

Source Set 3 Cultural Misunderstanding

Essential Question:

What do these sources reveal about the relationship between the British and Cherokee in the 1700's?

1. Determine if your sources are primary or secondary.
2. Read the Timberlake excerpt. What is his overall opinion of the Cherokee? Cite one example from the text to support your answer.
3. Look at the Timberlake map. Identify any locations mentioned in the excerpt on the map. What is the purpose of Timberlake's map? (Look at the key)
4. Read the Bertram excerpt. How is his description of the Cherokee similar or different to Timberlake. Cite one example from the text to support your answer.
5. Be prepared to share your answer to the essential question.

Excerpts from
The Memoirs of Lieut. Henry Timberlake

EXCERPT 1 1761-1762

Within four or five miles of the nation, the Slave Catcher [an old Cherokee with whose party of ten or twelve Indians Timberlake traveled for two days] sent his wife forward by land, partly to prepare a dinner, and partly to let me have her place in his canoe, seeing me in pain, and unaccustomed to such hard labour, which seat I kept till about two o'clock, when we arrived at his house, opposite the mouth of Tellequo river, compleating a twenty-two days course of continual fatigues, hardships, and anxieties.

Our entertainment from these people was as good as the country could afford, consisting of roast, boiled, and fried meats of several kinds, and very good Indian bread, baked in a very curious manner. After making a fire on the hearth-stone, about the size of a large dish, they sweep the embers off, laying a loaf smooth on it; this they cover with a sort of deep dish, and renew the fire upon the whole, under which the bread bakes to as great perfection as in any European oven.

We crossed the river next morning, with some Indians that had been visiting in that neighbourhood, and went to Tommotly, taking Fort Loudon in the way, to examine the ruins.

We were received at Tommotly in a very kind manner by Ostenaco, the commander in chief, who told me, he had already given me up for lost, as the gang I parted with at the

Great Island had returned about ten days before, and that my servant was then actually preparing for his return, with news of my death.

After smoaking and talking some time, I delivered a letter from Colonel Stephen, and another from Captain M'Neil, with some presents from each, which were gratefully accepted by Ostenaco and his consort. He gave me a general invitation to his house, while I resided in the country; and my companions found no difficulty in getting the same entertainment, among an hospitable, tho' savage people, who always pay a great regard to any one taken notice of by their chiefs.

Some days after, the headmen of each town were assembled in the town-house of Chote, the metropolis of the country, to hear the articles of peace read, whither the interpreter and I accompanied Ostenaco.

The town-house, in which are transacted all public business and diversions, is raised with wood, and covered over with earth, and has all the appearance of a small mountain at a little distance. It is built in the form of a sugar loaf, and large enough to contain 500 persons, but extremely dark, having, besides the door, which is so narrow that but one at a time can pass, and that after much winding and turning, but one small aperture to let the smoak out, which is so ill contrived, that most of it settles in the roof of the house. Within it has the appearance of an ancient amphitheatre, the seats being raised one above another, leaving an area in the middle, in the center of which stands the fire; the seats of the head warriors are nearest it.

They all seemed highly satisfied with the articles. The

peace-pipe was smoked, and Ostenaco made an harangue to the following effect:

"The bloody tomahawke, so long lifted against our brethren the English, must now be buried deep, deep in the ground, never to be raised again*; and whoever shall act contrary to any of these articles, must expect a punishment equal to his offence†. Should a strict observance of them be neglected, a war must necessarily follow, and a second peace may not be so easily obtained. I therefore once more recommend to you, to take particular care of your behaviour towards the English, whom we must now look upon as ourselves; they have the French and Spaniards to fight, and we enough of our own colour, without meddling with either nation. I desire likewise, that the white warrior, who has ventured himself here with us, may be well used and respected by all, wherever he goes amongst us."

The harangue being finished, several pipes were presented me by the headsmen, to take a whiff. This ceremony I could have waved, as smoking was always very disagreeable to me; but as it was a token of their amity, and they might be offended if I did not comply, I put on the best face I was able, though I dared not even wipe the end of the pipe that came out of their mouths; which, considering their paint and dirtiness, are not of the most *ragoutant* [tasty], as the French term it.

After smoking, the eatables were produced, consisting chiefly of wild meat; such as venison, bear, and buffalo; tho' I cannot much commend their cookery, every thing being greatly overdone: there were likewise potatoes, pumpkins,

homminy, boiled corn, beans, and pease, served up in small flat baskets, made of split canes, which were distributed amongst the croud; and water, which, except the spirituous liquor brought by the Europeans, is their only drink, was handed about in small goards. What contributed greatly to render this feast disgusting, was eating without knives and forks, and being obliged to grope from dish to dish in the dark. After the feast there was a dance; but I was already so fatigued with the ceremonies I had gone through, that I retired to Kanagatucko's hot-house**; but was prevented taking any repose by the smoke, with which I was almost suffocated, and the croud of Indians that came and sat on the bed-side; which indeed was not much calculated for repose to any but Indians, or those that had passed an apprenticeship to their ways, as I had done: it was composed of a few boards, spread with bear-skins, without any other covering; the house being so hot, that I could not endure the weight of my own blanket.

* As in this speech several allusions are made to the customs of the Indians, it may not be impertinent to acquaint the reader, that their way of declaring war, is by smoking a pipe as a bond among themselves, and lifting up a hatchet stained in blood, as a menace to their enemies; at declaring peace this hatchet is buried, and a pipe smoked by both parties, in token of friendship and reconciliation.

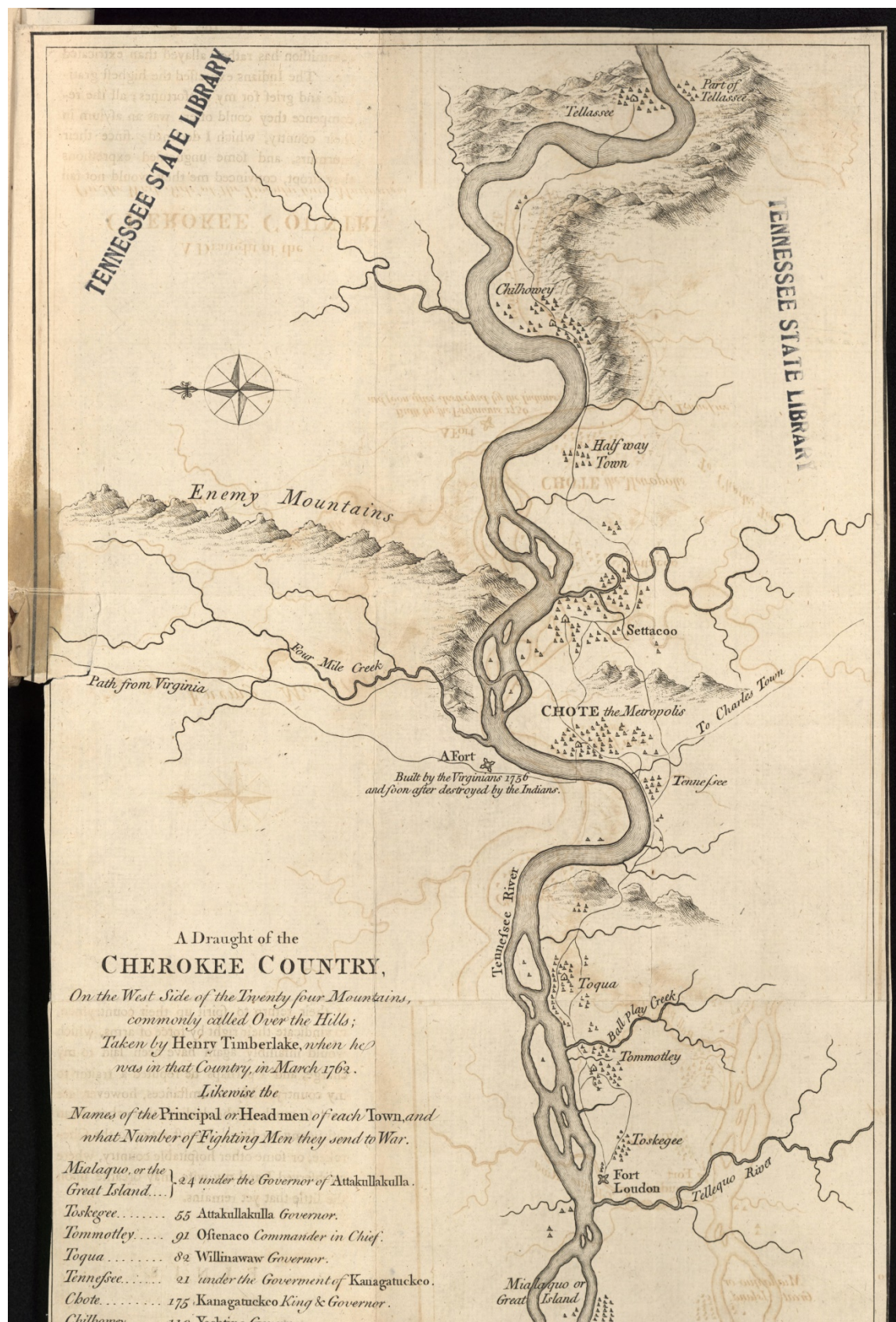
† The chiefs can inflict no punishment; but, upon the signing of the peace, it was agreed by both nations, that offend-

ers on either side should be delivered up to be punished by the offended party, and it is to this the Chief alludes.

**The Hot-House [of Kanagatucko, one of the headmen at Chota] is a little hut joined to the house, in which a fire is continually kept, and the heat so great, that cloaths are not to be borne the coldest day in winter.⁸

Excerpts from:

Rozema, Vicki. *Cherokee Voices: Early Accounts of Cherokee Life in the East*. Winston-Salem, NC: John F. Blair, 2002. Print. Pages 34-39



Timberlake, Henry. A draught of the Cherokee Country: on the west side of the Twenty Four Mountains, commonly called Over the Hills. 1762. Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville. TSLA. Web. June 23, 2016. <
<http://cdm15138.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/compoundobject/collection/p15138coll23/id/352/rec/3>>

Excerpt from William Bartram's 1773
*Travels through North & South Carolina,
Georgia, East & West Florida . . .*

Soon after crossing this large branch of the Tanase, I observed, descending the heights at some distance, a company of Indians, all well mounted on horseback; they came rapidly forward: on their nearer approach I observed a chief at the head of the caravan, and apprehending him to be the Little Carpenter, emperor or grand chief of the Cherokees, as they came up I turned off from the path to make way, in token of respect, which compliment was accepted, and gratefully and magnanimously returned; for his highness with a gracious and cheerful smile came up to me, and clapping his hand on his breast, offered it to me, saying, I am Ata-cul-culla; and heartily shook hands with me, and asked me if I knew it. I answered, that the Good Spirit who goes before me spoke to me, and said, that is the great Ata-cul-culla; and added, that I was of the tribe of white men, of Pennsylvania, who esteem themselves brothers and friends to the red men, but particularly so to the Cherokees, and that notwithstanding we dwell at so great a distance, we were united in love and friendship,

and that the name of Ata-cul-culla was dear to his white brothers of Pennsylvania.

After this compliment, which seemed to be acceptable, he inquired if I came lately from Charleston, and if John Stewart [Stuart] was well, saying that he was going to see him. I replied, that I came lately from Charleston on a friendly visit to the Cherokees; that I had the honour of a personal acquaintance with the superintendent, the beloved man, whom, I saw well but the day before I set off, and who, by letters to the principal white men in the nation, recommended me to the friendship and protection of the Cherokees. To which the great chief was pleased to answer very respectfully, that I was welcome in their country as a friend and brother; and then shaking hands heartily bid me farewell, and his retinue confirmed it by an united voice of assent. After giving my name to the chief, requesting my compliments to the superintendent, the emperor moved, continuing his journey for Charleston; and I, yet persisting in my intention of visiting the Overhill towns, continued on. Leaving the great forest I mounted the high hills, descending them again on the other side, and so on repeatedly for several miles, without observing any variation in the natural productions since passing the Jore: and perceiving the slow progress of vegetation in this mountainous, high country; and, upon serious consideration, it appearing very plainly that I could not, with entire safety, range the Overhill settlements until the treaty was over, which would not come on till late in June; I suddenly came to a resolution to defer these researches at this time, and leave them for the employment of another season and more

favourable opportunity, and return to Dartmouth in Georgia, to be ready to join a company of adventurers who were to set off in July for Mobile in West Florida. The leader of this company had been recommended to me as a fit person to assist me on so long and hazardous a journey, through the vast territories of the Creeks.

Therefore next day I turned about on my return, proceeding moderately, being engaged in noting such objects as appeared to be of any moment, and collecting specimens; and in the evening of next day arrived again at Cowe.

Next morning Mr. Galahan [the head trader at Cowe] conducted me to the chief of Cowe, who during my absence had returned from the chase [chase or hunt]. The remainder of this day I spent in observations in and about the town, reviewing my specimens, &c.

The town of Cowe consists of about one hundred dwellings, near the banks of the Tanase, on both sides of the river.

The Cherokees construct their habitations on a different plan from the Creeks; that is, but one oblong four square building, of one story high; the materials consisting of logs or trunks of trees, stripped of their bark, notched at their ends, fixed one upon another, and afterwards plaistered well, both inside and out, with clay well tempered with dry grass, and the whole covered or roofed with the bark of the chesnut tree or long broad shingles. This building is however partitioned transversely, forming three apartments, which communicate with each other by inside doors; each house or habitation has besides a little conical house, covered with dirt, which is called the winter or hot-house; this stands a few yards

distance from the mansion-house, opposite the front door.

The council or town-house is a large rotunda, capable of accommodating several hundred people: it stands on the top of an ancient artificial mount of earth, of about twenty feet perpendicular, and the rotunda on the top of it being above thirty feet more, gives the whole fabric an elevation of about sixty feet from the common surface of the ground. But it may be proper to observe, that this mount on which the rotunda stands, is of a much ancienter date than the building, and perhaps was raised for another purpose. The Cherokees themselves are as ignorant as we are, by what people or for what purpose these artificial hills were raised; they have various stories concerning them, the best of which amount to no more than mere conjecture, and leave us entirely in the dark; but they have a tradition common with the other nations of Indians, that they found them in much the same condition as they now appear, when their forefathers arrived from the West and possessed themselves of the country, after vanquishing the nations of red men who then inhabited it, who themselves found these mounts when they took possession of the country, the former possessors delivering the same story concerning them: perhaps they were designed and appropriated by the people who constructed them, to some religious purpose, as great altars and temples similar to the high places and sacred groves anciently amongst the Canaanites and other nations of Palestine and Judea.

The rotunda is constructed after the following manner: they first fix in the ground a circular range of posts or trunks of trees, about six feet high, at equal distances, which are

notched at top, to receive into them from one to another, a range of beams or wall plates; within this is another circular order of very large and strong pillars, above twelve feet high, notched in like manner at top, to receive another range of wall plates; and within this is yet another or third range of stronger and higher pillars, but fewer in number, and standing at a greater distance from each other; and lastly, in the centre stands a very strong pillar, which forms the pinnacle of the building, and to which the rafters centre at top; these rafters are strengthened and bound together by cross beams and laths, which sustain the roof or covering, which is a layer of bark neatly placed, and tight enough to exclude the rain, and sometimes they cast a thin superfluities of earth over all. There is but one large door, which serves at the same time to admit light from without and the smoak to escape when a fire is kindled; but as there is but a small fire kept, sufficient to give light at night, and that fed with dry small sound wood divested of its bark, there is but little smoak. All around the inside of the building, betwixt the second range of pillars and the wall, is a range of cabins or sophas, consisting of two or three steps, one above or behind the other, in theatrical order, where the assembly sit or lean down; these sophas are covered with mats or carpets, very curiously made of thin splints of Ash or Oak, woven or platted together; near the great pillar in the centre the fire is kindled for light, near which the musicians seat themselves, and round about this the performers exhibit their dances and other shows at public festivals, which happen almost every night throughout the year.



About the close of the evening I accompanied Mr. Galahan and other white traders to the rotunda, where was a grand festival, music and dancing. This assembly was held principally to rehearse the ball-play dance, this town being challenged to play against another the next day.

The people being assembled and seated in order, and the musicians having taken their station, the ball opens, first with a long harangue or oration, spoken by an aged chief, in commendation of the manly exercise of the ball-play, recounting the many and brilliant victories which the town of Cowe had gained over the other towns in the nation, not forgetting or neglecting to recite his own exploits, together with those of other aged men now present, coadjutors in the performance of these athletic games in their youthful days.

This oration was delivered with great spirit and eloquence, and was meant to influence the passions of the young men present, excite them to emulation and inspire them with ambition.

This prologue being at an end, the musicians began, both vocal and instrumental; when presently a company of girls, hand in hand, dressed in clean white robes and ornamented with beads, bracelets and a profusion of gay ribbands, entering the door, immediately began to sing their responses in a gentle, low, and sweet voice, and formed themselves in a semi-circular file or line, in two ranks, back to back, facing the spectators and musicians, moving slowly round and round. This continued about a quarter of an hour, when we were surprised by a sudden very loud and shrill whoop, uttered at once by a company of young fellows, who came in briskly



after one another, with rackets or hurls in one hand. These champions likewise were well dressed, painted, and ornamented with silver bracelets, gorgets [large shell, stone, or metal ornaments worn around the neck] and wampum, neatly ornamented with moccasins and high waving plumes in their diadems: they immediately formed themselves in a semicircular rank also, in front of the girls, when these changed their order, and formed a single rank parallel to the men, raising their voices in responses to the tunes of the young champions, the semicircles continually moving round. There was something singular and diverting in their step and motions, and I imagine not to be learned to exactness but with great attention and perseverance. The step, if it can be so termed, was performed after the following manner; first, the motion began at one end of the semicircle, gently rising up and down upon their toes and heels alternately, when the first was up on tip-toe, the next began to raise the heel, and by the time the first rested again on the heel, the second was on tip-toe, thus from one end of the rank to the other, so that some were always up and some down, alternately and regularly, without the least baulk or confusion; and they at the same time, and in the same motion, moved on obliquely or sideways, so that the circle performed a double or complex motion in its progression, and at stated times exhibited a grand or universal movement, instantly and unexpectedly to the spectators, by each rank turning to right and left, taking each others places: the movements were managed with inconceivable alertness and address, and accompanied with an instantaneous and universal elevation of the voice, and shrill whoop.

Excerpts from:

Rozema, Vicki. *Cherokee Voices: Early Accounts of Cherokee Life in the East*. Winston-Salem, NC: John F. Blair, 2002. Print. Pages 50-56