

**OPENING OF THE CHEROKEE STRIP  
PHOTOGRAPHS, 1893  
MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION 26**

*Oklahoma State Archives Division  
Oklahoma Department of Libraries  
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# OPENING OF THE CHEROKEE STRIP PHOTOGRAPHS, 1893 MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION 26

PHOTOGRAPHS  
1893

.25 Cubic Feet  
*Manuscript 26-1*

The Cherokee Outlet, more often referred to as the Cherokee Strip, was located in what is now the state of Oklahoma. It was a sixty-mile wide strip of land south of the Oklahoma-Kansas border between the 96th and 100th meridians. About 225 miles long, in 1891 it contained 8,144,682.91 acres. The Cherokee Strip was, in actuality, a two mile strip running along the northern border of much of the Cherokee Outlet and which was the result of a surveying error.

According to the Treaty of New Echota, 1836, the United States government gave the land to the Cherokee Nation as a perpetual outlet to travel and hunt in the West. This was in addition to the land given to them for settlement upon their arrival from their home in Georgia during the Indian Removals.

After the Civil War, the Cherokees were required to renegotiate the treaty due to their alliance with the Confederacy. A revised treaty, 1866, allowed the United States government to dispose of the land: "*The United States may settle friendly Indians in any part of the Cherokee country west of 96° ... to be paid for to the Cherokee Nation ... after which their jurisdiction and right of possession to terminate forever...*"

The settlement of several tribes in the eastern part of the Cherokee Outlet closed it from the Cherokee Nation and left them unable to use it for grazing or hunting. Texans began driving their cattle across the Outlet to markets and railroads in Kansas and soon others began using the land for grazing. In the early 1880s, with the support of the Cherokees, the ranchers using the land organized and began fencing individual claims. The Cherokees felt the organization would help them collect their rents.

In 1883 the cattlemen finally incorporated under the laws of Kansas as *The Cherokee Live Stock Association*. They negotiated a five-year lease for the entire outlet for \$100,000 per year, payable semi-annually in advance. At the end of the five years, the Cherokee Nation put the lease up for bid, hoping to get a better price. The Cherokee Live Stock Association eventually got the bid for \$200,000 per year, but it was not to be completed.

In 1889, the United States Congress authorized a commission to persuade the Cherokees to cede their complete title to the land. After a great amount of pressure and confirmed by another treaty, Congress approved in 1893, the Cherokees agreed, for "*the sum of \$8,595,736.12, over and above all other sums*" to turn title over to the United States government. On September 16, 1893, the eastern end of the Cherokee Outlet was settled in the Cherokee Strip land run, the largest land run in the United States. This section of land is still known as the Cherokee Strip, and the label has often been used to refer to the whole of the Cherokee Outlet.

Generally, the **Oklahoma State Archives does not maintain historical photographs**, this special collection comprises four photographs showing the opening of the Cherokee Strip in 1893.

**Box 1**

**Photo 1:** Opening of the Cherokee Strip, September 16, 1893. Hutchinson and Southern Railroad. "Group of Spectators."



*Opening of the Cherokee Strip, Sept. 16, 1893. Hutchinson + Southern R.R.  
"Group of Spectators."*

**Box 1**

**Photo 2:** Opening of the Cherokee Strip, September 16, 1893. Hutchinson and Southern Railroad. "Before the Race. Getting in Line."



*Opening of the Cherokee Strip, Sept. 16, 1893. Hutchinson & Southern R.R.  
"Before the Race. Getting in Line."*

**Box 1**

**Photo 3:** Opening of the Cherokee Strip, September 16, 1893. Hutchinson and Southern Railroad. "Registering Booths and Officials in Charge."



*Opening of the Cherokee Strip, Sept., 16, 1893. - Hutchinson & Southern R.R.  
"Registering Booths & Officials in charge."*

**Box 1**

**Photo 4:** Opening of the Cherokee Strip, September 16, 1893. Hutchinson and Southern Railroad. "The Start."



MORE INFORMATION:

**Bibliography:**

Further information about Oklahoma's territorial period and its governors can be found at the National Archives and Records Administration: Southwest Regional Division in Fort Worth, Texas. <http://www.archives.gov/southwest/index.html>

Photographs of the opening of the Cherokee Strip, Manuscript Collection 26, housed in the Oklahoma State Archives and may be used freely. See Copyrights and Permissions. <http://www.crossroads.odl.state.ok.us/cdm4/rights.php>

Visit the Cherokee Strip Museum, Perry, Oklahoma.

Dale, Edward Everett. "The Cherokee Strip Live Stock Association." 5, no. 1 *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* (March 1927): 58-78.

Newsom, D. Earl. *The Cherokee Strip: Its History and Grand Opening*. New Forums Press, 2001.

Price, Jay M. *The Cherokee Strip Land Rush (OK Images of America)*. Arcadia Publishing, 2006.