

**THE CHICKASAW NATION:  
A SHORT SKETCH OF A  
NOBLE PEOPLE**

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The Chickasaw Nation: A Short Sketch of a Noble People by James H. Malone

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**Souvenir of Memphis Centenary Celebration  
May 19-24, 1919**

**By  
JAMES H. MALONE**

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## FOREWORD.

During a somewhat protracted experience at the Memphis bar, my attention was early called to the treaties of 1832 and 1834 between the United States and the Chickasaw Nation.

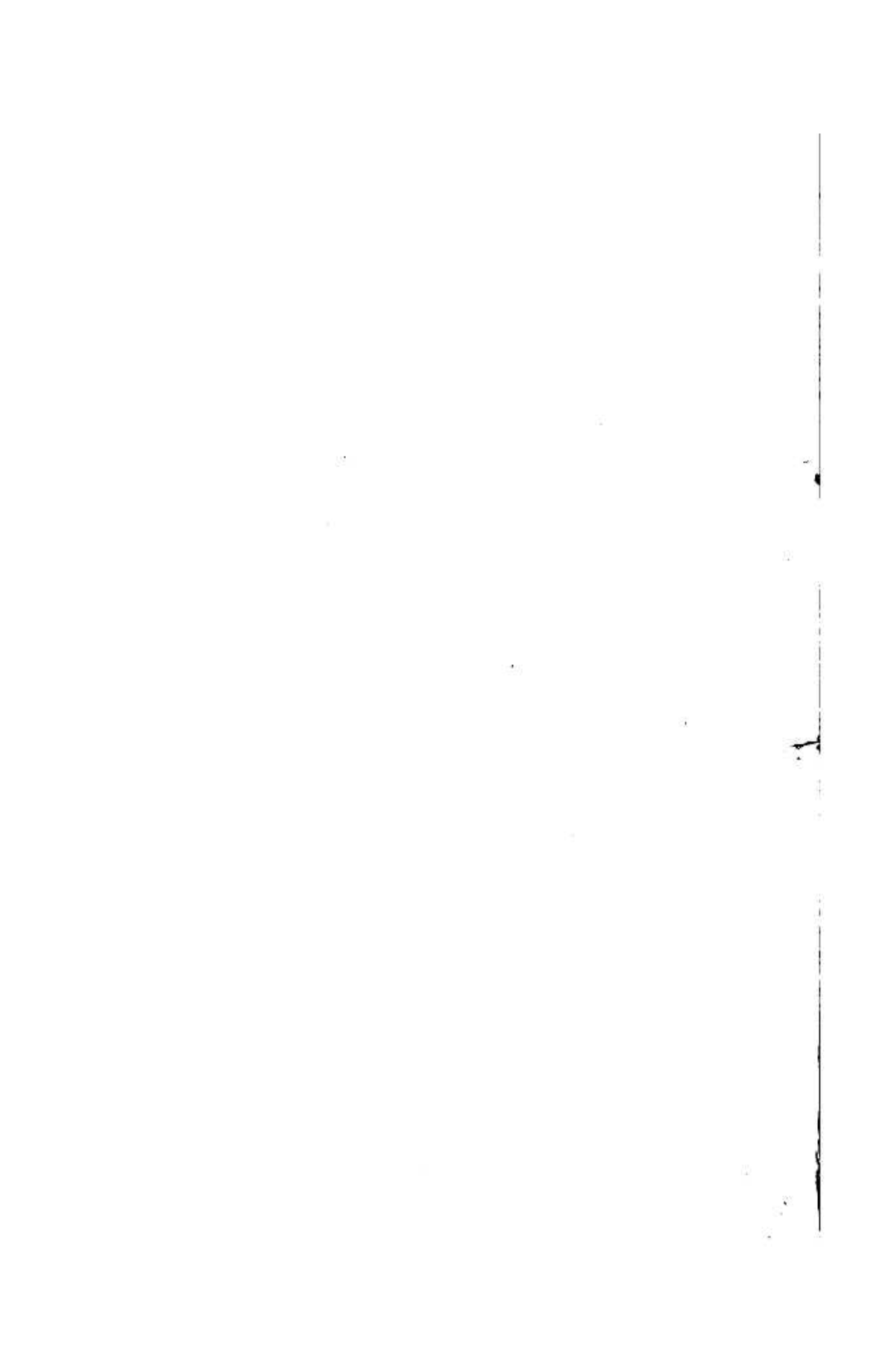
Under these treaties the Chickasaws ceded the last inch of that vast and splendid domain which they had conquered and occupied long before Columbus, sailing westward, looked upon the shores of what was called a new world.

There are lines of deep pathos in those treaties. From time to time my attention was called to the early history of the Chickasaws, and I made some notes, and still later wrote some fragmentary sketches upon the subject, more as a diversion than otherwise. In assisting with our approaching Centenary Celebration (May 19-24, 1919), I concluded, almost at the last moment, to print what I have already written as a souvenir, and as a small contribution to local history.

Should time and opportunity permit, I hope to complete what I design to call—"The Chickasaw Nation; A Short Sketch of a Noble People."

JAMES H. MALONE.

May, 1919.



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## CHAPTER I.

### AS TO THE ORIGIN OF THE AMERICAN INDIANS.

When Christopher Columbus sailed from Spain in August, 1492, going westward over an unexplored sea, the expectation of discovering a new world was far from his thoughts.

It had for years been the dream of his life that there must be land beyond the limits of the Atlantic, and that by sailing to the West he could discover a nearer route to India than was at that time in use.

The riches of India were believed to be almost boundless, and Venice and other centers of commerce had amassed wealth in trade therewith; all of which fired the imagination of Columbus who was naturally of an adventurous disposition, and withal a man of great daring and ability.

After some months of sailing it took all the ingenuity and address of the great sailor to prevent an open mutiny of his crew, consisting of 120 men, who became discouraged, many of them fearing that they would be cast away upon what seemed to them a limitless waste of desolate waters.

Finally when the crew was almost in a state of mutiny, one night Columbus descried a light and soon land loomed up in the distance, and then the vessels lay to, until next day, when they were overjoyed to behold a beautiful forested land from which friendly savages, perfectly naked, issued forth looking upon the white men and their vessels with evident astonishment.

Attired in scarlet Columbus with his principal officers and men bearing the standards of Ferdinand and Isabella, were soon on the land, when the admiral fell on his knees, kissed the earth and returned thanks for his safe deliverance with tears of joy; and his example being followed by his men, he arose and with sword in hand declared that he took possession of the country in the name of his King and Queen.

In so doing he ignored the rights of the aborigines, whose ancestors had possessed the country as their own from time immemorial.

He claimed the country by what is termed the right of discovery, or which might otherwise be termed the right of might.

Long years afterwards in the year 1823, the Supreme Court of the United States through Chief Justice Marshall solemnly adjudged that in point of law the Indians had no real title to the country they occupied, but that European nations secured the title thereto by right of original discovery, which was the subject of barter and sale, regardless of the rights and claims of the aborigines who for ages had occupied, claimed and owned distinct and separate parts of the new world. (See the case of *Johnson v. McIntosh*, 8 Wheaton, 543.)

Columbus named the island on which he landed San Salvador, and thinking that it was a part of India he called the inhabitants Indians, and this designation has clung to the aborigines of America to this day, and will doubtless endure for all time.