

**Chickasaw Cartography; Comparing Historical and Modern Maps of the Sovereign
Chickasaw Nation.**

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Abstract

This paper collects sources of maps, treaties, and other relevant writing to explore the location of the Chickasaw Nation since the eighteenth century. In addition, I will use my learning of cartographic aspects and techniques to compare historic spatial depictions of the Indigenous community to that of their current geographic representations. Prior to discussing such findings, it is pertinent to acknowledge that studies on any Native entity are complex, as even a narrow scope often requires researchers to have a broader understanding of the historical, political, and cultural influences at play. Thus, a literature review is necessarily included for accurate descriptions of such.

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I. Introduction

Often, US education systems belittle the genocide against Native Americans, and the scope of Indigenous homelands. This can result in American beliefs of false narratives like European supremacy, Native indifference to settlement, and peaceful colonization. To protect more accurate depictions of history and to prevent future silencing of Indigenous peoples, this paper seeks to raise cartography and GIS applications as a solution. The study and use of cartography could be an incredibly important aspect of self-determination and cultural connection for Indigenous peoples across the world. Not through means of assimilation to Western/European practices, but instead through adaptable use of technology to better display regions and acquire additional opportunities. It can also serve as historical documentation, preventing the passage of time from erasing significant locations or events.

With a focus on the sovereign Chickasaw Nation, residing today in the South-Central region of Oklahoma, the research conducted will investigate the historical and political events that led to the drawing of their boundaries. This study will cover a broad period of time from 1723 to 2019, a vast geographic scope of the Southern US, and range in topics such as the language, cartographic techniques, treaties, forced removal, and intergovernmental relationships of the Chickasaw. This paper will be separated into sections to designate shifts in both time and location, beginning with the discussion of Chickasaw homelands during European Colonization. Before ending in a study of the Chickasaw Sovereign Nation as a part of Oklahoma, additional sections of explanations for significant geographic depictions and foreign affairs agreements will also be provided. Among these will be maps of cessions and treaty agreements, which often depict non-native surveyor notes of landforms, infrastructure like trading routes, and natural resources such as soil and vegetation types in addition to waterways. Given the nature of human existence, wars and acts of suppression onto others for personal power must be approached through multiple lenses. The limitation of historical and cultural documentation from one or few sources only harms society, allowing for disrespect to ancestors, disregard to the current context, and discounts to the future quality of life granted to humans. Sufficient utilization of Native collaboration and creation of maps, both in focus on the past and present, can serve to better

understand social/political/economic climates of groups of people, preventing the formation of violent or oppressive patterns.

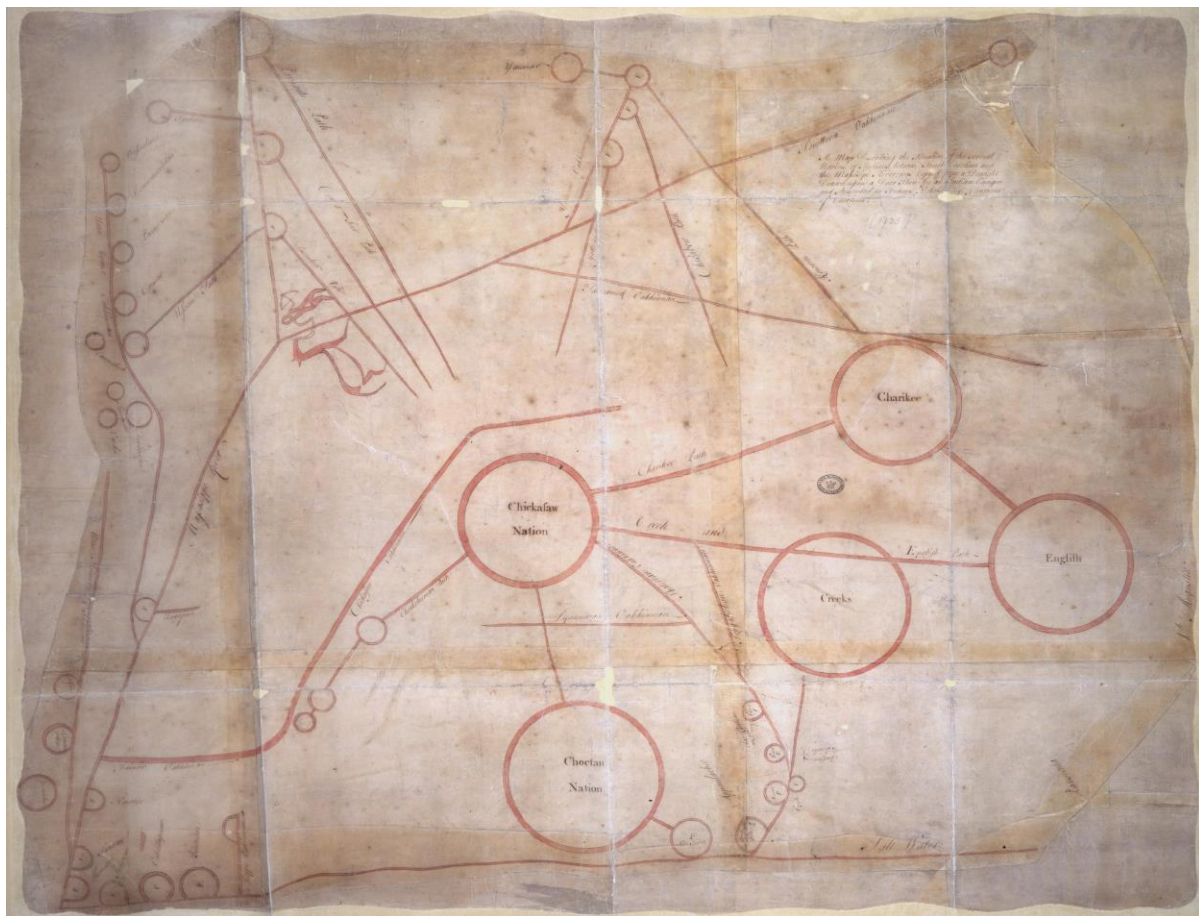
II. Chickasaw Cartography Prior to the American Revolution

The oldest documented map of the Chickasaw Nation exists from Fani Minko', or Squirrel King, dating back to 1723. Painted onto deerskin and presented to the British, it displays trading routes, natural resources, and spatial relationships between many of the Southeastern Tribes (Figure 1). With a focus area reaching as far as Upper New York in the North, Central Florida in the South, the Atlantic Coast in the East, and Texas in the West; this map covers over 700,000 square miles of America.¹ This is equivalent to a study area double the size of Texas, a considerable feat given the limited techniques and technology available to the Chickasaw chief.

This three-hundred-year-old map withstands techniques taught in modern studies of cartography. The use of red establishes a foreground of the map data on top of the pale hide, and Fani Minko's discrete points and lines effectively communicate spatial relationships. The size of the circles drawn likely suggests feature size or importance estimations but not necessarily shape.

Figure 1. Fani Minko's map of geographic relationships of the tribes in the area, 1723.

¹ Kristofer Ray, "Interpreting *Native Trans-Appalachia, 1670-1770*", *XVII-XVIII* [Online], 78 | (2021). URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/1718/8090>; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/1718.8090>.



It shows what is believed to be Cahokia (large earthen mounds of cultural significance) and bison hunting in current-day Illinois, as well as rivers such as the Mississippi, Wabash, Ohio, and the Tennessee.² Through this, one could infer the incredible knowledge required of the Chickasaw leader and any other collaborators of his to craft such a sizeable spatial depiction with so many features. A great understanding of geographic orientation would be required, not only in natural resources like the waterways listed above but also in economic/social practices inferred from the trading routes and relative locations of other cultures.

Scribed upon by the English after bequeathal, many of the names appear divergent from modern terms. This is likely due to language barriers between multiple tongues of speech, the lack of a Chickasaw written language, and the passage of time influencing the identities of such features. The word Chickasaw itself is likely different from the original pronunciation of the people

² Kristofer Ray, "Interpreting *Native Trans-Appalachia, 1670-1770*", *XVII-XVIII* [Online], 78 | (2021). URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/1718/8090>; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/1718.8090>.

associated with it. Today, with language revitalization efforts, it is written and spoken as “Chickasha” when the traditional tongue is used instead of English.

Further, it was unlikely that the circular features drawn by Fani Minko’ could be considered as unified as the British colonizers believed when writing in these names. Instead, Indigenous political and social organizations were much more fluid and prone to evolution in their structure than the rigid distinctions in European minds when trying to claim land and establish colonies. According to a previous interpretation of this map, the lack in depiction of the French and Spanish in the Western regions of this map suggests little concern of European parties to the Chickasaw. Or at the least, deliberate exclusion of such by Fani Minko’ perhaps to influence the British into some economic or political agreement with the Chickasaw.³ One may find interesting insight into this proposed phenomenon by comparing the techniques and subjects included in other Indigenous-created maps of this period.

III. Comparisons to Other Native Maps

Perhaps the most easily compared map of similar source and origin is found in the “Catawba Deerskin Map,” or “Map of the several nations of Indians to the Northwest of South Carolina.” Created by another tribe within the Southeast region (it is debated whether this should be credited to the Catawba or the Cherokee) and gifted to English South Carolina colonies, the study subjects and audience nearly overlap with that of Fani Minko’s map. However, this map is believed to have been created in 1721, two years before the one studied above, and depicted a deer hide with red ink.

Its features are believed to include footpaths symbolized by double lines between similar circles that suggest Indigenous settlements.⁴ While larger in scale this map’s spatial scope does not traverse as wide of a geography, instead studying a North-South corridor from Virginia down to South Carolina. It also may not include as many natural and spiritual resources as the visually aesthetically similar 1723 cartograph, but it does feature a port implied by a ship, and possible roads suggested from single lines along the bottom. Similarly rendered between these two are the

³ Kristofer Ray, “Interpreting *Native Trans-Appalachia, 1670-1770*”, *XVII-XVIII* [Online], 78 | (2021). URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/1718/8090>; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/1718.8090>.

⁴ American Geographical Society. (n.d.). *Indigenous Maps*. Ubique.

<https://ubique.americangeo.org/uncategorized/map-of-the-week-indigenous-maps/>

Chickasaw, Cherokee, and the practice of hunting game, although the spatial relationship between such are depicted differently. In the 1721 map, the Chickasaw are referenced North of the Cherokee, while the one created in 1723 by Fani Minko' shows an opposite labeling of the two Indigenous entities. However, this may be attributed to the ever-changing boundary lines and territorial claims that persisted both prior to and following the 1720s. Instead, it is focused and effective in its explanation of social, political, and economic relationships between the Indigenous of the region, with many smaller communities labeled than in the 1723 map. Many may argue that this map serves the field of human geographic cartography, while Fani Minko's map serves both human and resource geography disciplines in less detail.

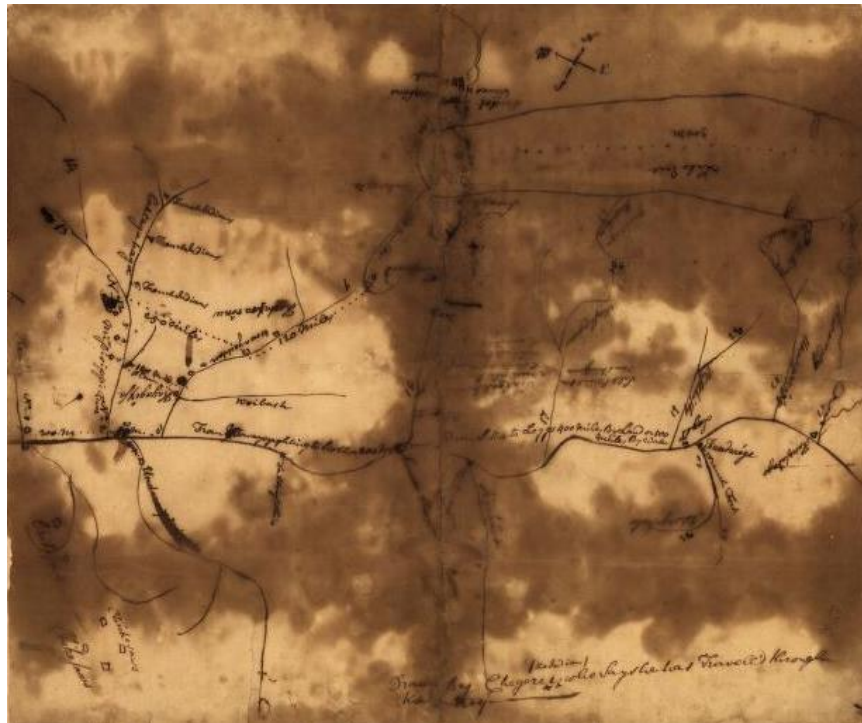
Figure 2. A Cherokee or Catawba map source of spatial relationships, sourced by Library of Congress.



Among other Native sources of cartography prior to the establishment of the United States of America is Chegeree's "Map of the country about the Mississippi," of 1755 (Figure 3). This cartographic rendering may be difficult to decipher in its aged condition, but it remains salient to this study as one among the few surviving maps created by Indigenous peoples during this focus in time. Many insightful maps and creations of similar origins are believed to have been lost to conscious acts of suppression and erasure, as well as the faultless passage of time. Despite this, Chegeree, a Native creator of an unspecified tribe compiled geographic knowledge for this historic project.

This depiction resembles Fani Minko's map of the Southeast for its reference to Chickasaw land in the bottom left, and its low detail symbolization of features and the subject matter it contains. It is interesting to note the inclusion of European mapping traditions and common practices, like the drawing of a North arrow in the top right. However, this map was believed to be created or influenced by its tribe of origin's allyship with England. Evidence for such is granted in its time of creation, only a year into the French and Indian War. Also, the inclusion of Fort Duquesne of modern-day Pittsburg, Pennsylvania suggests Indigenous aid to the English effort against the other European power.⁵

Figure 3. "Map of the country about the Mississippi" from 1755, scanned by the Library of Congress.



IV. Homelands and Early Nineteenth Century Treaties

After hundreds of years of living as separate entities with their own histories of war, treaties, trade, and culture, the arrival of European settlers triggered a complicated era for the Indigenous Americans. As immigrants began to colonize the land, the number of parties with interest in land rights and resource use increased significantly. Territories would no longer be defended by

⁵ American Geographical Society. (n.d.). *Indigenous Maps*. Ubique.

<https://ubique.americangeo.org/uncategorized/map-of-the-week-indigenous-maps/>

traditional Indigenous practices, and previous ways of life for the Native Americans would become threatened by European crusades for their assimilation and political submission. This impact would only increase following the American independence from Britain and the establishment of its Federal Government, about 55 years after the creation of Fani Minko's map.

In May of 1802, President Thomas Jefferson and Secretary of State James Madison signed the Treaty of Chickasaw Bluffs. This agreement allowed the US construction of a road through Chickasaw land in the then territories of Tennessee and Mississippi for mutual use. This however kept the Natchez trace, the trade corridor that this road would be constructed along, under Chickasaw legislation and ownership. It called for the preservation of peace along the region and promised land rights of the Chickasaw would be protected by the US.⁶

The Treaty of the Chickasaw Nation in 1805 reads as significant historical documentation of the US encroachment onto Native land rights, despite the prevention of such promises just three years prior. American accountability for such was likely dismissed with sums of money paid to notable chiefs and leaders of the Chickasaw.⁷ Under such ratification, 2.25 million acres (about half the area of modern New Jersey) of hunting land in Kentucky, Alabama, and Tennessee were signed over to the US in the agreement of relief for alleged debt from the regions' tradesmen.⁸ The land granted (Figure 4) is specified in the document, with rivers acting as the boundaries in addition to the very road built because of the 1802 treaty.⁹ This was likely an economic, political, and social goal of the Federal government and the settlers in the surrounding region to suppress or limit Native power.

A battle between the US and the Creek Tribe brought forth another treaty with the Chickasaw. Indigenous boundaries, as expected, were highly contested between the many parties of interest,

⁶ Ratified Indian Treaty 30: Chickasaw - Chickasaw Bluffs, October 24, 1801; Indian Treaties 1789 – 1869; General Records of the United States Government 1778 – 2006; National Archives at Washington, DC - Textual Reference.

⁷ Barnett, James F. "1801–1837: TREATIES AND REMOVAL." *Mississippi's American Indians*, University Press of Mississippi, 2012, pp. 164–207. *JSTOR*, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt24hws3.10>. 165.

⁸ Barnett, James F. "1801–1837: TREATIES AND REMOVAL." *Mississippi's American Indians*, University Press of Mississippi, 2012, pp. 164–207. *JSTOR*, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt24hws3.10>. 170.

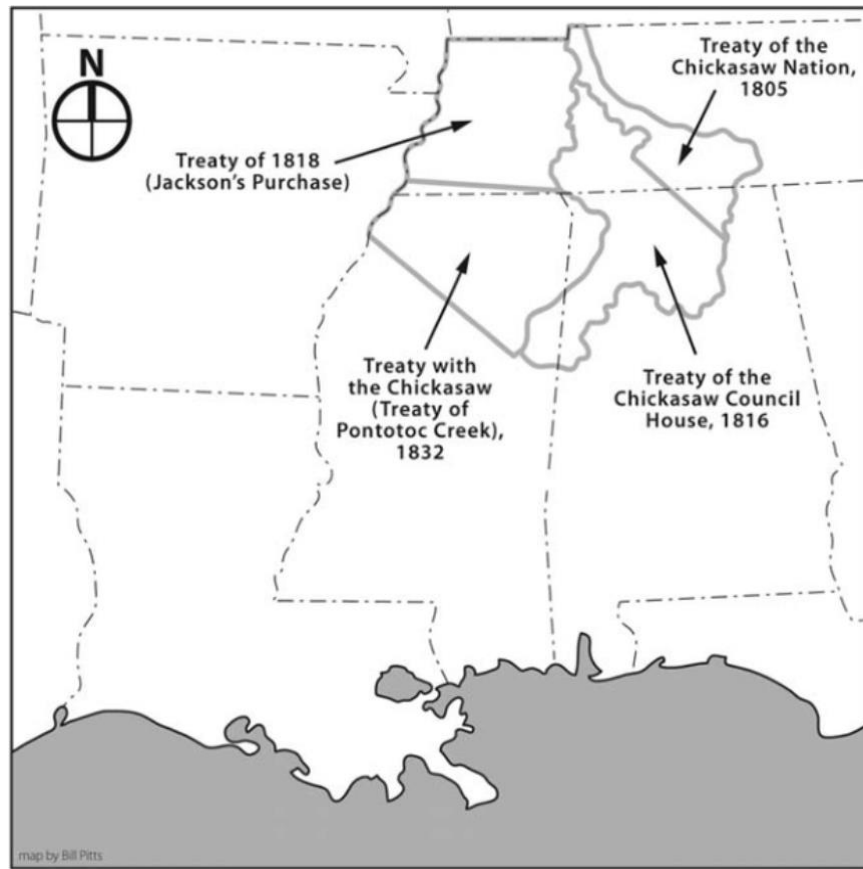
⁹ Ratified Indian Treaty 30: Chickasaw - Chickasaw Bluffs, October 24, 1801; Indian Treaties 1789 – 1869; General Records of the United States Government 1778 – 2006; National Archives at Washington, DC - Textual Reference.

and after the surrendering of the Creek this cumulated into the another signing of a treaty. After Chickasaw warriors volunteered to fight on both sides of the conflict, the resulting former-Creek land fell into debates over claims and historical rights of ownership.¹⁰ As differing claims between the three other surrounding tribal entities staked claim over muddled boundaries and each declared rights to the former Creek territories, to settle such, a meeting between the Creek, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Cherokee, and US leaders commenced at the Chickasaw Council House. The location, as requested by the Chickasaw, was permitted by the US government. The 1816 treaty at the Chickasaw Council House resulted in appeasement when Creek/Cherokee/Chickasaw boundaries were acknowledged, and the Chickasaw sold the resulting 6 million acres of land in modern day Tennessee and Alabama to the Federal Government.¹¹

Figure 4. From Barnett's book, *Mississippi's American Indians*, showing lands ceded in result of early nineteenth century treaties between the US and Chickasaw Governments.

¹⁰ Barnett, James F. "1801–1837: TREATIES AND REMOVAL." *Mississippi's American Indians*, University Press of Mississippi, 2012, pp. 164–207. *JSTOR*, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt24hws3.10>. 177.

¹¹ Ratified Indian Treaty 84: Chickasaw - Chickasaw Council House, September 20, 1816; Indian Treaties 1789 – 1869; General Records of the United States Government 1778 – 2006; National Archives Building, Washington, DC.



This location acceptance was likely an action of mediation, as the two previously mentioned treaties directly signed sums of money to Chickasaw leaders who were of agreeable manner and amicable disposition.¹² A continuation of suggested motives from Fani Minko’s erasure of French and Spanish in Figure 1 may have allowed the Chickasaw to employ the US with a similar belief. By playing to their wishes, it is possible the Chickasaw sought to influence the non-native government, portraying themselves as a lesser threat of violence and disagreements among the Southeastern tribes through means of entertaining their negotiations. This could have given their people a better chance at peaceful relations with the US, and therefore more leverage in future policy decisions.

¹² James F Barnett, “1801–1837: TREATIES AND REMOVAL.” *Mississippi’s American Indians*, University Press of Mississippi (2012): 164–207. *JSTOR*, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt24hws3.10>. 172.

As for as their relationship with the other Indigenous populations of the region, the closest bond of the Chickasaws was found in their Southern neighbors, the Choctaw. With a shared origin story of two brothers splitting their ancient group into separate Choctaw and Chickasaw distinctions, these entities' histories were deeply woven and interconnected. Even today they remain so related that to be fluent in either of their languages, one also possesses the ability to understand the other. Still, it must not be mistaken, the Chickasaw and Choctaw were under two separate identities at the time of the early nineteenth century treaties. Distinct in their boundaries and beliefs, the two tribes navigated the turbulent nature of US foreign policy and expansion independently.

By 1818, US eagerness to transform territories into official states had not slowed. The transition into such proved oppressive to the brother tribes along the Mississippi, who had already ceded much of their homeland, hunting grounds, and sacred sites. Jackson's Purchase of 1818 claimed an additional 8.5 million acres not bound by markers specified in the treaty for the statehoods of Kentucky and Tennessee. The remaining Chickasaw land was located South of the 35th parallel, North of the Choctaw boundary, East of the Mississippi river, and West of the Tennessee River.¹³

The treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek did not initially concern the Chickasaw, but rather the Choctaw. Its signing in 1830 remains significant to this study, as it began the immigration into Indian Territory, under agreements of unchallenged and irreversible sovereignty. This promise of the United States was, by no surprise, unkept. Two years later, the Chickasaw would find themselves in a similar position of conflict, resulting in the Treaty of Pontotoc Creek (Figure 5) where they would cede nearly 7 million acres of their remaining homelands. This document following Jackson's passing of the Indian Removal Act of 1830, forced the Southeastern tribes to relinquish ownership of their homelands and migrate West into "Indian Country", which would later become Oklahoma.

Figure 5. A map from the survey of Henry M. Lusher, depicting the lands ceded by the Chickasaw in 1832 and 1834.

¹³ Barnett, James F. "1801–1837: TREATIES AND REMOVAL." *Mississippi's American Indians*, University Press of Mississippi, 2012, pp. 164–207. JSTOR, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt24hws3.10>. 179.



V. Forced Chickasaw Emigration

Under the Presidency of Andrew Jackson came the forced removal and migration of the Southeastern Tribes from their homelands and into Indian Country (modern day Oklahoma). Without a formal land grant of their own, the Chickasaw were invited to migrate onto Choctaw land and live there as guests, but the offer was declined. Later, the two brother tribes would sign a treaty to sell 3.2 million acres of the Choctaw territory to the Chickasaw under the provision that the region still fall under Choctaw law and leadership. Relinquishing any conflicts that commenced before such, both Choctaws and Chickasaws settled in these two territories, with a formal but rarely acknowledged border between them.¹⁴ Despite opposition and fights to remain

¹⁴ Barnett, James F. "1801–1837: TREATIES AND REMOVAL." Mississippi's American Indians, University Press of Mississippi, 2012, pp. 164–207. JSTOR, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt24hws3.10>. 204.

on the lands they had resided on for hundreds of years, the Chickasaws set forth on their journey along the removal routes (Figure 6).

Figure 6. A cartographic depiction of the Chickasaw's forced removal from their homelands, from the US Bureau of Indian Affairs.

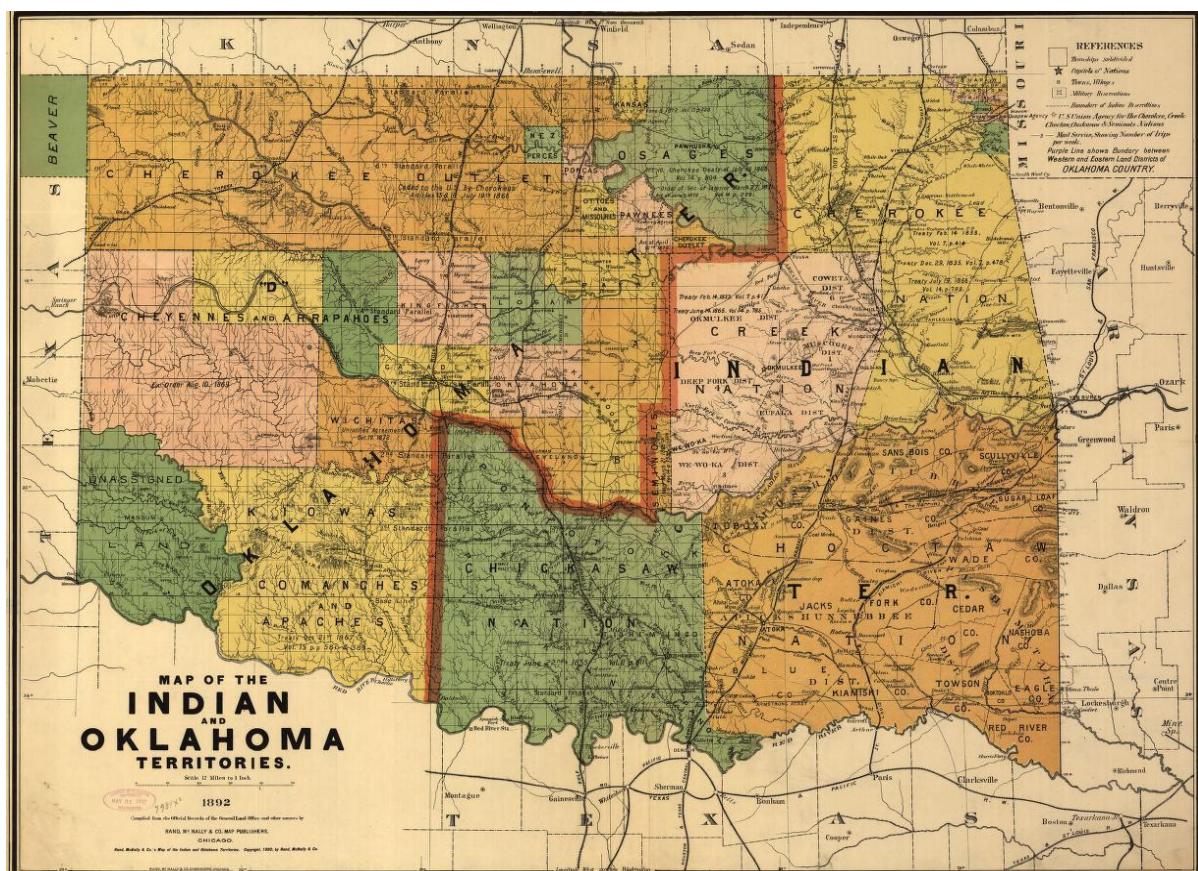


Following the Pontotoc Treaty, the last of Chickasaw homelands was sold to white settlers, often prematurely to removal, heedless of the Chickasaw insistence that suitable land of equal value to their Mississippi grounds did not exist in Indian Country¹⁵. Ultimately, the genocide against Native Americans prevailed over any allyship of the US to the Chickasaw and cession commenced. This new land West of the Mississippi River (Figure 7) had not even granted them the right to independently govern themselves, but this was of little concern to white leadership who often ignorantly believed in the mass grouping of Indigenous cultures into one tribe. Jackson and other positions of power held no regard for the long-standing turmoil between these

¹⁵ Barnett, James F. "1801–1837: TREATIES AND REMOVAL." *Mississippi's American Indians*, University Press of Mississippi, 2012, pp. 164–207. JSTOR, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt24hws3.10>. 196.

Advancements in technology also allowed for colored printing, more easily deciphering between different regions and features. A legend labeled “references” in the top right explains the use of symbols for significant features that would otherwise be difficult to identify on this large-scale map. Similar to figure 1, this map displays trade routes, hubs of importance, and minor depictions of regions outside the boundaries of focus. So, while indisputably modern in its use of technology, it is also close to the traditional Chickasaw approach to spatial referencing.

Figure 8. An 1892 Map viewing Indian Country alongside US states and territories, from the Library of Congress.



Many maps from this era in Chickasaw history are not from the tribe itself, as we discussed Fani Minko’s map above, but from a wide range of Federal agencies and departments. This is not to say they are not accurate, but instead do not focus on the daily interactions between the tribal citizens and their environment and take a broader, more bureaucratic approach to the capturing of spatial references. Some might argue that depictions of railroad systems like the one below

(Figure 9) are not all divergent from the trading routes included by Fani Minko'. However, maps like this fail to capture Indigenous notions from their own lens. Instead, maps like this might focus on US interests that would limit native narratives through deliberate exclusion of tribal consultations and collaborations.

Figure 9. A 1902 map created by the Department of the Interior and scanned online by the Library of Congress, showing Indian Country and the railroad system within it.



Most of such cartographic projects come from sources of contention in Native American History, like the Military Division of the Missouri, and the Army Corps of Engineers. Maps sourced from defense offices (Figure 10) suggest the relationship between the Federal Government and tribal entities was not one of mutual respect and total independence. Rather, one might infer that the US, still in their pursuit to establish themselves as a major country in the world, regarded the Indigenous with tension.

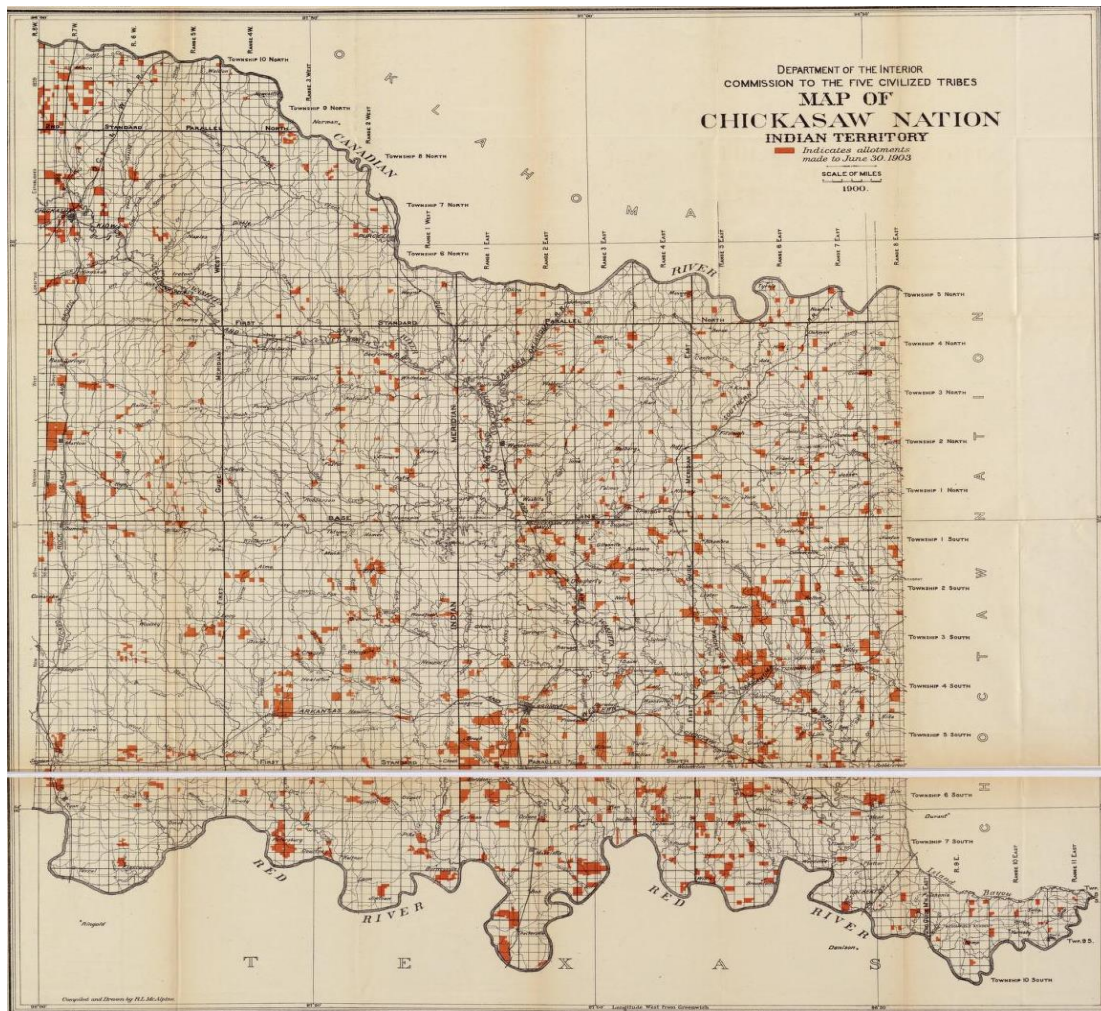
Figure 10. Indian Territory below the state of Kansas in 1903, drawn by the US Engineer Bureau, War Department.



The Indian Allotment Act allowed for the sale of unclaimed land on Native Nations (Figure 11). Often referred to as the Dawes Act, this legislation was a deep compromise against promises made to the five removed tribes in their previous treaties. The Curtis Act, the appellation of which is becoming frequently criticized for being named after a US congressman of the Kansa tribe even after his initial draft had been almost entirely rewritten, amended the Dawes Act in 1906 and caused the complete control of tribal enrollment to fall under the decision of the Dawes

Commision.¹⁶ This legislation was passed in an attempt by the federal government to transform the Oklahoma territory into formal statehood.

Figure 11. A cartographic representation from 1903 of the Chickasaw boundaries featuring the allotments under the Dawes Act, scanned online by the Library of Congress.



These signal a shift in Native culture and heritage, as it gave the Federal Government power to determine tribal ancestry and removed the self-determination the Chickasaws had held for centuries. If an application to the US government for tribal recognition was permitted, the applicant could receive a parcel of land within a tribe's boundaries. Any land within treaty

¹⁶ Tatro, Kaye M. "Curtis Act (1898)." Oklahoma Historical Society | OHS, <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=CU006>. Accessed 26 Oct. 2023.

boundaries not given to citizens of the specified tribe would be subsequently sold to white settlers as America began their great migration Westward.

It has been estimated that the tribes within the Oklahoma Territory (and later, the state of) kept only 7% of their original treaty-granted land.¹⁷ Within these allotted regions, Natives held little political power or social/cultural liberties and were subject to the jurisdiction of the newly formed governing bodies¹⁸ after the Organic Act of 1890. These further encouraged US intervention on Native grounds, dividing the original six counties into twenty-seven and granting the new Oklahoma Territory a tertiary organization of government. Federal powers did not honor the sanctity of the Pontotoc treaty, drawing straight lines through Chickasaw boundaries for these counties despite already existing distinctions of such. And, as the “manifest destiny” and Land Run sprung white settlers once more onto the scene of independent nations, subsequential assimilation and cultural erasure followed suit.

VII. Chickasaw within the State of Oklahoma

With that history in mind, the Chickasaw and other Native entities in their prior Indian and Oklahoma Territories did play important roles in the statehood of their region. So much so that Oklahoma’s name comes from the Choctaw and Chickasaw languages, translating to Red (homa) and People (Okla). This was not due to racial identification, as many may assume, but the river that was named for its rich iron soil that forms the boundary between the tribes and Texas. As the Southernmost peoples found within Oklahoma's boundaries, the Red River has become significant in the brother tribes’ self-identity. With deep historical, economic, and spiritual ties to flowing waters back in their homelands along the great Mississippi, it is not too surprising that another significant river might gain a parallel role in their new Nations as well.

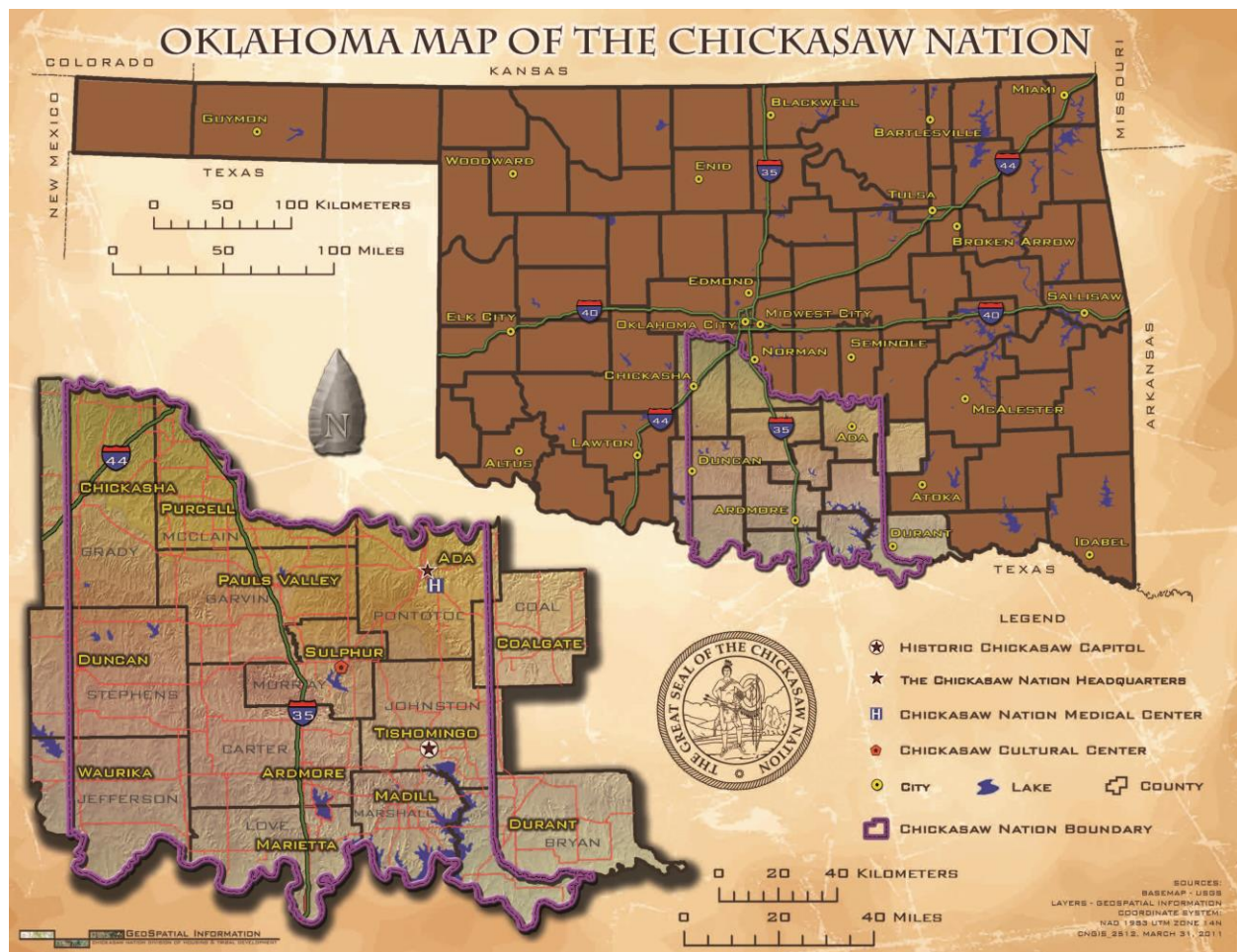
In pride for their heritage and continued connection to their culture, the sovereign Chickasaw Nation has its own governmental department for geographical information science. Knowledge and use of cartography is nothing new to the Chickasaw, as seen from Fani Minko’s map of 1723. Their modern applications of GIS have once again begun to include many of the same

¹⁷ Goins, Charles Robert, et al. “Counties of Oklahoma Territory and Recording Districts of Indian Territory, 1906.” *Historical Atlas of Oklahoma*, 4th ed., University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, OK, 2006, pp. 36–148.

¹⁸ Goins, Charles Robert, et al. “Counties of Oklahoma Territory and Recording Districts of Indian Territory, 1906.” *Historical Atlas of Oklahoma*, 4th ed., University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, OK, 2006, pp. 36–148.

themes from Fani Minko's map: spatial relationships between the sovereign nation and other governments, locations of natural resources, and hubs of significance to the Chickasaw. In figures 12 through 14, particular notice should be granted to the North arrow, which features an homage to Chickasaw history. Divergent from simplistic orientation tools used regularly outside the Chickasaw GIS department, the use of a projectile point pays respect to ancient native technology.

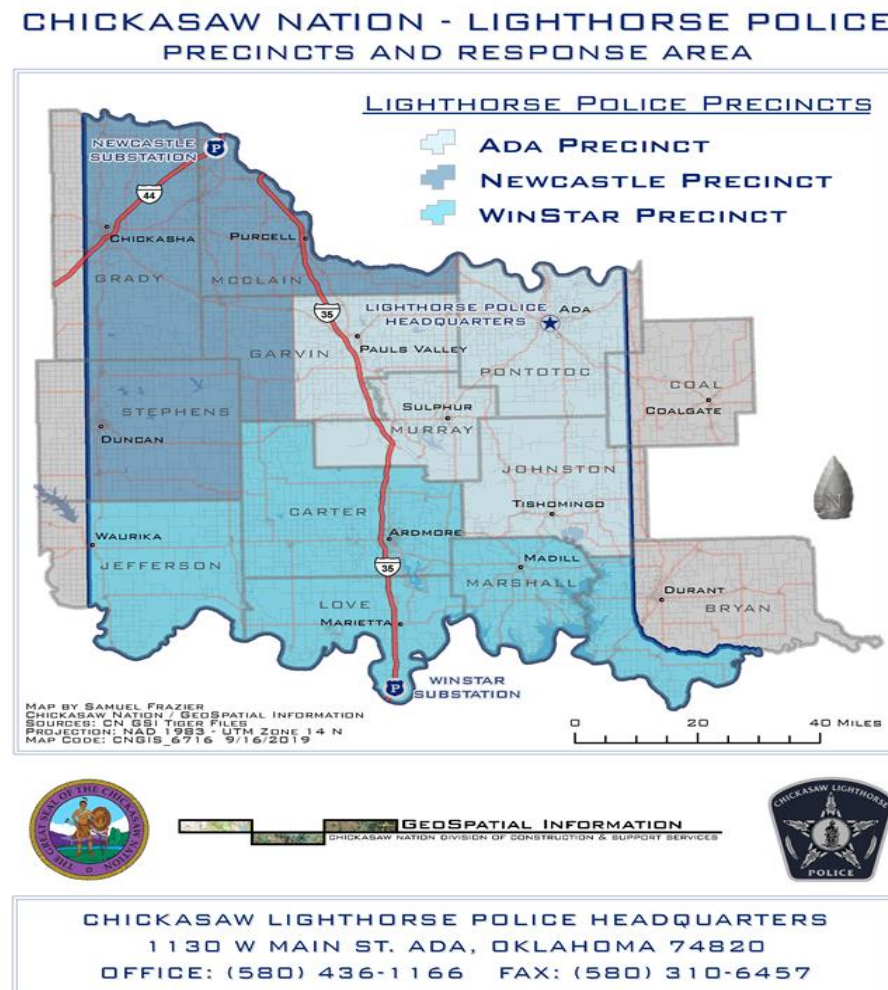
Figure 12. A 2011 Map of Chickasaw Boundaries within the state of Oklahoma.



Another example of map-based self-determination could be found in their use of GIS to depict their independent governance and jurisdiction with the Chickasaw law enforcement, Lighthouse Police (Figure 13). Beyond their official 7,648 square miles of jurisdiction in Chickasaw boundaries, Lighthouse also strives for foreign diplomacy through agreements and collaboration

with state and federal-wide agencies of the same nature.¹⁹ Called Lighthorse Police to honor the previously termed law service in Indian Territory before statehood, this also holds as a cultural and historical preservation landmark for the Indigenous in Oklahoma.

Figure 13. Boundaries of Chickasaw Law Enforcement's precincts, from Samuel Frazier, 2019.

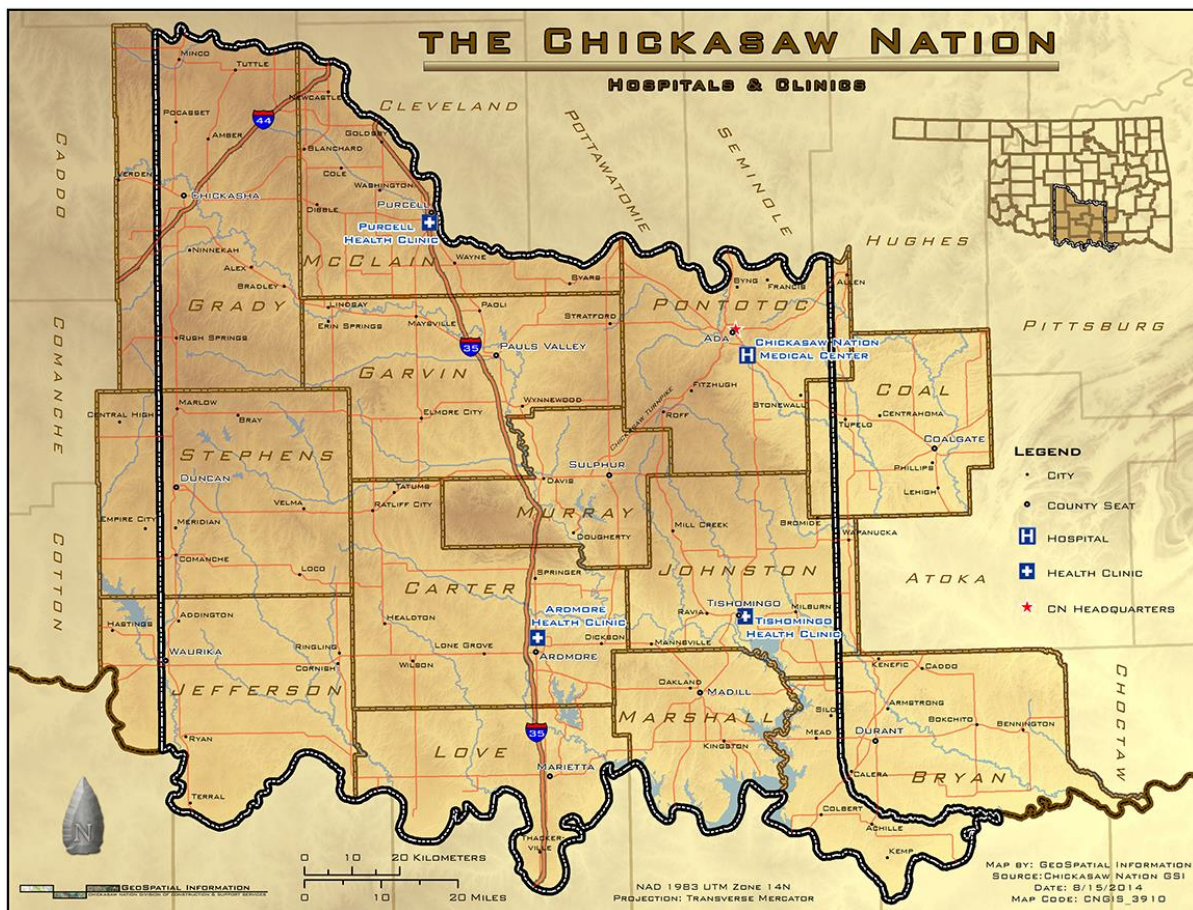


Beyond criminal and legislative self-service, the Chickasaw GIS department also issued an official map of Indigenous-focused healthcare facilities and resources in their Nation (Figure 14). As a sovereign region within US borders, the ability to offer their own essential services like medicine and healthcare is vital to the preservation of their tribal identity and ability to self-

¹⁹ About Lighthorse Police. Chickasaw Nation. (n.d.). <https://www.chickasaw.net/Our-Nation/Government/Lighthorse-Police/About.aspx>. Accessed 30 Oct. 2023.

govern. This ensures that the health of Chickasaw citizens and other non-native residents of the nation can receive adequate care, which might affect many community affairs like quality of life, local culture, and economic prosperity.

Figure 14. Hospitals and Clinics within the Chickasaw Nation, from the Chickasaw GIS Department in 2014.



VIII. Conclusion

This Nation, incredibly unique in its geographic and political position within US borders, is an excellent case study for human, historical geography, and GIS. Today, many maps related to the Chickasaw and other Native entities are drawn up by Geographical Information Scientists of their own tribal governments, or by federal agencies with scopes of specialties directly related to topography and environmental resources rather than defense or war. The United States Geological Survey is one of such agencies providing cartography and data for further GIS

analysis of the Chickasaw, and they work closely with tribal liaisons and the Chickasaw's own GIS professionals.

The Chickasaw have begun to use maps to connect to their cultural history, and enrich their citizens with educational and professional opportunities, especially as a part of their annual Internship program. They have utilized cartography to depict their economic and political connections since the eighteenth century. This practice also allows them to act as stewards of their environments investigating and documenting natural resources like the way they did in the early 1700s.

The figures of maps above as evidence suggest increases in Native investment to GIS and Cartography could aid in many realms of identity and self-determination. The ability to create their own documentations of not just borders and legislative districts, but significant locations and natural resources as well, could path the way for stronger Native involvement in scientific and political communities. Free from Federal and State lenses, Indigenous entities could better contribute to decisions that affect humanity or environments as a whole and preserve qualities of life more broadly.

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