth and roll out until your dough is about one-half inch thick. Cut this into portions about the size of a quart jar lid and make some slits in it. Now cook in deep fat, just like doughnuts.

WILD ONIONS AND SCRAMBLED EGGS
Gather wild onions while they are tender and clean them. Then chop them up very fine, including the tops. Into a heavy covered skillet put a cup of bacon drippings and heat this. Add the onions and brown lightly. Now add a cup of hot water, put the lid on tight and simmer. Stir frequently until the water is cooked away. Now add six or seven eggs and scramble together. Salt and pepper and serve.

Medicine

Cherokee medical practices in the pre-colonial days were drastic. There is no comment on their efficiency. We have this description by William Frye in a letter to his brother dated 1761. "The conjurors also act as their physicians using charms and conjurations ’tho they have a universal remedy which they use for all disorders which is to place the sick in (a Cherokee hothouse) in which is placed a large stone. This is made very hot and water thrown on it until by the steam and his own sweat the patient is well soaked and then they hurry him to the nearest river and throw him in.’"

There are conjurations that you can use today. Here’s one for healing a burn. "Sprinkle cold water on it and say: Ice has been brought by the Anidawehi. Snow has been brought by the Anidawehi. They quickly make it feel cool. Let the heat disappear into a very old tree."
The Way It Was

An old man speaks of the changing land. "We talk about how the woods used to be long ago. Acorns used to cover the ground. There were tall oak trees and acorns were thick out in the woods. People don't believe you now when you tell them, but that's the way it was. The trees were very large, and the ground in wintertime was covered with acorns. That was mast in the woods many years ago. When you tell this to the white people, they won't believe it. When the people wanted to fatten their hogs, they just let them live in the woods and they would return home as fat as could be. Some people look back and say that those were the good old days. I look back too; I look back to those good times. It was good times in those days. People had an easy living. The Indians were left alone in the woods where they had all these things. And when the sawmills came, well they done away with all that timber, you see, and we don't have the mast. The sawmills did that."
THE VILLAGE
at Tsa-La-Gi

This is a 17th century Cherokee village. Everything is as it was then. Your feet will walk in the old ways.

1. tortoise shells rattle during a dance
2. viewing the villagers through an unfinished wall
3. weaving mats from cane
4. a study in concentration
5. the wonder of the old world
6. a booger mask for dancing
The Cherokees

a short history

Of Iroquois linguistic stock, the Cherokees called themselves Ani-'Yun' wiya' meaning leading or principal people. The original Cherokees were found in early times in Georgia, North and South Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky and West Virginia.

The Cherokees were first discovered by the Spanish, then the French, and the British. During Colonial times the British had the greatest influence over this tribe. British goods, especially firearms, were important in making the Cherokees a powerful nation.

British traders settled among the Cherokees, took Indian wives, and produced mixed-blood family names like Adair, Lowry, Rogers, Ross, Vann and Ward. These mixed-bloods became prosperous merchants, traders, planters, and slave owners, teachers, writers, and tribal statesmen.

Pressure by settlers reduced the tribal range principally to northwestern Georgia, western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee. This had the effect of consolidating and unifying the Cherokee Nation. The tribal council directed the construction of a nation capital at New Echota. Cherokees established new enterprises, and the Cherokee Nationflowered in this unity.

Of the missionaries sent to the nation, none were more outstanding than Samuel A. Worcester. He built schools and churches throughout the nation and encouraged the Cherokees in their upward advance; through his influences, mission school graduates were sent on to academies and colleges in New England. This system of education produced well-informed, dedicated leaders for the nation and included such names as John Ross, Elias Boudinot (Buck Owattie), his brother Stand Watie, John Ridge, Charles Hicks, and many others.

In 1822, after years of hard work, Sequoyah completed his Cherokee alphabet, an eighty-five character system which reduced the Cherokee language to written form. While many of the mixed-bloods were literate in English, Sequoyah's invention made it possible for the entire tribe, young and old alike, to learn to read and write in the native language in the matter of a few months. Sequoyah's gift to his people made them the only Indian tribe in the United States to have a language written in its own characters or alphabet.

Spurred by this, the Cherokees advanced rapidly. In 1828, Elias Boudinot established the Cherokee Phoenix, America's first Indian newspaper, printed in both English and Cherokee.

In 1827 an Indian convention at New Echota wrote a constitution for
the nation. John Ross was elected Principal Chief by the first election under this constitution. The constitution roughly paralleled the U. S. constitution, providing for two houses of an elected legislature, a system including a Supreme Court, a jury system, and a national police to enforce the edicts.

During the first quarter of the nineteenth century great pressure was exerted on the tribe to move west. Actually small bands of Cherokees had been moving west from as early as 1795, and by 1817, a community of about 5,000 Cherokees had settled between the White and Arkansas rivers in northwestern Arkansas. That year the United States government signed a treaty granting to the Cherokees this new domain. All eastern Cherokees were invited to join their brethren in Arkansas.

In 1828, the Cherokees signed another treaty. They surrendered their lands in Arkansas in exchange for a 7,000,000 acre tract in what is now northeastern Oklahoma. This was to be the domain for the Cherokee Nation until Oklahoma Statehood in 1907.

At least three-fourths of the Cherokee Nation remained in the east. Continual harassment convinced certain Cherokees that removal was inevitable and that the tribe should sign an agreement with the United States surrendering their Georgia lands and join their kinsmen in Indian Territory. The leaders of this group were Major Ridge, John Ridge, Elias Boudinot (Buck Owatole), and Stand Watie; they came to be called the Treaty Party. Chief John Ross and most of the full-blood Cherokees were opposed to leaving.

United States Commissioners repeatedly attempted to obtain a cession treaty but the Ross group refused. Finally at New Echota late in 1835, United States commissioners met with a group comprising a small minority of the nation, and got their treaty. This agreement was accepted by the United States as the will of the Cherokee Nation and over the protests of Ross and his full-blood following put it into effect. The Treaty Party members left for Indian Territory soon after signing this agreement at New Echota. The treaty allowed the Cherokees until 1838 to wind up their affairs and remove, but the Ross party remained firm and made no effort to remove.

During May, 1838, federal troops under General Winfield Scott occupied the Cherokee Nation, rounded up the reluctant Indians, and literally drove them from their homes over the western trails to Indian Territory. The Cherokee "Trail of Tears" was a time of suffering, blizzards, disease, and hunger.

The Treaty Party was blamed for this mass suffering and death and when the survivors arrived in Oklahoma, they vowed vengeance on the signers of the New Echota Treaty.

During June, 1839, the signers were struck down by unknown assassins, even the scholarly Elias Boudinot falling before the executioners' knife. Only Stand Watie escaped.

The so-called "Cherokee Murders" triggered a vicious, destructive civil strife in the Cherokee Nation, but eventually the factions fused for the common good. On September 6, 1839, a new constitution was signed at Tahlequah. Civil disturbances quieted, and the Cherokee turned to taming the Oklahoma wilderness. They chose Tahlequah as their national capital.

Mission schools were set up throughout the nation, and in 1841 the Cherokees established a national public school system. Cherokee Male and Female Seminaries were opened in 1851 in the vicinity of Tahlequah. Indian youth could pursue an education from kindergarten through academy level in their own Nation; then the top scholars were selected to attend state-side colleges to complete their education.

The Golden Years in the Cherokee Nation ended in 1861. Secession split the United States on the Ohio River.

In the west, states adjacent to the Indian Territory except Kansas went for the Confederacy. Confederate officials were interested in the Indian Territory.

Confederate Commissioner Albert Pike worked hard on Chief John Ross, and the Cherokee Council urging them to join the Confederacy. At first Ross refused, but late in 1861 he signed a treaty of alliance with the Confederacy. The Cherokee Nation became a battleground for Union and Confederate armies. Union forces drove through, captured Tahlequah in the summer of 1862, and the nation was under Union occupation.

Things were never the same for the Cherokees after the war. Old differences were slow in healing; tribesmen were destitute; their homes and improvements had been destroyed, their fields and ranches desolated by four years of wasteful war. Thus weakened by internal division and economic loss, the Cherokees were unable to present a united front to thwart the drastic changes in the post Civil war period.

Railroad construction across the nation began in 1870, and while the railroads quickened economic development, they brought the land hungry homesteaders. After years of "Boomer" promotion by the homeseekers, and over the protests of the Cherokees and other Indian tribes, western Indian Territory was opened to settlement in 1889. Oklahoma Territory was organized in 1890, and it grew so rapidly that by 1907 the Twin Territorial, Oklahoma Territorial and Indian Territory, were fused into the State of Oklahoma.
The Cherokee National Museum and Archives at Tsa-La-Gi

The Archives to be located here will provide a central location for all possible information on the Cherokees and their heritage.

Designed as a seven-sided structure, the Archives building will suggest an ancient council house, like the one in the village.
The old ways are swift birds
They fly away or die and leave no sign.
Here some of the Cherokee heritage is being passed on.
Cut into the stone facing of our National Archives Building in Washington, D. C. are these words: 
"WHAT IS PAST IS PROLOGUE."

This message is being repeated here in the Green Country of Northeast Oklahoma where a history older than that of the United States is in the process of being preserved.

In the years to come, thousands and thousands of people will come to this place where history is being reenacted and recorded. Young and old, rich and poor, from all nations and all races, people will have here an opportunity to see the past and perhaps learn better preparation for the future.

This is an important contribution by the Cherokees to Oklahoma and to our Country.

We hope you return often, and profit from every visit.

Dewey F. Bartlett  
Governor  
State of Oklahoma

W. W. Keeler  
Principal Chief  
of the Cherokees
Other noteworthy outdoor dramas:

CROSS AND SWORD, spectacular drama depicting the founding of our Nation's oldest city. Late June to Labor Day, nightly except Mondays at 8:30 p.m. St. Augustine, Florida.


LOST COLONY—Paul Green's symphonic drama in its thirtieth production season. June 19 to August 30, nightly except Sundays, 8:30 p.m., Waterside Theater, Ft. Raleigh, Roanoke Island, North Carolina.

UNTO THESE HILLS, outdoor drama of the Cherokee Indian. Presented nightly except Mondays at 8:45 p.m., June 22 to September 2, Cherokee, North Carolina.

The program committee wishes to acknowledge gratitude to Mrs. Anna G. Kilpatrick for permission to quote the Cherokee lore gathered by her and her husband, Dr. Jack F. Kilpatrick, some of which is contained in the books they wrote, "FRIENDS OF THUNDER" and "RUN TOWARD THE NIGHTLAND", published by Southern Methodist University Press, Dallas, Texas.