Trail of Tears National Historic Trail
National Park Service

City of Waynesville
Pulaski County Tourism Bureau

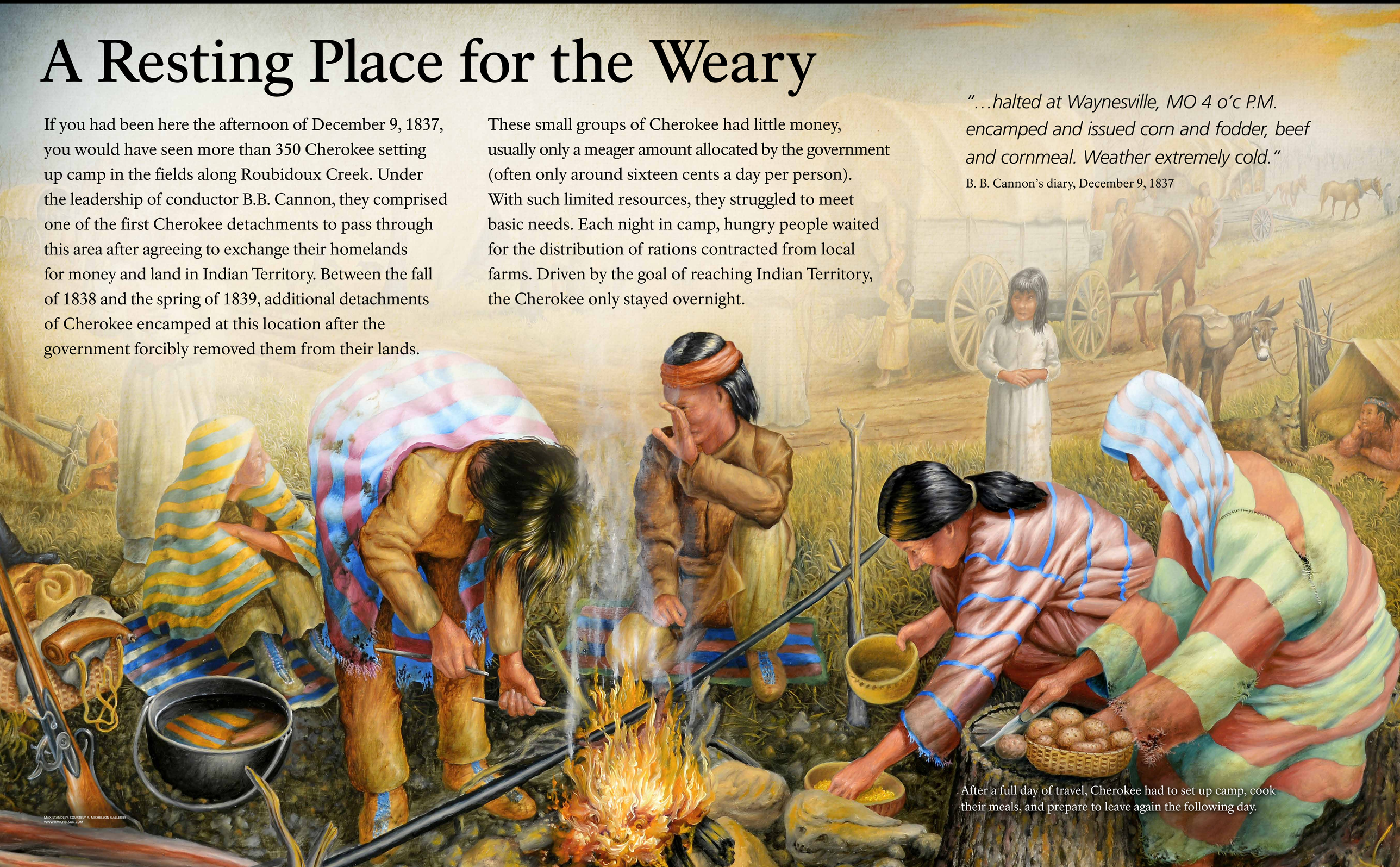
A Resting Place for the Weary

If you had been here the afternoon of December 9, 1837, you would have seen more than 350 Cherokee setting up camp in the fields along Roubidoux Creek. Under the leadership of conductor B.B. Cannon, they comprised one of the first Cherokee detachments to pass through this area after agreeing to exchange their homelands for money and land in Indian Territory. Between the fall of 1838 and the spring of 1839, additional detachments of Cherokee encamped at this location after the government forcibly removed them from their lands.

These small groups of Cherokee had little money, usually only a meager amount allocated by the government (often only around sixteen cents a day per person). With such limited resources, they struggled to meet basic needs. Each night in camp, hungry people waited for the distribution of rations contracted from local farms. Driven by the goal of reaching Indian Territory, the Cherokee only stayed overnight.

"…halted at Waynesville, MO 4 o'c P.M. encamped and issued corn and fodder, beef and cornmeal. Weather extremely cold."

B. B. Cannon's diary, December 9, 1837



After a full day of travel, Cherokee had to set up camp, cook their meals, and prepare to leave again the following day.

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