

CORRESPONDENCE.

From Major Francis W. Armstrong
to William Hicks and John Ross,
Principal Chiefs of the Cherokee Na-
tion:

RIDGES FERRY 19. JULY 1828.

TO THE TWO PRINCIPAL CHIEFS OF
THE CHEROKEE NATION, WILLIAM
HICKS AND JOHN ROSS

GENTLEMEN: I am instructed by the
Sec'y of War, as you have been appri-
zed by your Agent Col. Montgomery,
to visit your Nation for the purpose
of ascertaining, as far as practicable
at this time, the disposition of the
Cherokee Nation, to cede to the Uni-
ted States, a strip of land sufficient to
make a Canal or the Rail road on, (as
the case may be,) so as to unite the
waters of Tennessee with those of
Ala. at some point on the Conasauga.
It is proper that I should state,
that I have no contracting powers of
any kind whatever, my instructions are
to converse freely upon this very im-
portant subject, with such of the lead-
ing men of the Nation as I could meet
with. This I have had the pleasure
of doing today, with yourselves and
Major Ridge—Upon my report—If
necessary—Commissioners will be ap-
pointed to meet the Nation at such
time and place as may be agreed on
by the parties, for the purposes here-
in stated.

I flatter myself from the conversation
which we have had this morning, that
your answer to this communication
will be such as to authorize me to
make a report, expressive of your
willingness to confer with Commission-
ers when appointed.

With great respect and esteem, I
have the Honour to be Your Oht.
Servant,

F. W. ARMSTRONG.

Headmen Wm. Hicks &
John Ross, Present.

From William Hicks and John Ross,
Principal Chiefs &c. to Major Fran-
cis W. Armstrong.

RIDGES FERRY C. N. JULY 19. 1828.

MAJOR FRANCIS W. ARMSTRONG,

SIR,—We have had the honor to
receive your communication of this
date, informing us that "you are in-
structed by the Secretary of War to
visit the Cherokee Nation for the pur-
pose of ascertaining, as far as prac-
ticable, at this time, the disposition of
the Nation to cede to the United States
a strip of land sufficient to make a Ca-
nal or Rail road on, (as the case may
be) so as to unite the waters of Ten-
nessee with those of Alabama, at some
point on the Canasauga." In reply to
this part of your communication, we
will inform you, that the sentiments of
the Nation remains the same, as has
been made known to the former au-
thorized agents of the United States,
who had been instructed to negotiate
with us on this subject—that is, the
Cherokee Nation objects making fur-
ther cessions of lands to the United
for any purpose whatsoever. There-
fore being so deeply sensible of the
unchangeable disposition of the Nation
on this point, we cannot in the slight-
est degree flatter you to make a re-
port that will induce the General
Government to appoint Commissioners
for the purpose of renewing the sub-
ject for negotiation. In presenting
you with this candid expression of the
sentiments of the Nation, we hope
Sir, you will not be disposed to im-
pute this objection to any malignant
feelings of the Nation towards the
States interested in this occasion, nor
view their decisions emanating from
a gross ignorance of the great impor-
tance and the utility of internal im-
provements; especially when you re-
flect that some of your own enlighten-
ed States have cherished a jealousy
towards the United States exercising
the powers of merely making internal
improvements within the limits of the
States without infringing upon the
sovereign Jurisdiction of the States—
But Sir, what would be the situation
of the Nation, were they to make a ces-
sion of land for a canal or rail road
through it? However small or insigni-
ficant the cession may appear to be,
so soon as it is made to the United
States, the right of sovereign jurisdic-
tion passes through the U. States to
the State within whose charter it may
fall. Here then would necessarily
be a narrow strip in the heart of the

Nation, over which the State must exercise its laws. Under such circumstances much embarrassment and litigations would arise between the Cherokee and the Citizens of the State. And from the improving condition of the Nation, we cannot but flatter ourselves that the Nation will be prepared with better roads across the portage of those rivers, at least by the time the United States, or the State of Alabama shall have completed removing the obstructions in the Coosa river up to the Ten Islands.

With great respect and esteem, we are Sir, your Obt. Servants;
WILLIAM HICKS,
JNO. ROSS.

MAJOR FRANCIS W. ARMSTRONG
Present.