

Oconostota is the War Chief. He has fought many battles and is tired of fighting. He, like Peace Chief Attakullakulla, wants to remain neutral in the conflict between the British and the Colonists. Northern tribes want the Cherokees to side with them against the newly named "Americans."

(Words in blue were actually spoken by him; taken from historical sources).

Memorization is not essential for the audition, but you must be very familiar with the speech.

Oconostota: I am no speaker, but I have spoken some. Years ago our Path was a little bad with the English and I was sent to make it straight between the Governor and our beloved headman Kana-gatoga, "Old Hop" as the English called him. He always loved the white people and I was sent to prove it. There had been blood spilled and I was sent to clean it up. Like a cloudy morning that clears away again, I endeavored to clear away all that was bad.

Their warriors had carried the hatchet to war against us. We had done the same against them, and both acted like boys. I told the Governor I was willing to bury the hatchets of my young people, and put weights on them never to be taken off again. I meant it.

I am a Warrior, but want no War with the English—or the Americans. I am old and have no desire to war with guns, hatchets—or words. I have heard that the Great King over the water talks good, and wants all matters to be straight between the white people and the Indians, and that they shall not hurt one another. I am in agreement with him. I have now finished my talk and reckon myself as one with all of you.

Captain Nathaniel Gist has lived with the Cherokee for many years. He is the wife of Wuh-teh and the father of Sequoyah (George Gist), the creator of the Cherokee Syllabary.

Originally from Virginia, he is of English heritage, a friend of George Washington's, and while he had been loyal to the King of England, he is now considering joining the Colonials (which he does after the series of events depicted in this play).

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Nathaniel Gist: I have been with the Cherokee people for many years now. While I am from Virginia originally, I know none of you calls me a "*Virginian*" as some would—you know with whom my loyalties rest. (*Atta. nods and smiles*) I have followed in my father's footsteps as a free merchant and trader among honorable men.

Let us consider, what do the Americans want but the freedom every man wants? If the quarrel cannot be solved with words as the King desires, *can* they be solved with rifles? Would it be wise for any of us to go against the wave of colonists who continue to sweep over the mountains? (*He looks and sees all looking at him with consternation and anger. Attakullakulla. has folded his arms across his chest. Gist changes his tact; continues a bit nervously.*)

History has shown... All I am saying is—I don't know if any of us—Cherokee, English—or Virginian—can stop the tide.

Attakullakulla is the Cherokee Peace Chief. He is the father of Dragging Canoe, the uncle of Nancy Ward. He speaks with wisdom and a quiet authority. *(words in blue were actually spoken by him; taken from historical sources).*

He, like War Chief Oconostota, wants to remain neutral in the conflict between the British and the Colonists. Northern tribes want the Cherokees to side with them against the newly named "Americans."

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Attakullakulla: O-si-yo. Brothers and sisters, I always speak one way and am not double minded. As to what has happened between the Great King and his rebellious children, I believe all things have been ordered by the Great Father above. We are of a different color from the white people, but one God is the father of all. The Great Father above made all people, and there is not a day but some are coming into, and some going out of the world. I hope that the path, as the Great King told me years ago, will never be crooked between us, but straight and open for all to pass. I hope, as we all live in one land, we shall all live as one people. It is my hope all his children will be as one without quarreling.

Nan'ye'hi. You have been quiet, contemplating your hands, or have you been in prayer for us? *(all chuckle; he then addresses a male member of the audience)* I see my son's brother Cameron from Scotland is with us. Scotchie, it is customary among the red men to admit women to our councils. As the white people, as well as the red, are born of women, is not that the custom among them also? *(does not wait for reply, but immediately addresses Nancy)*

Nancy, as Ga-tsi-ge-yu-i (*Gah-gee-gay-you-ee*), the Beloved Woman, you have important words to share with us. What does the Women's Council want us to know as we prepare to welcome the delegation of tribes from the north?

Nancy Ward has the honorable title of “Beloved Woman.” She is a woman of peace, yet she is also known as the War Woman. Chief Attakullakulla is her uncle, and Dragging Canoe is her cousin. (*words in blue were actually spoken by her; taken from historical sources*)

You may choose one of the speeches below. Memorization is not essential for the audition, but you must be very familiar with the speech.

1. Nancy Ward: My Chief, I have the honor of being called Ga-tsi-ge-yu-i (*Gah-gee-gay-you-ee*), the Beloved Woman—and conversely the War Woman, yet it is certainly not war I seek. I believe I am hearing from the Spirit of our Great Father above when I say (*slowly, deliberately*) this is not our war. We must remain peaceful at all costs.

Many of our women are like Wut-teh here (*gestures to woman in audience*), brother Nathaniel’s wife. They have children we count our own, like their son Sequoyah. Many of our Cherokee women have married white men—and who can tell me they have a mark on their head which distinguishes whether they are Loyalists or Colonials? If our warriors become embroiled in battle, will they kill our husbands? Our sons? Your *brothers*?

2. Nancy Ward: Ho-wa, my Chief. Great Warrior Oconostota mentions the Battle of Taliwa twenty years ago where my first husband Kingfisher was killed. (*to Dragging Canoe*) You speak of my fighting spirit, cousin. Yes, I had a fighting spirit then. And it was something more. My teeth are *broken* because of that fighting spirit. I chewed the lead bullets Kingfisher put in his rifle so when they hit their mark they would lacerate their victim and prove far more deadly.

When he fell, a fury overtook me. I called to our men to fight harder. I picked up my husband’s rifle and ran toward the Ani-Gusa, the Creeks. I was not thinking of valor, or honors, only destruction. The men rallied behind me and brought victory.

For this I have been honored with the title which means as much to me as my own three children: Ga-tsi-ge-yu-i (*Gah-gee-gay-you-ee*), the Beloved Woman. This honor has made me mother to many children. (*to Gist:*) *I look on you and the red people as my children. I am older now, but I hope yet to bear more children, who will grow up and people our nation, and shall have no more disturbance — no more fighting— only peace.*

My brothers, I am in hopes that you rightly consider that woman is the mother of all—and I will take the privilege to speak to you as my own children.

Hear the words from the bottom of my heart today. These are the words of your mother, the words of the Women’s Council and the words of the Good and Great Spirit. It is a call for peace. *All for peace.* (*she sits*)

Dragging Canoe (*Tsi-yu-gan-si-ni* pronounced *Gee-you-gahn-see-nee'*) is a man of action and strong principles. He is angered by the colonists' constant encroaching on Cherokee lands and sees the coming war as an opportunity to win back these lands.

(words in blue were actually spoken by him; taken from historical sources)

Note: During the audition, someone else will read your cues for you from Cameron and Oconostota.

You may choose the speech below, or the one on the next page. Memorization is not essential for the audition, but you must be very familiar with the speech.

"Cameron" audience member: What will you do if the Great King sends his troops to fight the rebels?

Dragging Canoe: If? If? When he sends them! When he does, we will fight against the rogues with his men! But why wait until the King sends his troops? The time to fight is now. We have waited long enough. Scotchie can get us all the ammunition we need from the English in Florida.

The white men have almost surrounded us, leaving us only a little spot of ground to stand upon, and it seems to be their intention to destroy us as a Nation. They squatted on our land, and then used that jackal Henderson to "buy" it from us for trinkets and guns. Even King George knows it was an illegal sale. These "Watauga settlements" are our land.

I had nothing to do with making that bargain; it was made by some of the old men who are too old to hunt or to fight. As for me, I have a great many of my young warriors around me (*gestures to others in distance*), and they mean to have their lands. I say let us use those guns to get it back.

Oconostota: Do not be hasty, Dragging Canoe. Let the Great King fight his own battles.

Dragging Canoe: E-du-tsi (*eh-doo-gee*), Uncle, you were a Great Warrior. What has clouded your mind—is it age or *something else*? We have sat too long beneath the shrinking shade of this rotting tree. It is time to awaken from our slumber. We are not colonials or Wataugans—this is OUR land.

Did you not say, "A few presents are as nothing compared to good land, which will last forever"? It was not that long ago, E-du-tsi (*eh-doo-gee*)! What has happened?

Dragging Canoe: Father, did I not say the decision has been made for us? We will be threatened with extermination if we do not take action immediately.

Earlier today a runner came from the northern tribes. They are only a day's journey from us. The Mohawk said that white people had come into their towns and killed many of their people, among them the son of their English Agent Sir William Johnson, who had been put to death by immersion in hot tar.

They said the French have given them "plenty of ammunition. All of the Northern tribes have agreed to take satisfaction." They said, "the King's troops will soon fall on our enemies toward the sea, and if we, the red men, unite and fall on them on this side, we will find them as nothing."

Even before we heard this news my men have been busy repairing their moccasins and making spears, clubs and scalping knives. The time to act is now.