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Georgia 1800s lottery help form Union County

Bit 'o History

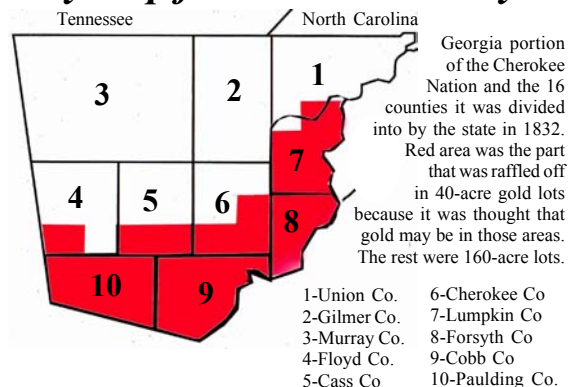
There are many places in Union County to buy lottery tickets - be they scratch off tickets or those selected for the drawings seen on television. Occasionally a few lucky people will win some money, but most people who purchase the lottery tickets walk away empty handed. A few win while thousands lose. Many believe that lottery gambling is fairly new, having been formed in 1992, with half the money going to prizes, one-third to education, and the rest to operating and marketing.

However, a lottery was part of Georgia's history in the early 1800s. Creek Indian land was part of five lotteries from 1805 to 1827. The Cherokee Indian nation land was gambled away in the sixth lottery in Georgia's history in 1832 and 1833. Part of that lottery included land which is today Union County.

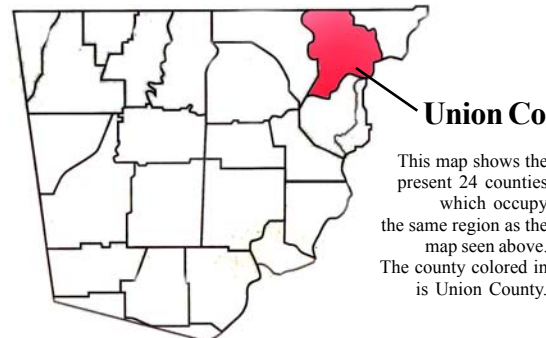
Gold was discovered on Cherokee Indian land in the late 1820s. That discovery brought thousands of miners to North Georgia.

The long time desire for Cherokee land and then the desire for gold spelled the end of the Cherokee Indian nation in Georgia. The Georgia Assembly had already passed a law in December 1828 that stated the Cherokee Indian nation in the state would be subject to Georgia laws.

When potential gold miners flooded into the area in 1829, the Cherokees asked the federal government to honor treaties and get rid of the invaders. The United States Army was sent, but



Georgia portion of the Cherokee Nation and the 16 counties it was divided into by the state in 1832. Red area was the part that was raffled off in 40-acre gold lots because it was thought that gold may be in those areas. The rest were 160-acre lots.



This map shows the present 24 counties which occupy the same region as the map seen above. The county colored in is Union County.

had no success. Local counties opposed federal troops. U.S. President Andrew Jackson withdrew the Army. A Georgia Guard was established to protect the mines, but it failed. A case that went to Washington, D.C., the United States Supreme Court ruled against Georgia and declared the Cherokee Nation to be a distinct community occupying its own territory.

The practice of distributing land by lottery was a Georgia idea. Citizens of the state, but not Indians, could register for the lottery.

A popular song of the day stated, "All I want in this creation, Is a pretty little wife and a big plantation, Away up yonder in the Cherokee Nation."

In February 1831, 96 district surveyors were cho-

sen to map the Cherokee territory. Each land lot was 160 acres, unless evidence of gold was found in the district, in which case the lots were 40 acres. These gold lots were distributed in a separate lottery, and there was also a third drawing where fractional lots were awarded.

On October 22, 1832, there were 85,000 people looking for 18,309 prizes. In the Gold Lottery, 133,000 people were hopeful to win one of the 35,000 lots.

One of the most desired spots was just south of Union County.

About three out of every four people went away with nothing. The biggest losers in the 1832 Georgia lottery were the Cherokee Indians, victims of cultural and territorial imperialism.

NC

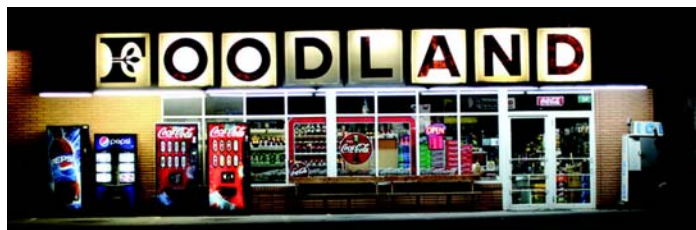
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