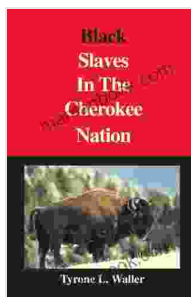


# The Forgotten History of Black Slavery in the Cherokee Nation

The history of slavery in the United States is often told from the perspective of the white slave owners and the African slaves they held in bondage. However, the story of slavery is more complex than that. There were many different groups of people who were enslaved in the United States, including Native Americans.

One of the most overlooked groups of enslaved people in American history are the black slaves who were held by the Cherokee Nation. The Cherokee were one of the largest and most powerful Native American tribes in the Southeast. They lived in a territory that stretched from what is now Georgia to Tennessee.



## Black Slaves In the Cherokee Nation by Tyrone L. Waller

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

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Like many other Native American tribes, the Cherokee owned slaves. However, the Cherokee system of slavery was different from the system of

slavery that existed in the white South. Cherokee slaves were not considered property, and they had some rights under Cherokee law.

Despite the differences between Cherokee slavery and white slavery, the fact remains that black people were enslaved by the Cherokee Nation. This is a history that has been largely forgotten, but it is a history that needs to be told.

## **The Origins of Black Slavery in the Cherokee Nation**

The first black slaves in the Cherokee Nation were brought to the territory by white traders in the early 18th century. These slaves were mostly from Africa, but some were also from other parts of the Americas.

The Cherokee quickly adopted the institution of slavery. They used slaves to work on their farms, hunt, and do other tasks. Slaves were also used as a form of currency. Cherokee families often traded slaves with each other, and they also sold slaves to white traders.

The number of black slaves in the Cherokee Nation grew rapidly in the 18th and 19th centuries. By the early 19th century, there were more than 4,000 black slaves in the Cherokee Nation. This made the Cherokee one of the largest slaveholding tribes in the Southeast.

## **The Life of a Black Slave in the Cherokee Nation**

The life of a black slave in the Cherokee Nation was harsh. Slaves were forced to work long hours in the fields, and they were often beaten or punished for even minor offenses. Slaves were also denied basic rights, such as the right to own property or to marry.

However, there were some differences between Cherokee slavery and white slavery. Cherokee slaves were not considered property, and they had some rights under Cherokee law. For example, slaves could testify in court, and they could own property.

Despite these differences, the fact remains that black people were enslaved by the Cherokee Nation. This is a history that has been largely forgotten, but it is a history that needs to be told.

### **The Cherokee Slave Trade**

The Cherokee were active participants in the slave trade. They traded slaves with other Native American tribes, and they also sold slaves to white traders. The Cherokee slave trade was a major source of income for the tribe.

The Cherokee slave trade took place in a variety of ways. Sometimes, the Cherokee would raid other tribes and capture slaves. Other times, they would buy slaves from white traders. The Cherokee also traded slaves with other Native American tribes.

The Cherokee slave trade was a brutal business. Slaves were often packed into crowded ships and transported long distances. Many slaves died during the journey.

### **The End of Slavery in the Cherokee Nation**

The Cherokee slave trade was finally abolished in 1866, after the Civil War. The United States government forced the Cherokee to free their slaves.

The end of slavery was a major change for the Cherokee Nation. The Cherokee had to find new ways to work their farms and do other tasks that had been done by slaves.

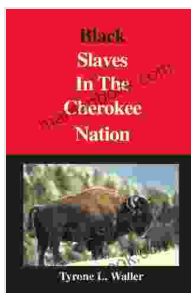
However, the end of slavery also brought new opportunities for the Cherokee. The Cherokee were able to develop a more democratic and just society.

## The Legacy of Black Slavery in the Cherokee Nation

The legacy of black slavery in the Cherokee Nation is complex and controversial. Some Cherokee people deny that the tribe ever owned slaves. Others acknowledge that the Cherokee owned slaves, but they argue that Cherokee slavery was not as harsh as white slavery.

There is no doubt that black people were enslaved by the Cherokee Nation. This is a history that has been largely forgotten, but it is a history that needs to be told.

The Cherokee experience with slavery is a reminder that all Americans, regardless of their race or ethnicity, have been affected by the legacy of slavery. It is a history that we must never forget.



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