‘TO MAKE US INDEPENDENT’: THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG MEN AT THE CHEROKEE MALE SEMINARY, 1851-1910.

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Abstract: In the years following forced removal, Cherokee leaders considered how to prevent future assaults on tribal sovereignty. Their answer was education. In 1846, the Cherokee National Council established two high schools, one for boys and one for girls. Modeled after northeastern high schools (such as Boston Latin School), the Cherokee Male Seminary featured instructional methods, curriculum, and disciplinarian measures similar to those found in institutions for white children. As a tool for cultural change, the seminary educational model resembled late nineteenth-century government Indian boarding schools. During its operation, the Male Seminary achieved dual goals: first, it provided some Cherokee youth with the same advanced education offered at top-tier academies in the Northeast; second, by adding the indigent program and Primary Department in the 1870s, the school made an elementary education more accessible to Cherokee children of all backgrounds and classes. By exploring the creation and goals of the Male Seminary, this work spotlights a crucial stage in the development of Cherokee education, the mid-nineteenth century in which tribal leaders decided to allocate a substantial portion of the tribal budget to post-Primary schools. Furthermore, by examining the political changes which swept the Cherokee Nation in the 1860s and 70s, this work demonstrates the consequences that shifting political power had for the seminary. Finally, the careers seminary students chose after graduation underscore the impact the school had on Cherokee society. Whether viewed as a paragon of higher learning or a tool for cultural destruction, the Cherokee Male Seminary educated several generations of young men and had an influence on tribal identity and culture.

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PREFACE

"The culture we belong to and the legacies passed down by our forefathers shape the patterns of our achievements in ways that we cannot begin to imagine." –Jay Hannah, descendant of a Cherokee seminary student[2]

On May 7, 2011, the Descendants of Cherokee National Male and Female Seminaries Student Association held their annual meeting in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. The attendees gathered in the Branscum Alumni Center at Northeastern State University, where they visited with old friends, met new members, and recalled stories about their ancestors' experiences. My mother and I decided to join the luncheon to honor my great-grandmother, May Beatrice Tyner, who attended the female seminary in 1890. We enjoyed meeting and sharing our stories with the other descendants. One of the descendants, after hearing that I was writing my dissertation on the Male seminary, gave me a brick from the original building (a valuable artifact considering that the only thing left from the building is the base of one column). Others relayed amusing anecdotes about their grandparents' school experiences, a few of which I was asked not to repeat. This association comprises dedicated members who believe that by honoring those who attended the seminaries we acknowledge the impact our ancestors' lives had on future generations.

[2] Jay Hannah, *The Cherokee Phoenix*, http://www.cherokeephoenix.org/24949/article.aspx.

When I discovered that my great-grandmother, May, attended the Cherokee Female Seminary, I wanted to learn more. My mother and grandmother were able to recall some specifics about May's experience. She attended when she was thirteen years old in 1890 (the year that the newly-built seminary hall opened after a fire destroyed the original). She remained at the school for a year but ran away at the end of the year because "she was lonely." She and a classmate walked and then hitched a ride on the back of a wagon from Tahlequah to Ochelata, a 108 mile journey. I learned later that her experience was not unique; several students ran away.

While my mother and grandmother supplied some information about May's experience, I decided that I wanted to learn more about the institutions themselves. I quickly came across a few works on the female seminary, including Devon Mihesuah's *Cultivating the Rosebuds: The Education of Women at the Cherokee Female Seminary, 1851-1909*, but I discovered that there was relatively little on the school's Male counterpart, the Cherokee Male seminary. This omission prompted me to write my dissertation on the institution. The purpose of this study is not to present a reinterpretation or correction in the extant literature but to investigate the nature of the Male Seminary and its impact on Cherokee society. Issues explored include masculinity and gender in nineteenth-century Cherokee society, the special role of class, dissention over the direction and purpose of public education in the Cherokee Nation, and the complex problems of ethnicity and race.

Much of the scholarship on Indian boarding schools describes a dismal situation for the students who attended these schools. Culture shock, homesickness, physical and mental abuse, strictly regimented schedules, laborious work, and military-style living

characterized off-reservation boarding schools run by the federal government. The children who attended these schools suffered psychological damage as they were forbidden from being themselves and speaking their own language; they were given new names and strange and uncomfortable clothing. They were subjected to hard labor, physical punishment, ostracism, and assaults on their sense of self-worth.[3]

Understandably, much of extant scholarship highlights this bleak past and brings to light the tragic stories resulting from assimilation efforts. However, anthropologists and historians have also found evidence of positive experiences, countering the extreme negativism and presenting, instead, a more nuanced and contradictory evaluation of boarding schools.[4] My research has also revealed that students at the Cherokee Male Seminary held multi-faceted and complex impressions of their school days, owing largely to the uniqueness of the institution. Unlike federal boarding schools, the Male Seminary was created and administered by the tribe, which diminished significantly the level of psychological damage associated with practices common at federal boarding schools, such as cutting students' hair, changing their names, and banning all traces of their ethnic

[3] K. Tsianina Lomawaima, *They Called it Prairie Light: the Story of Chilocco Indian School* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994); Devon Mihesuah, *Cultivating the Rosebuds: the Education of Women at the Cherokee Female Seminary, 1851-1907* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993); W. David Baird, "Spencer Academy: Choctaw Nation, 1842-1900," *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, 45 (Spring 1967), 25-43; David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1995); Holly Littlefield, *Children of the Indian Boarding School: 1879-Present* (New York: Media Source, 2001).

[4] Clyde Ellis, *To Change Them Forever: Indian Education at the Rainy Mountain Boarding School, 1893-1920* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994); Sally J. McBeth, "Indian Boarding Schools and Ethnic Identity: An Example from the Southern Plains Tribes of Oklahoma," in *Plains Anthropologist* 28 (May 1983), 120; David Wallace Adams, "Beyond Bleakness: the Brighter Side of Indian Boarding Schools, 1870-1940" in *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational* Experiences, Cliffort E. Trafzer, Jean A. Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc, eds. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 35-64; Amanda J. Cobb, *Listening to Our Grandmother's Stories: The Bloomfield Academy for Chickasaw Females, 1852-1949* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992); Myriam Vučković, *Voices from Haskell: Indian Students between Two Worlds, 1884-1928* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2008).

identity. The goals of the seminary were also unique: the tribe wanted well-educated Cherokees who could defend tribal sovereignty and not blend into the American mainstream. On the other hand, the Male Seminary pushed an agenda of assimilation and glorified the privilege and power held by those Cherokees who adapted to the white world. These dual goals of the Male Seminary, combined with the diverse student body, resulted in paradoxical and complex assessments of the school.

Understanding the complexity of the institution and the historical forces that led to its creation requires both a chronological and thematic approach to Cherokee education. Chapter One offers an overview of Cherokee education, from pre-European contact all the way through Oklahoma statehood, and a general timeline of the Cherokee Male Seminary. The questions addressed in this chapter include: What was the nature of education in traditional Cherokee society? How did traditional education differ from the type of education introduced by the Christian missionaries? Did mission schools serve the entire nation, or just a small percentage of the children? How did the Cherokee Nation public school system attempt to fix the problems associated with mission schools? What prompted John Ross and other Cherokee leaders to create the Cherokee Female and Male Seminaries?

Chapter Two provides an analysis of the Male Seminary in its early years, from 1851 to 1856, focusing on the first teachers and administrators, development of the curriculum, the demographics of the student body, and problems associated with the initial program. This chapter seeks to answer: how did the tribe design and structure the seminaries? Where did the tribe find teachers to staff the schools? How did Cherokee students adapt to the rigorous curriculum? What were the prevailing attitudes guiding the

direction of the school? Was there a ruling elite class in nineteenth-century Cherokee society which held a disproportional amount of economic and political power? Did an elite class dominate Cherokee politics, thereby controlling the board of education and the Cherokee Male Seminary? Did a significant difference in class exist between those in charge of the school, those who attended the school, and the majority of the Cherokee populace? Did the Male Seminary fix the problems associated with the mission school system and the Cherokee public school system?

The Male Seminary in the later years (1872-1910) differed markedly from the early years. When political power shifted to populists in the late nineteenth century, tribal leaders made significant changes to the Male Seminary. Chapter Three examines the nature of these changes and answers the following questions: Why and how did tribal leaders alter the dynamic of the seminaries? What were the results of these changes? Did the "new" seminary fulfill the hopes of Cherokee families?

Chapter Four explores the student experience and considers daily life from the student perspective. Focusing on issues of race, class, gender, health, religion, and athletics, this chapter seeks to answer: How did seminarians interpret racial difference? Did a "full-blood" versus "mixed-blood" dichotomy exist at the Male seminary? If so, were these differences based more on phenotypical features or cultural allegiances? How did the experience of students in the Primary Department differ from students in the "Seminary Proper"? Was the Male Seminary an outgrowth of previous mission education, a replica of northeastern Anglo-American institutions of higher learning, or something entirely new? Was class difference a significant factor in shaping the experience of students at the Male Seminary? Chapter Four also deals with students'

reactions to the seminary's goals, curriculum, expectations, and rules. The seminary's faculty meeting minutes contain hundreds of documented cases of defiance of school rules. Acts of defiance could represent student resistance, and this evidence raises several questions: precisely who created school rules and for what end? Did rules and regulations change over time? If so, did these changes reflect transformations within the tribe itself? Which rules did students most often disregard? Did defiance represent resistance to the drive for assimilation, or were these just cases of "boys just being boys"?[5] How did student behavior at the Cherokee Male Seminary compare to behavior at government Indian boarding schools and learning institutions for Anglo-American children?

Chapter Five follows the Male seminarians after they left school and traces their post-education experiences. Many of the seminary's graduates attended a university and returned to Indian Territory as the Nation's leading politicians, businessmen, doctors, and lawyers. The questions addressed in this chapter include: What professions did seminary graduates enter? What kinds of people did the seminary produce? Of those who became political leaders, did their education seem to influence their political decisions? How did the seminary influence those who attended?

The final chapter includes concluding remarks and suggestions for future research. The conclusion explores the legacy of the Cherokee Male Seminary. The seminary was remarkable because: 1) the Cherokee Nation created and administered the

[5] Tom Mooney, "Boys Will be Boys," in *Cherokee Heritage Center Columns* (Winter 2000), 2-7.

institution; 2) it was the first secular school west of the Mississippi; 3) and many graduates of the seminary became tribal leaders.[6]

A note on terminology:

Like other American Indian tribes, the Cherokees are diverse in terms of race, ethnicity, and culture, and any meaningful discussion of their history requires an understanding of how Cherokees and outsiders view and categorize these differences. American Indian identity and racial "authenticity" has become a critical and controversial issue in many tribal communities. Both Indians and non-Indians use the terms "mixed-blood" and "full-blood" when discussing the genetic makeup of an individual. For example, Hopi geneticist Frank Dukepoo explains, "I don't know what 'blood' means. But I do know what 'genes' means . . . . I don't like the idea of the blood or the genes being deleted [through Indians' intermarriage with non-Indians]."[7]

According to L.G. Moses, however, the terms "mixed-blood" and "full-blood" are ambiguous social and cultural terms that often have very little to do with genetics. He argues that the term "blood" is used "to assign one another to categories of assumed biological differences. Very often these differences are imagined to be evident in physical appearances but can also include alleged moral, intellectual, and psychological differences. This 'folk' usage . . . merges unscientific ideas about biology with observed and sometimes enforced social differentiation and discrimination."[8] In the context of

[6] Hugh T. Cunningham, "A History of the Cherokee Indians," in *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 8 (December 1930), 407-440.

[7] Frank Dukepoo, as quoted in Eva Marie Garroutte, *Real Indians: Identity and the Survival of Native America* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2003), 41.

[8] L.G. Moses, *Indian Lives: Essays on Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Native American Leaders* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1985), 6.

Cherokee history, these terms take on racial, social, and cultural meanings. Complicating matters further, "mixed-blood" and "full-blood" have different meanings even among members of the same tribe.

Native American tribes are diverse and often defy the standard dichotomization of progressive versus traditional, or more typically "mixed-blood" versus "full-blood." Indeed, anthropologist Circe Sturm warns against perpetuating such pan-Indian stereotypes.[9] Nevertheless, at least among the Cherokees, there were distinct socioeconomic classes, and, generally speaking, the wealthy class was dominated by a group of prominent families who were of mixed-white ancestry, whom I refer to as "mixed-blood." I often use the term "children of mixed-ancestry" when referring to children who, by virtue of their genetics and social class, had access to educational opportunities limited to other children. Although there were exceptions, generally speaking, these Cherokees had lighter skin, spoke English, and were culturally more aligned with mainstream America. When using the term "full-blood," I am referring to those who spoke Cherokee and held a subordinate socioeconomic status in the Nation. It is with an understanding of the complexity of American Indian identity and the racist roots of these categories that I continue the use of the terms "mixed-blood" and "full-blood."

[9] Circe Sturm, *Blood Politics: Race, Culture, and Identity in the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), 18.

INTRODUCTION

"They are, at the same time, demonstrating beyond cavil, the existence of mental powers in our midst, which only require development to make us self-improving and independent."—John Ross, 1857[10]

"I again want to emphasize the importance of continuing our campaign to raise funds for Cherokee students."—Rick Ward, The Descendants of Cherokee Seminaries Association President[11]

In the midst of territorial and cultural loss, the Cherokees turned to education as a means of survival in an increasingly changing world. To hasten the acculturation of the tribe, the Cherokee National Council established two high schools in 1846, one for boys and one for girls. The objective of these institutions was to promote "religion, morality, and knowledge, [which are] necessary to good government, the preservation of liberty and the happiness of mankind."[12] The preservation of liberty was especially vital to Cherokees, who only eight years earlier had been stripped of their homeland and autonomy. In the years following forced removal, political leaders considered how to prevent future assaults on tribal sovereignty. Their answer was education. Arm young Cherokees with the best education possible so they would be on equal footing with whites—they would have the skills necessary to guide the tribe into a more powerful

[10] John Ross, "Message of the Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation to the National Committee and Council in General Council Convened," 5 October 1957.
[11] Rick Ward, *The Cherokee Phoenix*, http://www.cherokeephoenix.org/Article/Index/1429.
[12] *Cherokee National Male Seminary Catalogue,* 1886, 12.

position in dealings with the federal government. To many tribal leaders, the Cherokee Male Seminary was the best weapon in the ongoing struggle for self determination.

Educational institutions make excellent case studies for understanding society and culture because they often reflect "the culture of which they are a part and respond to forces within that culture."[13] The Cherokee National Male Seminary was no exception. Modeled after northeastern high schools (such as Boston Latin School), the Cherokee Male Seminary featured instructional methods, curriculum, and disciplinarian measures similar to those found in institutions for white children. As a tool for cultural change, the seminary educational model resembled late nineteenth-century government Indian boarding schools. Therefore, the Cherokee Male Seminary reflected both Cherokee and mainstream American culture.

The seminary's creators were members of the wealthy class of Cherokees who had embraced the values, traditions, and practices of their white neighbors. These "progressive" tribal Councilmen wanted to bring "enlightenment" to the culturally-traditional Cherokees. Therefore, one of the central aims of the seminaries and of the entire Cherokee public school system was to "better the condition of our people."[14] The children of these families had a strong presence at the seminaries; thus, this study will deal with the conflation of class and race in nineteenth-century Cherokee society.

The forces that bore racial and class difference among Cherokees were myriad and complex. Cherokees had a long history of resistance and accommodation when faced with Euroamerican presence and pressure. Ethnohistorian Theda Perdue explains that

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[13] Raymond Callahan, *Education and the Cult of Efficiency: A Study of the Social Forces that have Shaped the Administration of the Public Schools* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), 1.

[14] James M. Payne, "re: Schools," 16 July 1845, John Ross Papers, Thomas Gilcrease Museum.

prior to European contact, the Cherokees' matrilineal kinship system and matrifocal residence pattern created a rather egalitarian society in terms of social, political, and economic power.[15] The notion of balance grounded the Cherokee worldview. Tremendous economic gain for one meant considerable loss for another, thereby upsetting the balance. Increasing contact with whites, however, frayed traditional conceptions of wealth and wove new ones. For example, the introduction of plantation slavery by missionaries created an affluent class in Cherokee society who amassed substantial wealth by using slave labor to cultivate staple crops, such as wheat, cotton, corn, hemp, and tobacco. Moreover, as intermarriage with whites increased, a new residence pattern, neolocal, emerged.[16] Over time, the children of unions between Cherokee women and Anglo-American men began to identify more with their fathers' culture.[17]

Although this group of Cherokees embraced certain elements of Anglo-American culture, such as plantation slavery and a centralized form of government, historian William McLoughlin argues that these cultural changes may not have represented assimilation but accommodation, or the act of making adjustments to meet the demands of new circumstances.[18] By the early nineteenth century, the Cherokee tribe, like other southeastern tribes, faced a host of new circumstances: increasing pressure to sell their land and move west; rising dissonance between those tribal members whose

[15] According to anthropologist Peter Kunstadter, a matrifocal family is a "co-residential kinship group which includes no regularly present Male in the role of husband-father," in Richard Randolph's "The 'Matrifocal Family' as a Comparative Category," *American Anthropologist* 66 (June 1964), 628-631.

[16] In a neolocal residence pattern, married couples and their children live apart from the families of either spouse.

[17] Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700-1835* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), 13, 59, 149.

[18] William McLoughlin, "The Cherokees in Transition: A Statistical Analysis of the Federal Cherokee Census of 1835." *The Journal of American History* 64 (December 1977), 699.

determination to remain on their homelands remained steadfast and those who thought it best to avoid warfare and leave, and the apparent unraveling of traditional cultural ways. Some members of the southeastern tribes viewed their adoption of mainstream American culture as testimony to their ability and willingness to embrace capitalism, make good use of the land, and engage in the market economy, all of which defied popular characterizations of Indians as backward, lazy, and unintelligent. Cherokees retained enough of their traditional Indian identity in the minds of their non-Indian neighbors to be found encumbering the soil.[19]

In 1828, gold was discovered in Cherokee Country. Land already coveted for its horticultural fecundity now brought in a flood of white settlers lured by a hope for riches. The discovery of gold in Cherokee territory prompted the Georgia governor to disavow Cherokee sovereignty and declare the Cherokee Nation subject to the jurisdiction of Georgia. Meanwhile, a handful of prominent Cherokees, without tribal consent, signed the Treaty of New Echota, selling all the tribal land holdings in the Southeast in exchange for annual remuneration and acreage west of the Mississippi River. Bolstered by popular will and undeterred by the prodigious legal efforts of Chief John Ross, Supreme Court Justice John Marshall, and others, President Andrew Jackson signed the Indian Removal Act in 1830, making legal the forced relocation of forty-six thousand Native Americans from their ancestral lands in the southeast to western territory.[20] The Cherokee Male Seminary was created eight years after this monumental event. To understand the reason for the school's creation and its special role in the drive for self determination, one must

[19] Ibid.

[20] Russell Thorton, *The Cherokees: A Population History* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), 56-58.

recognize the sweeping cultural, societal, political, and economic changes that culminated in compulsory migration and forced the tribe to rebuild their homes and lives in a strange land.

The Indian Removal Act was one method employed by the federal government to deal with the "Indian problem." Historian Francis Paul Prucha provides an overview of Indian policy from 1780 to 1980 and explains that, generally speaking, the federal government utilized two methods for dealing with Native Americans, the treaty system and the reservation system. According to Prucha, the former had one key problem—the United States' government "seemed powerless to hold back the onslaughts of advancing whites."[21] Treaties were often broken by either one or both parties, and by the mid-nineteenth century, the federal government increasingly favored the reservation system to maintain safety for white settlers and acquire more tribal land holdings.[22] The federal government administered Indian reservations through the Office of Indian Affairs and its director, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. The reservation agent became the new ruling chief and wielded tremendous power over the Native Americans living on the reservations. By the end of the nineteenth century, Native Americans relegated to reservations found themselves in desperate conditions.[23]

According to Prucha, Grant's Peace Policy ushered in a period of intensified Christian reform activity, emphasizing assimilation as the panacea to the "Indian problem." During this period, there was a general perception that Native American tribes

[21] Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 45.
[22] Francis Paul Prucha, *Indian Policy in the United States* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1981), 179.
[23] Prucha, *The Great Father*, 600.

were nearing extinction. Reformers believed that helping Native Americans culturally assimilate to mainstream America would save them from extinction. Policy makers also turned to assimilation as a way to absorb Native Americans into the larger society. Indian boarding schools created during this era reflected this zeal for assimilation. Reformers claimed that education would quicken the process of acculturation, prepare Indians for economic self-sufficiency, and cost less than killing them.[24] In 1879, Richard Henry Pratt opened Carlisle Indian School, the prototype of an "institutional mechanism for transforming the offspring of savage warriors into fully civilized citizens."[25] Pratt convinced Sioux chiefs to turn over eighty-four children, claiming that the Indians' only defense against the white man was to learn his language and ways. Carlisle and other off-reservation boarding schools attempted to strip Native American children of their tribal identities and cultural traits and transform them into Christian citizens capable of spreading the gospel of capitalism, individualism, republicanism, and Christianity to those tribal members back on reservations.[26]

Scholars Michael Coleman and David Wallace Adams have written important works on the experience of Native American children in these government boarding schools. In *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928,* Adams offers an overview of Indian policy formation, how policy translated into practice in schools, and how students responded to these efforts. Because policymakers believed that schools needed to strip away all outward characteristics of the children's tribal identity, administrators cut boys' hair, made them

[24] David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1995), 20.

[25] David Wallace Adams, "Foreward," *Battlefield and Classroom: An Autobiography by Richard Henry Pratt*, Robert M. Utley, ed. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2003), xii.

[26] Ibid.

wear school uniforms, and gave them English names, all of which, Adams asserts, "constituted a grave assault on Indian identity."[27] Furthermore, the living conditions in the boarding schools were deplorable. The students were undernourished, subjected to corporal punishment, and lived in ill-ventilated dormitories, which fostered the spread of diseases such as tuberculosis and trachoma. Adams uses excerpts from Luther Standing Bear's autobiography to illustrate the difficulties Indian children had in attempting to learn English and the humiliation students felt when teachers reprimanded them for failing. Teachers also highlighted the principles of republicanism, the rights and obligations of citizenship, and the structure of the local, state, and federal governments—lessons crucial to making American citizens. Adams concludes that the boarding school had two outcomes: first, most returned students were agents of cultural change and white education was a main acculturation force shaping Indian society; secondly, off-reservation boarding schools fostered a pan-Indian consciousness.[28]

In *American Indian Children at School, 1850-1930,* Michael Coleman relies on Native American autobiography to analyze student responses to missionary and government schools, the staff, the curriculum, and each other. Coleman explains that many Native American parents chose to send their children to boarding schools because they realized the importance of learning to read and write English to understand treaties and other documents. In other words, Indians transformed these institutions of ethnocide into tools for increased tribal power and autonomy. Coleman uses hundreds of narratives

[27] Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 110.
[28] Ibid., 336.

to demonstrate the Indian children's remarkably diverse reactions to life at government boarding schools.[29]

While Adams and Coleman offer a general assessment of Indian boarding schools, other scholars focus on specific schools and place these institutions in the context of cultural change, ethnic identity, and tribal sovereignty, matters that are at the core of this study. Historian Clyde Ellis has contributed greatly to our understanding of the role of education in American Indians' struggle for cultural, political, and economic survival. In *To Change Them Forever: Indian Education at the Rainy Mountain Boarding School, 1893-1920*, Ellis provides an important perspective on American Indian education—the student perspective. He uses student interviews to tell the story of the reservation boarding school experience at Rainy Mountain, a government boarding school on the Kiowa-Comanche-Apache Reservation in southwestern Oklahoma. Placing the school within the context of the government's assimilation program of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, Ellis discovers that, despite the government's drive to eradicate Kiowa culture, the children who attended the school retained their Kiowa identity and also learned valuable vocational skills. Ellis concludes that some boarding schools came to represent cultural survival, or a means to exert sovereignty and identity. [30]

But the Cherokee seminaries were different from government boarding schools. The situation of Cherokees and the other so-called "civilized tribes" was unique. Compared to the tribes that had been relegated to reservations, the five southeastern tribes

[29] Michael Coleman, *American Indian Children at School, 1850-1930* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1993).

[30] Clyde Ellis, *To Change Them Forever: Indian Education at the Rainy Mountain Boarding School, 1893-1920* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996).

owned and controlled their own land and had generated considerable wealth. These tribes realized that education was crucial to leading their tribes into a position of power and negotiation. The historical events that shaped the creation of academies and seminaries in Indian Territory were different from those of the federally-owned and operated boarding schools. Historians Amanda J. Cobb and Devon Mihesuah explore two such institutions. The methods and theories these scholars informed my approach to the Cherokee Male Seminary.

In *Listening to Our Grandmother's Stories: The Bloomfield Academy for Chickasaw FeMales, 1852-1949,* Amanda J. Cobb uses interviews with former students to analyze the school (later Carter Seminary). She writes that education in the Chickasaw Nation was a tool of negotiation and survival in the face of great social and cultural changes. Cobb uses the students' own voices to "tell a story" previously untold, and adds "a thread to the history of women's literacy education, to the type of literacy instruction American Indian students received, and to the special issues of language and identity they faced, particularly mixed-blood students."[31] Originally located fifteen miles south of Durant, Bloomfield Academy opened in 1852 and operated for nearly a century, during which time administrative control changed hands three times, from Protestant missionaries, to the Chickasaw Nation, and, finally, to the federal government. Though each administration's ultimate goal was the "betterment" of the tribe, they each had a distinct idea about what "betterment" meant. Christianization of the tribe was the missionaries' holy charge, and as such they focused heavily on religious literacy. For the tribe itself, literacy and academic training meant an increased chance of economic,

[31] Amanda Cobb, *Listening to Our Grandmother's Stories: The Bloomfield Academy for Chickasaw FeMales, 1852-1949* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 9.

political, and cultural survival in the wake of forced removal. As Cobb explains, "for the Chickasaws, literacy was a way to 'equalize' and enable the Chickasaws to compete economically with the white settlers populating the region."[32] Most Bloomfield students were of mixed ancestry, living in two overlapping and interweaving worlds. In this and many other respects, the Bloomfield Academy mirrored the Cherokee Male Seminary. Both were for children of the southeastern tribes, whose relationship with the federal government differed markedly from other tribes; both began around the same time, shortly following removal to Indian Territory; and both, at some point, were controlled by the tribes themselves.

Mihesuah's work on the Cherokee female and male seminaries is especially crucial to this project. Her meticulous archival research laid the groundwork for my own. In *Cultivating the Rosebuds: The Education of Women at the Cherokee Female Seminary, 1851-1909*, Mihesuah examines the female seminary through the framework of cultural and racial tension and places the school within the context of the sweeping changes which divided the Cherokee Nation into divergent cultural factions. The Cherokee Female Seminary shared several commonalities with the Bloomfield Academy: both were designed to educate the children of southeastern tribes, both schools provided for the education of Indian women, and both were seen as tools to ensure the "betterment" of the tribes. While sharing similarities with the Bloomfield Academy, the Cherokee Female Seminary was unique in that it was created and run by the tribe and open to Cherokees alone. The seminary doors were closed to children from other tribes and ethnic backgrounds. Mihesuah reveals that Cherokee girls from "progressive,"

[32] Cobb, *Listening to Our Grandmothers' Stories*, 51.

mixed-blood families and those from more traditional, full-blood families lived together at the seminary and that their diverse cultural backgrounds contributed to social friction. The school's curriculum and goals fostered this social division by training young Cherokee women to become the ideal woman venerated in Victorian society. The cult of domesticity created an idealized picture of women—virtuous, pious, pure, submissive, and domestic. While this notion of womanhood fit neatly into the worldview of progressive students, it was foreign to young women with a more traditional upbringing. This theme of conflicting cultural adherences frames the work, throughout which Mihesuah offers a nuanced and insightful discussion of such delicate issues as ethnic and national identity formation, assimilation, tribal sovereignty, and cultural continuity.[33]

Mihesuah continues this line of analysis in her article, "'Out of the Graves of Polluted Debouches': The Boys at the Cherokee Male Seminary." Again, the author frames her analysis of the seminary in terms of racial and cultural tension between full-blood, traditional and mixed-blood, "progressive" members of the tribe. The Male Seminary differed from its female counterpart, however, in both curriculum and goals for the graduates. While the female school trained young women to become teachers and wives, the Male Seminary "prepare[d] the boys for a university education . . . [and] they were then expected to return to become political leaders and businessmen in the Cherokee Nation."[34] Mihesuah concludes that the Cherokee tribal Council created both seminaries to hasten the acculturation of the tribe; they viewed assimilation as the one of

[33] Devon Mihesuah, *Cultivating the Rosebuds: The Education of Women at the Cherokee Female Seminary, 1851-1909* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993).

[34] Devon Mihesuah, "'Out of the Graves of Polluted Debaches': The Boys of the Cherokee Male Seminary," *American Indian Quarterly* 15 (Autumn 1991), 503.

the most important means of survival. Thus, the Male Seminary was a catalyst for change.[35]

Building upon Mihesuah's seminal study on the male seminary, I explore further confluence of race and class in Cherokee society and its impact on public post-Primary education. During its operation, the Male Seminary achieved dual goals: first, it provided some Cherokee youth with the same advanced education offered at top-tier academies in the Northeast; second, by adding the indigent program and Primary Department in the 1870s, the school made an elementary education more accessible to Cherokee children of all backgrounds and classes. Whether viewed as a paragon of higher learning or a tool for cultural destruction, the Cherokee Male Seminary educated several generations of young men and had an influence on tribal identity and culture. By exploring the creation and goals of the Male Seminary, this work spotlights a crucial stage in the development of Cherokee education, the mid-nineteenth century in which tribal leaders decided to allocate a substantial portion of the tribal budget to post-Primary schools. Furthermore, by examining the political changes which swept the Cherokee Nation in the 1860s and 70s, this work demonstrates the consequences that shifting political power had for the seminary. Finally, the careers seminary students chose after graduation underscore the impact the school had on Cherokee society.

The seminaries embodied the tribe's enduring commitment to education and its resolve to remain independent. The descendants of the Male and Female Seminaries take this commitment seriously. In addition to honoring their ancestors' educational achievements, they offer an annual $1,000 scholarship to a Northeastern State University

[35] Mihesuah, "The Boys of the Cherokee Male Seminary," 503-521.

student who is a descendant of the seminaries. According to the president of the Descendants of Seminary Students Association, "since education is the foundation of this organization I feel that this [the annual scholarship] is a very important cause."[36]

[36] Rick Ward, *The Cherokee Phoenix*, http://www.cherokeephoenix.org/Article/Index/424.

CHAPTER I

CHEROKEE EDUCATION: PRE-CONTACT TO POST-REMOVAL

"When I think and see the poor thoughtless Cherokees going on in sin I can not help blessing God that has lead me in the right path to serve him."—Catharine Brown, Cherokee student at Brainard Mission School[37]

"Despite the many benefits of the mission schools, there was inevitably a feeling of dependence among the Cherokees, and the national seminaries took away much of it." Hugh T. Cunningham, Cherokee historian[38]

Cherokees valued education long before the arrival of Europeans and Africans. Prior to extensive European contact, the Cherokees, like other Native American tribes, focused on cultivating children's knowledge of spiritual awareness and tribal heritage. Cherokees learned from an early age that survival rested upon developing practical skills and maintaining balance among all living things in their world.[39] The eighteenth-century arrival of Christian missionaries in the Southeast introduced many Cherokee children to

[37] Catharine Brown, "Letter from Catharine Brown to William and Flora Chamberlain at the Brainerd Mission," 12 December 1818, in Vicki Rozema, *Cherokee Voices: Early Accounts of Cherokee Life in the East* (Winston: John F. Blair, 2002), 126.

[38] Hugh T. Cunningham, "A History of the Cherokee Indians," in *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 8 (December 1930), 419-420.

[39] Margaret Connell Szasz, *Indian Education in the American Colonies, 1607-1783* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988), 11.

an educational system that emphasized vastly different forms, cultural values, and educational techniques. As the white population increased, trade with whites increased, and mission schools flourished. Cherokee interactions with whites became more commonplace. Cherokee parents came to see the advantages associated with their children's learning the English language and other skills to help them cope with a rapidly changing world. They expected mission schools to teach their children these skills. When missionary schools failed to meet these objectives, the Cherokees established their own public school system, including two high schools. While neither the mission schools nor the Cherokee public schools bore much resemblance to traditional modes of learning, many parents hoped that the Cherokee high schools would at least produce bilingual instructors capable of teaching English to their children. Parents became even more hopeful when Chief John Ross, a major advocate of tribal survival through acculturation, lent his considerable influence to the cause of education. But, despite further advances for some tribal members, the quest for educational opportunity remained elusive for many who desired it most.

Education was especially critical to traditional Cherokee culture because the existence of the tribe depended upon future generations understanding the balance in nature. Balance grounded the Cherokee worldview. According to Cherokee legend (many years ago, soon after the world was made) a husband and wife lived in an ancient forest. Every day the husband, Kana'ti, hunted, caught game, and brought the kill back to his wife, Selu, who made baskets overflow with corn and beans by rubbing her stomach and arms. Kana'ti is the spirit of hunters; Selu is the spirit of corn. This Cherokee origin story underscores their traditional paradigm of balance and harmony. Men are

responsible for providing game and women are responsible for providing corn. Each are equally important—each equally necessary to survive.[40]

In their efforts to uphold a balanced relationship with nature, the Cherokees and other southeastern tribes performed rituals and participated in festivals celebrating the changing agricultural seasons.[41] Corn was an essential component of their economy; thus, the Green Corn Ceremony was the largest and most important annual celebration.[42] According to archaeologist Roy S. Dickens, the traditional Cherokee economy comprised equal parts hunting, gathering, and agriculture. Therefore, prior to acceptance as mature members of society, children had to master skills related to subsistence.[43] By the age of four or five, Cherokee boys learned skills related to hunting, such as crafting bows and arrows, while girls learned agricultural techniques. These gendered tasks helped to maintain equilibrium in Cherokee society.[44]

As historian Margaret Connell Szasz explains, all Cherokees "spoke a common language and shared a common spiritual outlook, a common past, and a common set of customs."[45] The Cherokees saw their children as the most important way to continue their culture and identity. Not just families but entire communities were involved in a child's education.[46] The Cherokees practiced a matrilocal residence pattern, meaning a husband and wife resided with the wife's kin. Children were raised by their mothers,

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[40] James Mooney, *History, Myths, and Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees* (Asheville: Bright Mountain Books, 1992), 242.

[41] Szasz, *Indian Education,* 12.

[42] Roy Dickens, Jr., *Cherokee Prehistory: The Pisgah Phase in the Appalachian Summit Region* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1976), 210.

[43] Dickens, *Cherokee Prehistory*, 210; Connell Szasz, *Indian Education,* 11.

[44] Carolyn Ross Johnston, *Cherokee Women in Crisis: Trail of Tears, Civil War, and Allotment, 1838-1907* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2003), 23; Mooney, *History and Myths*, 401.

[45] Szasz, *Indian Education*, 10.

[46] Ibid., 8.

grandmothers, aunts, older sisters, and mother's brothers, who were, as historian John Philip Reid explains, "the disciplinary and tutorial authority in the family."[47] A woman's household was multigenerational and women were the only permanent members of the household. Because the Cherokees practiced a matrilineal kinship system, young boys' maternal uncles taught their nephews techniques related to hunting and warfare. Thus, boys learned practical skills in a hands-on setting. Furthermore, caretakers relied on a variety of instructional methods, including storytelling. Cultures lacking a written language likewise rely on language—spoken and heard—to transfer cultural knowledge from one generation to the next. Described as "oral traditions," language nevertheless dominates learning. Storytelling was critical to educating children in traditional Cherokee culture.[48]

Discipline was also a crucial component of child rearing and caregivers typically turned to the fear of ridicule or ostracism.[49] Generally, Cherokees refrained from corporal punishment for misbehavior. They idealized a tolerance for pain thus eliminating the usefulness of physical correction for misconduct. Many tribes used fear of embarrassment or fear of supernatural intervention to keep children in line. Stories of supernatural reprisals for bad behavior combined Native Americans' tradition of storytelling with their spiritual world to ensure compliance to cultural norms and expectations.[50]

Following European contact, education took on a foreign and formal shape as missionaries sought to bring Christianity and "civilization" to the Native American

[47] Reid, *A Law of Blood*, 40.
[48] Szasz, *Indian Education*, 12.
[49] Johnston, *Cherokee Women*, 23
[50] Szasz, *Indian Education*, 18-21.

world.[51] While Cherokee leaders allowed missionaries from Moravian, Baptist, Methodist, Congregational, and Presbyterian churches into the Nation, tribal leaders made clear that the missionaries had to center their attention on educating Cherokee children and to insure their children learned English. Parents reluctantly and with skepticism enrolled their children in the mission schools.[52]

In the early nineteenth century, the rapid growth of missions concerned some Cherokees who questioned the missionaries' motives. Despite this apparent suspicion, however, many full-blood parents still made the arduous trek to enroll their children at Brainerd, the largest mission in the Nation.[53] Cherokee leaders and families chose to send their children to mission schools for two main reasons. First, sweeping economic changes brought impoverished conditions to many families, who took advantage of the free room and board at mission schools.[54] Secondly, and more importantly, learning the English language gave Cherokees a stronger position in negotiations with whites. The Cherokees began to view mission education as a way to cross cultural barriers, often to serve their own ends.[55] In other words, according to historian William McLoughlin, "when the Cherokees decided to admit permanent mission stations in their Nation, they did so because they expected the missionaries to teach their children to read and write and to provide them with other useful information in their effort to cope with a rapidly changing social order."[56]

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[51] The most comprehensive study of missionaries' work among Cherokees is William McLoughlin's *Cherokees and Missionaries* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984).

[52] Starkey, *Cherokee Nation*, 30-34.

[53] Ibid., 36.

[54] Szasz, *Indian Education*, 6; McLoughlin, *Cherokees and Missionaries*, 34.

[55] Szasz, *Indian Education*, 6.

[56] McLoughlin, *Cherokees and Missionaries*, 35.

Missionary activity increased significantly as the Second Great Awakening swept through the Northeast.[57] In 1799, the German-speaking Moravians were granted permission to open a school for Cherokee children in Murray County, Georgia. In 1817, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), the first foreign mission agency, authorized Congregational and Presbyterian missionaries to open more schools, who were soon followed by the Baptists and Methodists.[58] Bolstered by additional funding from the federal government's Indian Civilization Fund Act, which granted $10,000 annually to different denominations who pledged to educate and civilize Indians, the ABCFM played a major role in the assimilation effort.[59] Missionaries seldom lack ambition. Created in 1810, the ABCFM's goal was no less ambitious than converting the entire world to Christianity. These missionaries viewed Native American culture as antithetical to their own; the foreign cultural practices among the Cherokees, Creeks, Chickasaws, and Choctaws provided the perfect opportunity for the missionaries to begin their holy work of "saving the world."[60]

In 1817, the ABCFM established the Brainerd Mission in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Named after the famous missionary, David Brainerd, the Brainerd School was one of the largest and most influential Native American educational institutions prior to removal. At Brainerd, the missionaries implemented the Lancastrian plan, a system promoted by the War Department in which "spelling, writing, and artithmetic could be taught by older children acting as monotors to the younger children, when the children

[57] Ibid., 13, 34; Mary Stout, *Native American Boarding Schools*, in the Landmarks of the American Mosaic Series (Denver: Greenwood, 2012), 14

[58] Mooney, *History, Myths, and Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees*, 107.

[59] Stout, *Native American Boarding Schools*, 15.

[60] Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700-1835* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 159-160; Starkey, *The Cherokee Nation*, 32.

were divided by their abilities and taught systematically arranged subject matter according to their grade."[61] In other words, the Lancastrian system involved older students teaching and supervising younger ones; both boys and girls learned reading and writing in English along with arithmetic.[62] Students learned not only the basics of reading and writing, they were also instructed in European-American skills, including cooking, sewing, spinning, knitting, and other domestic skills, and boys engaged in field labor.[63] Each year, nearly one hundred children attended the boarding school, where they worked between forty and fifty acres of land.[64]

At the Brainerd mission, as with most mission schools in the Southeast, the students lived away from their families and communities thereby increasing the missionaries' chances of instilling Christianity and "civilization" without interference from tribal members.[65] Missionaries believed that most effective way to "civilize" Native Americans was to Christianize them and some students at Brainerd converted. One particularly gifted student, Catharine Brown, wrote "when I think and see the poor thoughtless Cherokees going on in sin I can not help blessing God that has lead me in the right path to serve him."[66] Catharine became a devout Christian and believed that the mission education system benefited her tribe, remarking to her teachers "I know you are

[61] Mary Stout, *Native American Boarding Schools*, 18.

[62] The Lancastrian method was developed in the early 1800s by Joseph Lancaster and involved older students teaching and monitoring younger ones. Amanda Cobb, *Listening to Our Grandmothers' Stories: the Bloomfield Academy for Chickasaw FeMales, 1852-1949* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 29; Vicki Rozema, *Cherokee Voices: Early Accounts of Cherokee Life in the East* (Winston: John F. Blair, 2002), 118.

[63] Ibid., 35; Mary Stout, *Native American Boarding Schools*, 18.

[64] Rozema, *Cherokee Voices*, 118-124.

[65] McLoughlin, *Cherokees and Missionaries*, 43.

[66] "Letter from Catharine Brown to William and Flora Chamberlain at the Brainerd Mission," 12 December 1818, in Rozema, *Cherokee Voices*, 126.

willing to assist me to learn the grammar and I wish me to do good to my people."[67] She was also apparently preoccupied with her own spiritual impurity, commenting several times in one letter about her "great sins."[68] According to one ABCFM report, "the order, docility, cheerfulness, and obedience of the pupils and all the regulations respecting the school were truly pleasing."[69] By the late 1820s, the ABCFM's mission schools among the Cherokees had developed a laudable reputation and attracted notable visitors, such as former President James Monroe.[70]

Some students at mission schools learned to navigate two worlds—they were bilingual, adopted Christianity to varying extents, and served as links between two cultures.[71] Despite the success stories of these students, many of the mission schools' full-blood attendees faced insurmountable obstacles. According to historian Marion Starkey, children of part-white ancestry "predominated at Brainerd and also tended to dominate the classes. They were quicker and more comprehending; to them were assigned the superior tasks of acting as monitors."[72] Mixed-blood students had a competitive edge because of their previous exposure to the English language and background in the basics of reading and writing. These students often teased their full-blood counterparts, who struggled to absorb the foreign language and culture.

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[67] Catharine Brown to William and Flora Chamberlain, American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Lamont Library, Harvard University.

[68] Ibid.

[69] "Report on the Brainerd Mission to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions" by Isaac Anderson, Matthew Donald, and David Campbell, 29 May 1818, in Rozema, *Cherokee Voices*, 121.

[70] Missionaries agreed to teach Indian children so long as exposing communities to Christianity remained a viable endeavor. On Sundays, missionaries at Brainerd opened their doors to nearby villagers interested in hearing a sermon and receiving the Eucharist. Over one hundred Cherokees, African Americans, and whites constituted the congregation at Brainerd and travelled as far as twenty miles to attend church. These attendance records indicate that some Cherokees were drawn to and perhaps found solace in Christianity, Coleman, *American Indian Children at School*, 40.

[71] Szasz, *Indian Education*, 7.

[72] Starkey, *Cherokee Nation*, 38.

Furthermore, although a handful of missionary teachers became fluent in Cherokee, most teachers had no interest in the language or in developing effective methods for teaching a foreign language.[73]

Before their relocation to the West, children's lack of progress at the mission schools infuriated Cherokee parents. One particular father, who operated a trade center for whites and Cherokees, sent his sons to school expecting that within a year they would have the ability to serve as interpreters. After two terms, the boys had absorbed nothing of the language and the father withdrew them from the school.[74] When Cherokee silversmith Sequoyah developed a syllabary in the Cherokee language in 1821, many Cherokees learned how to read and write in their own language and abandoned English language training. According to missionaries, on the eve of removal, "education was still at a low level; only two hundred were known who could read or write except in Sequoia's [*sic*] alphabet."[75] Given the lack of quality instruction in English, it seems likely that many parents were disappointed with the mission educational system.

The crisis of removal slowed neither Native Americans nor missionaries in their drive to educate youths. Missionaries were, in fact, a critical component of the government's assimilation efforts.[76] Under the direction of the ABCFM and funded by the United States' government, the Dwight Mission was the first to serve Cherokees west of the Mississippi River. Originally located in Arkansas Territory, the mission along with its founder, Reverend Gideon Blackburn, moved to Oklahoma (thirty miles east of Fort Gibson) in 1828. Dwight Mission educated hundreds of Cherokee children who,

[73] Ibid., 39.
[74] Starkey, *Cherokee Nation*, 87.
[75] Ibid., 132.
[76] McLoughlin, *Cherokees and Missionaries*, 2.

according to historian O.B. Campbell, "greatly influenced the way of life in the Nation."[77]

From the perspective of the missionaries, their central purpose was "the salvation of the people" through religious instruction.[78] The school's curriculum combined Presbyterian doctrine with elementary education. Student ages ranged from twenty months to thirteen years, with the older children learning geography, geometry, and botany. One of the aims of the mission, according to Reverend Cephas Washburn, was "to form habits of industry" among Native Americans.[79] Boys learned algebra, history, and mechanical skills, whereas girls focused on mastering household skills such as cooking, spinning, weaving, sewing, needlework, knitting, cleanliness, social graces, and "other virtues."[80] Missionaries impressed lessons of "civility" upon the students. One missionary's wife complained that the Cherokee children occasionally practiced "their former mode of living—using their fingers instead of knives and forks" at mealtimes.[81] Students were exposed to a regimen that allotted specific times for regular prayers and scripture readings in addition to meals, classes, and physical labor. According to Washburn, missionaries owed Native Americans "the blessings of civilization and the gospel, for the goodly land we have obtained from them."[82] From the perspective of many missionaries, Indian land confiscation was vindicated by the "gift" of cultural

[77] Because Cherokee leaders valued education, they welcomed the creation of the school. Indeed, prominent Cherokee surnames appear on the list of Dwight mission students, including Vann, Ridge, Starr, and Hicks, among others, indicating that high-ranking Cherokee leaders held the school in high regard. O.B. Campbell, *Mission to the Cherokees: The Story of Dwight Mission, the First Mission Established West of the Mississippi River to Serve the Cherokee Indians* (Oklahoma City, Metro Press, Inc, 1973), vii.

[78] Campbell, *Mission to the Cherokees*, 46.

[79] Ibid., 45.

[80] Ibid., 10, 44.

[81] Ibid., 57.

[82] Ibid., 63.

assimilation. One reverend recalled that "bringing the gospel with all its refining influences to a savage people . . . had done much to reconstruct Cherokee life."[83]

Many full-blood parents were not receptive to this religious education. According to Cephus Washburn, missionary and superintendent at Dwight Mission, the Cherokee parents he encountered "were incapable of appreciating the motives of the missionaries, and often regarded them with suspicion."[84] On one occasion, Washburn accepted an invitation to have dinner with the family of two Dwight students, who were horrified when their parents refused to pray with the minister.[85] Furthermore, parents refused to let the mission education interfere with traditional life. Parents often took their children out of school for important rituals such as the Green Corn Ceremony. According to Starkey, "when the least rumor reached them that a child was unhappy or that sickness threatened Brainerd, the parents would return and take their child away."[86] Missionaries frequently complained that many Cherokee parents failed to recognize the importance of regular school attendance.[87] The parents' different reactions to mission education created a division in many American Indian societies. Those who welcomed European-style education were considered "progressive," and those who opposed it were viewed as "traditional." This division continued throughout the nineteenth century.[88]

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[83] Dwight Mission also sponsored temperance society meetings. While the temperance movement found some loyal supporters in the Cherokee Nation, most who attended temperance meetings at Dwight were apparently hesitant to sign the pledge for total abstinence. Of the sixty members of the Dwight Temperance society, only thirteen (or twenty-two percent) agreed to teetotalism. Nevertheless, according to one reverend, at the meetings testimonials were frequent, Ibid., 43-44, 76.

[84] Rev. Cephas Washburn, *Reminiscences of the Indians* (Richmond: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1869), 16.

[85] Ibid., 21.

[86] Starkey, *Cherokee Nation*, 42.

[87] Washburn, *Reminiscences of the Indians*, 20.

[88] Stout, *Native American Boarding Schools*, 16.

While missionaries, government officials, and the Cherokees all pursued acculturation, the reasons motivating their pursuits differed drastically. Forced relocation, political infighting, and economic instability left many tribal members unsure about the likelihood of survival in the West. Many believed that the future of the tribe ultimately hinged upon acculturation through education. According to historian Carolyn Ross Johnston, "Cherokee schools . . . promoted assimilation as a strategy for survival."[89] John Ross, who was principal chief of the Cherokee Nation from 1828 to 1866, embarked on creating a comprehensive public educational system as one means of achieving and maintaining tribal self-determination.[90] Ross's ultimate goal was to strengthen the tribe's control over its own affairs. The National Council, taking the first steps to transfer control of education system from missionaries to the tribe, passed the Public Education Act of 1841, which created an extensive public school system for all ages.[91] The Cherokee national school system created eleven schools which were initially staffed with missionary teachers who were, overtime, replaced with educated Cheorkees.[92]

The ultimate goal of the public schools was to teach Cherokee-speaking children the English language. Many parents believed that learning English assured a stronger position in negotiations with whites. According to the Public Education Act, "enabling those who speak only the Cherokee language, to acquire more readily a practical knowledge and use of the English language" was paramount.[93] Throughout the 1840s and 50s, the tribe built additional public schools and the number of students enrolled

[89] Johnston, *Cherokee Women in Crisis*, 107.
[90] Ibid., 76.
[91] Ibid., 80; Minta Ross Foreman, "Reverend Stephen Foreman, Cherokee Missionary," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 18 (September 1940), 236.
[92] Stout, *Native American Boarding Schools*, 24.
[93] *The Constitution and Laws of the Cherokee Nation* (Washington: DeGales and Seaton, 1840; reprint, Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 1975), 56.

steadily increased.[94] Considering the challenges full-blood students encountered in the mission schools, parents were eager to send their children to Cherokee-controlled common schools.

While initially embracing the public school system, the majority of the tribe quickly became disillusioned with the limitations of their own schools as well. Unfortunately for many students, language barriers at the mission schools were replicated at the common schools. Despite being controlled by the tribe, the common schools were staffed with white teachers. According to the Board of Education, in 1845, the Cherokee Nation's eighteen public elementary schools were staffed by mostly citizens of the United States.[95] Just as at the mission schools, these teachers did not speak Cherokee. The public schools had difficulty retaining Cherokee-speaking students, who struggled with the English. Because of students' frustrations, as well as the invaluable labor they provided on their family farms, irregular attendance was a chronic problem.[96] Another challenge full-blood students endured was criticism from their English-speaking counterparts. According to missionary Samuel Worcester, mixed-blood children who came from English-speaking homes teased full-blood children for their "stupidity."[97] Even though full-blood Cherokees comprised three-quarters of the population, because so many full-blood children dropped out of school, the student body in the common schools was predominantly children of part-white ancestry.[98] It seems likely that many

[94] William McLoughlin, *After the Trail of Tears*, 89.
[95] *Annual Report of the Board of Education of the Cherokee Nation, Indian Territory, for the School Year Ending September 30 1887, for the School Year Ending September 30, 1888* (St. Louis: Robt. D. Patterson Stationary, 1889), 4.
[96] Ibid., 91.
[97] Samuel Worcester, as quoted in McLoughlin, *After the Trail of Tears*, 94.
[98] Ibid., 88-92.

Cherokees were disappointed that the public school system failed to fulfill its promise of providing all children with a quality education.

Another challenge for the public education system was funding. The Treaty of New Echota (December 1835) set aside an annual sum of $16,000 for a public, Cherokee-controlled school system. Because that budget failed to cover the costs of education, by 1843, teachers had to take significant reductions in salaries. Low salaries led to low-quality educators.[99] In a letter to John Ross, Cherokee Board of Education member James M. Payne explained that the public schools "are quite deficient of suitable books . . . . I found many of the schools very much neglected by the Directors and teachers indolent . . . . Some are totally ignorant and incompetent to teach . . . without a change in the law, and management of our schools that has the great and important design *calculated* to better the condition of our people will not be reallised [*sic*]."[100]

John Ross's response to these challenges was to create a high school, run by the Cherokees, with the capability of training their own young men and women to be teachers. Because many full-blood parents viewed the missionaries and common-school teachers with suspicion, they welcomed the idea of Cherokee high schools, expecting that thesw schools would produce bilingual Cherokee teachers for the common schools. According to historian William McLoughlin, "the poorer Cherokees backed the seminaries because they wanted more Cherokee schoolteachers, preferably bilingual."[101]

[99] Ibid., 86-93.
[100] James M. Payne, Letter to John Ross, "Re: Schools," 16 July 1845, John Ross Papers, Thomas Gilcrease Museum.
[101] McLoughlin, *After the Trail of Tears*, 92.

Principal Chief John Ross, however, had a different vision. His background affected his views on education. He was acculturated and believed that acculturation was necessary for tribal independence. According to the first Cherokee feMale seminary teacher, Ellen Whitmore, Ross "was a small man but very dignified and sedate."[102] He was of mixed ancestry, championed a centralized form of government, and embraced and reaped the benefits of slavery. He lived in a plantation-style home and owned black slaves.[103] He was a powerful statesman and a member of the wealthy class. Thus, it may seem somewhat surprising that the majority of the Cherokee populace, those yeoman farmers and hunters who did not embrace mainstream American culture, looked to Ross as their leader and counted on him to champion their interests. The grounds for their support lay in Ross's prodigious efforts to maintain control and ownership of the Cherokees' homeland. Even though Ross was among the elite, he fought tirelessly for tribal sovereignty. According to historian William McLoughlin, throughout Ross's tenure as Principal Chief (1828-1866), he was able to "sustain the loyalty of the full-blood majority while at the same time encouraging the mixed-bloods and intermarried whites to develop the Nation's resources to the fullest extent . . . . The full-bloods were always loyal to him."[104]

Ross's years of dealing with white businessmen, lawyers, and local, state, and national lawmakers led him to the conclusion that the future of the tribe depended upon highly-educated citizens. The Cherokee high schools were a crucial part of his strategy to maintain tribal sovereignty. His overall approach to maintaining sovereignty for his

[102] Ellen Whitmore, 13 November 1850, The Journal of Ellen Whitmore, Lola Garret Bowers and Kathleen Garret, eds., (Tahlequah, Northeastern State College).

[103] In 1838, John Ross acquired a "negro man the value of $1,000,"Louis Wyeth to Hon. R. Campman and C.C. Clay, 16 May 1838, John Ross Papers, Thomas Gilcrease Museum.

[104] McLoughlin, *After the Trail of Tears*, 227-228.

tribe was acculturation. While Ross sought to create opportunities for those who agreed that acculturation was central to Cherokee survival, he understood that acculturation had to occur in phases and at different rates for different individuals. The centerpiece of his plan to embrace acculturation and to mitigate assaults on tribal sovereignty was education. By arming young Cherokees with the best education possible and familiarizing them with the legal and cultural practices of white society, Ross placed them on equal footing with whites, and provided them with the skills necessary to maneuver the tribe into a more powerful position in dealings with the federal government.

He chose Lawrenceville Academy (a private college prep school) in New Jersey, for his son's and nephews' and niece's post-Primary education. In a letter to his uncle, young William Potter Ross explained that because he "represented my society in public," he earned the honor of delivering a speech on commencement day.[105] The future chief also relayed a message from his professor, who "compliments you [John Ross] for the advance you have made in civilization."[106] Another letter from William requested a copy of the Cherokee alphabet for his essay on "The Romance of Indian History."[107] Ross also received letters from his niece describing her studies at the Lawrenceville FeMale Seminary. She told her uncle about the subjects she studied (moral philosophy, astronomy, grammar, geography, arithmetic, and French) and assured him that her cousin, William Potter Ross, who attended a nearby academy, was enjoying his free time

[105] William Potter Ross, "re: Personal Letter," 2 August 1842, John Ross Papers.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Ibid.

and had become a skillful ice skater.[108] After graduation, Ross's son and nephews attended Princeton.

After comparing the quality of educational institutions in the Northeast to those in the Cherokee Nation, Ross decided to make education a priority. The chief lamented that there was no preparatory institution like Lawrenceville Academy in the Cherokee Nation; writing to a friend, he noted "I cannot at this time undertake to give you my views in detail, as to the best place and plan of instructing Indian boys, so as to make them a blessing to their Nation. It may be proper however to remark that the National Council [has] adopted measures for obtaining information . . . and preparing a system of general education by schools to be established in the Nation."[109] Advanced schools would prepare the brightest Cherokee youth for college or for teaching positions in the common schools. The Council approved the sum of between $60,000 and $70,000 to build the two seminaries, which ultimately cost the tribe closer to $80,000. A committee was chosen to observe the pedagogy of New England schools and colleges and to develop a curriculum for the seminaries. The committee modeled the Male seminary on the Boston Latin School and Lawrenceville Academy.[110]

Between 1817 and 1851, missionary schoolrooms replaced traditional education as Cherokees placed increasing emphasis on learning English and other practical skills. Because the United States' government often collaborated with missionaries to interfere in tribal affairs, in 1841, the Council assumed more control of education by developing a

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[108] Araminda Ann Ross to John Ross, 19 January 1838, John Ross Papers, Thomas Gilcrease Museum.

[109] John Ross to John Alexander, "Re: Indian Education," 10 February 1840, Ibid.

[110] C.W. "Dub" West, *Tahlequah and the Cherokee Nation, 1841-1941* (Muskogee: Muscogee Publishing Company, 1978), 28; McLoughlin, *After the Trail of Tears*, 92.

massive Cherokee-controlled public school system. Just like at the mission schools, however, the English-speaking teachers at the common schools lacked effective teaching methods, and Cherokee-speaking students floundered. In 1846, the Council approved the construction of two high schools, and many hoped that these institutions would produce bilingual teachers who would serve the Nation in the common schools. In addition, John Ross hoped that the seminaries would ultimately tighten the tribe's grasp on sovereignty. The expectations of the majority of the tribe and Ross's vision did not coincide, and the outcome left many Cherokees frustrated.

CHAPTER II

THE EARLY YEARS, 1851-1858

"After we came here in 1838 we started building the seminaries because we wanted our children educated." Deputy Chief Joe Grayson[111]

"Because the full-bloods generally wanted some education for their children, they resented the disadvantages they were under due to the absence of bilingual teachers." – William McLoughlin, Cherokee historian[112]

In an effort to increase the number of competent, Cherokee teachers, the Cherokee National Council in 1847 voted to establish two seminaries, one in Tahlequah, Indian Territory for Males and one in Park Hill for females.[113] According to the Council, the object of the schools was "the improvement of the moral and intellectual condition of our

[111] Deputy Chief Joe Grayon, *Cherokee Phoenix,* http://www.cherokeephoenix.org/18442/Article.aspx

[112] William McLoughlin, *After the Trail of Tears* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 94.

[113] "An Act for the establishment of two seminaries: one for the education of Males, and the other of FeMales, and for the erection of buildings for their accommodation," 26 November 1846, *Laws of the Cherokee National Passed at the Annual Session of the National Council*, Tahlequah, Cherokee Nation: Cherokee Advocate Office, 1847.

people."[114] They created these two schools "in which all those branches of learning shall be taught which may be required to carry the mental culture of the youth of our country to the highest practicable point."[115] John Ross and the progressive members of the tribe also set up the schools to promote the tribe's acculturation. The rest of the tribe simply wanted better educational opportunities for their children. While the early years may have represented John Ross's vision for advanced education, any hopes that bilingual Cherokees would graduate and teach in the common schools were quickly shattered. After the seminary had been open for only a few years, it became clear that the largest portion of the Cherokee populace, the full-bloods, were left out.

In 1851, before construction of the stately seminary buildings was completed, John Ross sent a committee of three Councilmen to New England on a fact-finding mission. The committee visited and observed the top preparatory schools and colleges in the region. From Ross's perspective, the acculturation of the tribe through education required creating virtual replicas of the best Northeastern schools. By building their own versions of these institutions, the Cherokees would produce their own teachers, businessmen, and political leaders, thereby building a nation capable of thriving in business and education while remaining independent of foreign control. Especially impressed by the curriculum at Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, Massachusetts, Boston Latin School, and Lawrenceville Academy near Princeton, the committee chose these schools as the models for the Cherokee seminaries.[116]

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[114] *Cherokee National Male Seminary Catalogue, 1886-7* (St. Louis: Levison & Blythe Stationary Co., 1887), 12.

[115] Ibid.

[116] Elizur Butler to S.B. Treat, 13 February 1851, The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missionary (hereafter referred to as ABCFM) Papers, Lamont Library, Harvard University.

The committee interviewed graduates from these and other schools, such as Yale University, searching for top scholars who would be willing to travel to Cherokee Territory to serve as the first teachers and principals. However, because many in the Northeast were opposed to slavery, the committee struggled to find participants. According to missionary Elizur Butler, the committee "visited Boston, Andover, and New Haven and South Hadley . . . [but] because of slavery [the committee] couldn't find teachers."[117] After days of searching, the committee recruited Thomas Budd Vann Horne of Massachusetts, a young Baptist from Newton Theological School, as the Male Seminary's first principal and Oswald Langdon Woodford of Connecticut, a Yale graduate, as the first teacher.[118] The tribe also hired missionaries and a few educated Cherokees to serve as the seminaries' first teachers.[119]

In 1851, four years after Chief John Ross laid the cornerstone, the Cherokee seminaries were opened May 6 (Male Seminary) and May 7 (Female Seminary). After arriving in Tahlequah, Oswald Langdon Woodford (who later became principal of the Male Seminary) and the other teachers administered a two-day entrance exam to prospective students, which evaluated their proficiency in reading, spelling, grammar, arithmetic, and geography.[120] For each seminary, administrators chose twenty-five students, and each year twenty-five more students were enrolled until the building reached its capacity of one hundred. At the Male Seminary, students typically began their studies at age seventeen and graduated at twenty-one. Most were from English-

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[117] Ibid.
[118] Ibid.
[119] Devon Mihesuah, "'Out of the Graves of Polluted Debaches': The Boys of the Cherokee Male Seminary," *American Indian Quarterly* 15 (Autumn 1991), 505.
[120] Samuel Worcester to S.B. Treat, 16 June 1852, ABCFM Papers, Lamont Library, Harvard University.

speaking, mixed-blood families. The Cherokee seminaries graduated their first classes in 1854.[121]

Figure 1. Cherokee Male Seminary, courtesy of the Cherokee Heritage Center, Tahlequah, Oklahoma.

The Cherokee seminaries were the first secular schools west of the Mississippi River. However, Christianity had a strong presence at the schools. According to missionary Elizur Butler, "when regulations were made for the seminaries no provisions were made for any religious instruction. The teachers were to be believers in the Christian religion, and this was all."[122] Samuel Worcester explained that "each seminary

[121] McLoughlin, *After the Trail of Tears*, 92.
[122] Elizur Butler to S.B. Treat, 13 February 1851, ABCFM Papers, Lamont Library, Harvard University.

has, for the present, two teachers, and all those teachers are pious."[123] The tribal Council hired Butler to preach at the feMale seminary every Sunday. Butler reported to S.B. Treat that, "I can be more useful at the seminary. . . . I preach here every Sabbath excepting once a month and the last Sabbath of every other month."[124] Worcester reported that, at the Male Seminary, either the principal, Thomas Budd Vann Horne, or the teacher, Oswald Langdon Woodford, preached the Sunday service, and students were required to attend. Vann Horne also had the authority to invite other ministers to give sermons at the Sunday service.[125] Thus, although the seminaries were not technically religious schools and were not affiliated with any one denomination, Christianity was imposed upon the students in their daily lives.

In terms of curriculum, discipline, extracurricular activities, and spiritual development, the high schools' early years (1851-1858) resembled Northeastern academies. For example, first-year students at the Boston Public Latin School learned Latin grammar, English grammar, reading, spelling, arithmetic, geography, and penmanship. Advanced students learned Caesar, French, Greek, algebra, Virgil, history, and geometry.[126] Similarly, first-year students at both the Cherokee Female and Male Seminaries studied English grammar, reading, spelling, arithmetic, geography, United States history, and composition. Male seminarians at the junior and senior levels took advanced classes such as physics, physiology, geometry, algebra, bookkeeping, Greek, Latin, French, Virgil, and logic, among others.[127] The students at both the New England

[123] Samuel Worcester to S.B. Treat, 16 June 1852, Ibid.
[124] Elizur Butler to S.B. Treat, 13 February 1851, Ibid.
[125] Ibid.
[126] Pauline Holmes, *A Tercentenary History of the Boston Public Latin School, 1635-1935* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1935), 277-279.
[127] *The Sequoyah Memorial*, 2 August 1855.

and Cherokee high schools learned from the same textbooks, including "Greenleaf's *National Arithmetic*, Davie's *Algebra*, McEllicott's *Analytical Manual*, Newman's *Rhetoric*, and Russell's *Elocution.*"[128] Thus, in terms of curriculum, the tribe succeeded in creating replicas of northeastern academies.

Furthermore, disciplinary methods of the early years reflected those found in New England institutions rather than mission schools for Native Americans. Evidence suggests that in the early years of the Male Seminary, teachers rarely responded to discipline breaches with physical punishment. Because most of the teachers and principals in the early years were from northeastern institutions, it seems possible that the Second Great Awakening influenced their views of corporal punishment. In the early nineteenth century, education advocates began condemning the effects of corporal punishment, a disciplinary measure deeply entrenched in Euroamerican history and culture. Tapping into the religious revivalism of the day, many reformers believed that children were innocent and required kindness and benevolence rather than stern discipline.[129] Concern over schoolroom corporal punishment reflected a wider trend among reformers that emphasized virtue, self-reliance, self-discipline, and civility. As a form of mere "external" coercion, corporal punishment threatened to dampen civility in children and, instead, incited their "animal passions."[130] Thus, the Male Seminary teachers' apparent reluctance to use physical punishment may have stemmed from their familiarity with this anti-corporal reform movement.

[128] Ibid.

[129] Myra C. Glenn, "School Discipline and Punishment in Antebellum America," *Journal of the Early Republic* 1 (Winter 1981), 407.

[130] Ibid., 401-403.

However, this explanation seems unlikely, considering that, while there was controversy over the use of corporal punishment in schools for white children, no such debate existed for American Indian or immigrant children. This double standard reflected broader cultural attitudes; in the face of arguments against corporal punishment, teachers and administrators continued to "use the rod" for dealing with lower-class, immigrant, and, especially, Native American children.[131] In certain Presbyterian mission schools, teachers believed that turning Indian children into "civilized" Christians required whipping and other forms of physical punishment.[132] In many schools for American Indian children, the use of corporal punishment was a common method for overcoming pupil resistance to classroom rules. As historian Michael Coleman explains, missionaries at Spencer Academy (in present-day Sawyer, Oklahoma) reported that in 1853, when a teacher attempted to whip a younger student, an older student came to the boy's aid. After the incident, according to the teachers, the students acted as if they believed that the teachers were afraid to use whipping as a punishment. In this battle of wills, the teachers chose eight older students and gave them "a good old-fashioned whipping."[133] The disciplinary measure did not have the desired effect, however, and several students were ultimately expelled. Another example of mission school teachers' proclivity for physical punishment came from Allen Candy, a Cherokee who was raised in a mission orphanage. He recalled, "I can't forget [my teacher] as long as I live. She like to have beaten us to death. Mean! I say mean."[134] Despite the anti-corporal punishment movement in the

[131] Glenn, "School Discipline in Antebellum America," 407.

[132] Coleman, Michael, "The Responses of American Indian Children to Presbyterian Schooling in the Nineteenth Century: An Analysis through Missionary Sources," *History of Education Quarterly* 27 (Winter 1987),485.

[133] Coleman, "The Responses of American Indian Children," 485.

[134] Allen Candy Interview, 22 July 1937, Indian-Pioneer Papers, Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma.

Northeast, school administrators, including Horace Mann, desired classroom order and believed that teachers needed to have the power to use physical punishment if only as a last resort. Arguing that lower-class, immigrant, and Native American children were "contaminated" by "vile" parental examples and associates, Mann argued that corporal punishment was essential in schools which "scooped up" children from diverse backgrounds.[135]

Thus, it seems likely that the seminary's early teachers limited physical punishment not because of their involvement with the anti-corporal punishment campaign but simply because they worked to create replicas of their alma maters in every way possible. By the early nineteenth century, schoolmasters at northeastern academies, such as the Boston Public Latin School, had abandoned all forms of corporal punishment.[136] Instead of physical retribution, the teachers in the early years at the Cherokee Male Seminary used a system in which students received "marks" for violating rules. According to historian Devon Mihesuah, "boys were given 'black marks' for misbehaving."[137] When a student reached twenty-five marks, he received a private warning; fifty marks earned the student public notification; seventy-five marks resulted in expulsion.[138] Interestingly, the use of public censure reflected traditional Cherokee methods of using public humiliation to dissuade misbehavior.

Although missionaries favored strict discipline, most Native American parents did not. According to historian Michael Coleman, Presbyterian missionaries complained that

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[135] Glenn, "School Discipline and Punishment," 407.

[136] Pauline Holmes, *A Tercentenary History of the Boston Public Latin School, 1635-1935* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1935), 84.

[137] Mihesuah, "Out of the Graves of Polluted Debauches," 507.

[138] *The Cherokee Advocate*, 21 March 1877.

neither the students nor their parents tolerated the use of corporal punishment to deal with student resistance. In most traditional Native American cultures, parents and teachers created different incentives to encourage compliance among children, none of which included corporal punishment.[139] According to historian Carloyn Ross Johnston, "Cherokees considered children extremely precious and refrained from physical punishment."[140] Instead, tribal members used fear of embarrassment or fear of supernatural intervention to keep children in line. The desire for praise and acclaim from kin, the threat of changing names to match behavior, and public humiliation motivated most children to obey their elders.[141] In traditional Cherokee society, discipline was a crucial component of child rearing, and caregivers typically turned to the fear of ridicule or ostracism.[142] Thus, the seminary's first teachers, perhaps unintentionally, used disciplinary measures similar those found in traditional Cherokee culture.

According to missionary Samuel Worcester, the Male Seminary students in the 1853 school year were especially disobedient. He explained that

> several of the students of the Male seminary have been expelled, others have left from sickness, dissatisfaction, and other causes, so that their whole number, at the close of the last term, was not more than twenty five, and a portion of them showed in examinations that they had not improved. There is something of infidelity and much of wickedness and insubordination among them . . . as a body they are in bad repute.[143]

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[139] Michael Coleman, *American Indian Children at School, 1850-1930* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1993), 15-24.

[140] Carolyn Ross Johnston, *Cherokee Women in Crisis: Trail of Tears, Civil War, and Allotment, 1838-1907* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2003), 23.

[141] Coleman, *American Indian Children at School*, 15-24.

[142] Johnston, *Cherokee Women*, 23

[143] Samuel Wocester to S.B. Treat, 18 February 1853, ABCFM Papers, Lamont Library, Harvard University.

The early years of the Male Seminary also mirrored northeastern high schools in terms of religious instruction. A crucial component of classical education in New England was spiritual development and religious training. Although religion was not the central goal of the Male Seminary, the Christian faith did have a strong presence at the school. Because one the main purposes of the seminaries was to foster the acculturation of the tribe and because Christianity was a fundamental component of mainstream American culture, teachers and faculty ensured that seminary students were well acquainted with Protestant doctrine. Christianity was imposed upon the students.[144] Attendance at the seminary's daily chapel service was mandatory, as were Sunday services at any local church the students preferred. Tahlequah and Park Hill were home to several denominations, including Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists.[145]

Like the students at northeastern preparatory schools, Male seminarians engaged in various extracurricular activities. Those students interested in further intellectual development created a literary society, the "Sequoyah Institute." The school's library, stocked with donated books and magazines, provided additional materials students could utilize during study hall. Students also created their own newspaper, *The Sequoyah Memorial,* and convinced the National Council to support the venture. The newspaper, devoted to "Truth, Justice, Freedom of Speech, and Cherokee Improvement," gave students the opportunity to work in a professional environment and to express their views on important issues.[146] Like the students at the Boston Public Latin School, Male

[144] Mihesuah, "The Boys of the Cherokee Male Seminary," 503.
[145] Ibid., 506.
[146] *The Sequoya Memorial,* 2 August 1855.

seminarians also chose less acceptable means of entertainment, including leaving without permission, breaking windows, smoking, chewing tobacco, and drinking intoxicating liquors.[147]

The creation of the Cherokee seminaries was an impressive feat for several reasons. Every aspect of the schools, from the grand, brick buildings to the highly-educated northeastern instructors, symbolized what the Cherokees were capable of achieving. They built high schools in which young men and women learned advanced sciences and mathematics, studied the works of Virgil and Caesar, and contemplated philosophy. The Male Seminary prepared young men for a university education.[148] The Cherokees imported northeastern education and made it their own. They constructed, staffed, and furnished the seminaries using funds from their national treasury. John Ross and the Council gave young Cherokee men and women the opportunity to have a foot planted firmly in each culture. Ultimately, the seminaries symbolized the spirit of resilience, ingenuity, and adaptation characteristic of the Cherokees in the nineteenth century.

Despite the laudable strides the tribe made in promoting education, however, John Ross had set up a system incapable of meeting the majority of the tribe's needs. Instead, he had established institutions that served the wealthy Cherokees of part-white ancestry. Ross and the Tribal Council crafted their own advanced school, complete with academic excellence, selective admissions, and social elitism. As the schools got underway, it

[147] Records from the Boston Public Latin School show that students engaged in various offenses, including tardiness, skipping school, firing pistols, cheating, and gambling, Holmes, *The Boston Public Latin School*, 77; Mihesuah, "The Boys of the Cherokee Male Seminary," 507.

[148] Duane King, "Cherokees in the West: History since 1776, " in *The Handbook of North American Indians*, 14 (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institute, 1978),14: 362.

became increasingly clear that a specific class of Cherokees benefitted from the seminaries. The tribe had successfully built their own versions of northeastern institutions, but they also established a system in which young men from financially-stable families of mixed-white ancestry thrived while the handful of full-blood seminary students struggled.[149]

Cherokee-speaking students faced tremendous obstacles in the mission and, later, public schools. Although there were exceptions, generally speaking, in the mid-nineteenth century, full-blood Cherokees were poor, subsistence farmers who had limited formal education and spoke only Cherokee. Without bilingual teachers, most full-blood students grew discouraged and dropped out of school. Furthermore, many poorer Cherokee parents, desperate for farm labor, withdrew their children from school. Thus, the majority of Primary school graduates who were able to pass the seminary's entrance exams were English-speaking Cherokees of mixed ancestry. The few full-bloods who graduated from the common schools were ill-prepared. In the early years, there were only four or five full-blood students. According to one missionary, Edwin Teele, the full-blood majority of the tribe

> do not care much for the schools. The mixed bloods are chiefly concerned in these movements. In the Seminaries there are not more than four or five pupils of fullblood. The majority have so much white blood in their veins that a stranger would pronounce them entirely of white parentage. The same is true to nearly an equal extent in all the public schools, so that the fullbloods are but little benefitted by these schools, and they compose about two-thirds of the whole Nation.[150]

[149] Devon Mihesuah, *Cultivating the Rosebuds*, 23, 44; McLoughlin, *After the Trail of Tears*, 89.
[150] Edwin Teele, as quoted in McLoughlin, *After the Trail of Tears*, 93.

In 1856, superintendent of the Cherokee public school system, A.W. Duncan, reported that resentment against the seminaries was at least partially rooted in the perception that the schools created Cherokee intellectuals incapable of contributing to society. Duncan assumed that Male Seminary graduates would enter the learned professions, which, he believed, were scarce in the Cherokee Nation. He argued that "all could not find such employment [in the Nation] and to seek it elsewhere would be to take a step towards the overthrow of the nation."[151] He warned that the schools would "educate our children for other countries."[152] Contending that students trained to be doctors and lawyers would ultimately relocate to white communities, he pushed for manual and agricultural training.[153] According to historian Devon Mihesuah, "unlike other Indian Territory boarding schools such as Spencer and Armstrong Academies (Choctaw), Tullahassee Manual Labor School (Creek), and Wapanucka Institute and Chickasaw Adademy (Chickasaw), the Cherokee schools did not contract with missionaries and [in the early years] did not include manual training."[154] It seems likely that the Cherokee seminaries did not include manual training because in 1838 the National Council established a separate manual labor school "for the purpose of educating orphan children."[155]

Many full-blood parents also took issue with the free tuition, room, and board that all seminary students received. They argued that the tribal funding being used to subsidize tuition was desperately needed by subsistence farmers. Because the

[151] A.W. Duncan, as quoted in Ibid., 95.
[152] Ibid.
[153] Ibid.
[154] Mihesuah, "The Boys of the Cherokee Male Seminary," 504.
[155] L.F. Taylor, President of the National Committee, Cherokee National Council, 8 November 1838, ABCFM Papers, Lamont Library, Harvard University.

overwhelming majority of students were from wealthy families, many concluded that the Council was using much-needed tribal funds to benefit those who could have afforded the expenses. On the other side of the argument, wealthy Cherokees supported the creation of the seminaries because the free tuition saved them from having to send their children to expensive and distant academies outside of Indian Territory. But while, in theory this privilege was available to all classes of Cherokee families, full-bloods rarely had the opportunity to partake of such advantages.[156]

Thus, the seminaries exacerbated and set at odds two disparate attitudes within the Nation. The first, typically held by culturally traditional and less financially stable Cherokees, insisted that the public schools and seminaries should serve non-English speaking Cherokee children, who, because of their families' financial status, had fewer opportunities to succeed. Indeed, the teachers at the public schools taught in English, and non-English speaking students struggled to do well. Furthermore, the children from less advantaged backgrounds found it nearly impossible to compete and keep up with the challenging curriculum at the seminaries. The parents of these children argued that the public schools and the seminaries catered to mixed-blood children of elite families and neglected non-English speaking, less affluent students. The second view, held mostly by John Ross and other Cherokees of affluence, maintained that the ultimate object of the high school was to institutionalize acculturation for survival and to "win respect for the Cherokees."[157] The public school system, while designed to bridge the gap between these two viewpoints, ultimately increased class antagonisms within the tribe.[158]

[156] Mihesuah, *Cultivating the Rosebuds*, 44.
[157] McLoughlin, *After the Trail of Tears*, 93-94.
[158] Ibid; Mihesuah, *Cultivating the Rosebuds*, 5.

Frustration turned to resentment as it became clear that English-speaking Cherokees had no interest in the education of Cherokee-speaking children and in training bilingual teachers. Many believed that "the rich were abandoning sacred traditions and pushing the Nation too rapidly toward the white man's ways and values."[159] Furthermore, full-bloods seethed over the patronizing comments directed toward traditional Cherokees. An analysis of the student newspaper, *The Sequoyah Memorial*, provides further evidence that the students from elite, mixed-white families had no interest in education that was beneficial to the masses. In addition to keeping students current on tribal news, student activities, amusing anecdotes, and professional advice, some editorials revealed students' abhorrence of traditional culture and their disdain for uneducated Cherokees. The student newspaper circulated throughout the Nation, so full-bloods were aware of how seminary students viewed them. One such student explained,

> does not the heart of every Cherokee parent swell with emotions of pure delight as he or she passes through the intervening Prairie and beholds on either side, one of the stately edifices which have been erected by the wisdom of our Nation and dedicated to the intellectual and moral culture of her youth? Or in other words, fond parents, are not your very hearts filled to overflowing with pleasure, when you see us—your sons and daughters—drinking of this fount of knowledge, ye yourselves have planted in our midst? Do you not look forward to the time when the dark clouds of ignorance and superstition, and all their offspring—idolatry, crime, misery, and all other human degradations—shall vanish before the rays of light that are to shine forth from these walls, as does twilight before the golden rays of the morning sun? Does not a hope spring up within your breasts, in which you see your country ranking among the most enlightened and Christianized of the world . . . do you not already realize the salutary influence which is being cast over our community as it issues from this fountain . . . . I will turn my remarks to those for whom these inestimable blessings are intended. . . . Our teachers are kind and accommodating, and ever ready to impart to us useful knowledge—knowledge that will qualify us to perform the necessary transactions of life and prepare us to move in the high circles of society . . . . The great

[159] McLoughlin, *After the Trail of Tears*, 76.

> and glorious object is our elevation. It was to unrivet the chains that fetter genius in the ignominious valley of heathen darkness, that it might ascend the hill of Science, and bask in the sunshine of pure refinement, it is that all the antiquarian idolatry of our ancestry may be abolished.[160]

Similarly, on the seventh of May 7, 1855, graduate and future Principal Chief, Joel B. Mayes, gave an address at a school celebration commemorating the day on which the seminaries opened their doors. In his speech, revealing a similar derision for traditional Cherokee culture, he remarked,

> As those whose thoughts and motives are imbued with the love and wisdom of refinement . . . we have come together to pay our homage and due respect to this day. Though not in commemoration of victories won on bloody battlefields, not the day on which some famous King Mounted a tyrannical throne which we must serve, but with the noble spirit of freedom, we pay these marks of joy and respect to the day on which our Nation made one bold step and a resolution to stand by the side of other enlightened Nations of the world, when she took the last step towards bursting asunder those fetters of ignorance which long bound her in prison. The day on which arose these two bright suns, as it were, whose rays were fully to penetrate that mist of ignorance which once clouded all the beauty and excellence of our land, and were to illuminate those bright gems of thought which had long been buried in the deep shade of mental darkness.[161]

These comments reflected an attitude among many white Americans, who believed that education could bring refinement to American Indians. The director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Thomas L. McKinney, pushed for the education of Indians in "white man's social and economic patterns."[162] According to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Orlando Brown, "the dark clouds of ignorance and superstition in which these people have so long been enveloped seem at length in the case of many of them to be

[160] *The Sequoyah Memorial*, 2 August 1855.
[161] Ibid.
[162] Thomas McKinney, as quoted in Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indian* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 25.

breaking away, and the light of Christianity and general knowledge to be dawning upon their moral and intellectual darkness."[163]

On the other hand, whereas some students referred to their ancestors with disdain, others showed remarkable ambivalence toward both Anglo-American and traditional Cherokee cultures. Commenting on the virtues of their tribe, one student wrote that his Cherokee ancestors were "the bravest of the brave, the noblest of the noble, first in all the virtues of savage life, the most successful in the chase, the most dreaded in war, implacable in their enmity, and everlasting in their friendship."[164] This student added, however, that the introduction of Christianity to the Cherokees enabled the "downfall" of the tribe's "savage" state and its ascendance from barbarism to enlightenment, remarking "the most interesting of Cherokee history begins with the ingress of civilization and the introduction of the true religion.[165] Although this student praised the Cherokee Nation as being a true republic modeled after the United States' government, he compared the latter to a younger, overgrown, and powerful sister who forced the tribe into the status of ward.[166] He argued that the Cherokees "have been forced to surrender our birth right . . . and allowed the appearance of a distinct nation; but in reality, subject to a secure and absolute supervision."[167] Another student also praised traditional Indian culture and ways, believing that Cherokees were "a happy race of people who treated [whites] like a brother . . . but as the force of whites grew stronger they made war against red men, conquered and drove them from their homes."[168] Clearly, some students, while not

[163] Orlando Brown, as quoted in Prucha, *The Great Father*, 25.
[164] *The Sequoyah Memorial*, 31 July 1856.
[165] Ibid.
[166] Ibid.
[167] Ibid.
[168] Ibid.

necessarily denigrating Anglo-American values of republicanism and Christianity, still resented the avaricious appetite that drove federal Indian policy, such as forced removal. These statements revealed that some seminarians experienced conflict over their dual heritage.

One of the most successful outcomes of the early seminaries was the increase in the number of Cherokee teachers in the common schools. Initially, the tribe had to recruit white teachers from the East to teach in the common schools and the high schools. Once the seminaries had been in operation for a few years, seminary graduates began replacing white easterners as common school teachers. The teachers trained at the seminary, however, were not bilingual. Thus, they failed to fulfill the expectations of the full-blood families.[169]

The seminaries opened in 1850 but only remained in operation for eight years. In 1858, severe drought prompted officials to close the schools temporarily, and they remained closed until after the Civil War. Ross lamented having to close the seminaries, announcing that they were "demonstrating beyond cavil the existence of mental powers in our midst which only require development to make us . . . independent."[170] Ross knew that full-bloods resented the free tuition, room, and board seminary students received, so he proposed that the seminary begin charging boarders to keep the schools in operation. Despite his persistent efforts to revive the seminaries, the full-blood-controlled Council voted to redirect the funding toward the construction of more common schools.[171] Thus,

[169] Cherokee Nation, *Annual Report of the Board of Education*, 1887, Seminary Documents, Northeastern State University Archives.

[170] John Ross, Report of the Secretary of the Interior, no. 90, United States House of Representatives Documents, Volume 101, United States Government Printing Office, 5 October 1857.

[171] McLoughlin, *After the Trail of Tears*, 94.

the late 1850s marked the only time throughout the seminaries' operation that the Council voted to close the schools.[172]

Between 1858 and 1872, when the seminaries reopened, Cherokee society had undergone sweeping changes. The issue of slavery divided Cherokee society along class lines, and many families who sent their sons to the Male Seminary supported not only the institution of slavery but also the Confederate cause. Several former students from the Male Seminary joined the Confederate army.[173] After removal, the economic disparity between the slaveholding and non-slaveholding classes grew, and slavery became a divisive issue. Both the Union and the Confederacy found eager soldiers among the Cherokee populace. Akin to the border states, fighting in the Cherokee Nation pitted brother against brother.[174] In 1861, Stand Watie was named a colonel of the Confederate Army, Ross became a prisoner of war, Ross's supporters fled Indian Territory, and Stand Watie became the de facto chief.[175] Education moved to the periphery as the tribe endured internecine conflict.

In 1865, Ross was reelected as principal chief, and the following year he and the federal government hammered out a peace treaty between the two nations. In this 1866 treaty, the United States' government agreed not to divide the Cherokee Nation and granted complete amnesty to both the pro-Confederate Cherokees. Ross, as urged by congressmen promoting a more radical brand of Reconstruction, agreed to grant citizenship to former Cherokee slaves and their descendants. The Cherokees also

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[172] Ibid.

[173] Mihesuah, "The Boys of the Cherokee Male Seminary," 508.

[174] Duane King, "Cherokees in the West: History since 1776," in *The Handbook on North American Indians* 16 vols (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution), 14: 363.

[175] Sturm, *Blood Politics*, 73; King, "Cherokees in the West," 364.

allowed other tribes to relocate to Cherokee land and allowed two railroad companies rights-of-way with one hundred feet on each side of track though Cherokee Territory. The Senate ratified the treaty on July 27, 1866, and John Ross died four days later.[176]

By the end of the Civil War, the Cherokee Nation lay in ruins. Four thousand Cherokees were killed, several thousand were disabled, and over one thousand children were left orphans.[177] After Ross's death, the tribal Council chose his nephew, William Potter Ross, to finish out his term.[178] In 1858, the Keetoowah Society, a full-blood, Cherokee-speaking political and social organization gained control of the tribal Council. By the time of the seminaries' reopening, the Keetoowahs had achieved a populist take-over of Cherokee politics and envisioned an entirely different path for the Cherokee Male Seminary. The modifications that the Council made to the seminary were meant to include a greater proportion of Cherokees. Now that full-bloods were in power, they resolved to make sure that the seminary was more inclusive and served the majority of the tribe.

[176] McLoughlin, *After the Trail of Tears*, 227; James Mooney, *Historical Sketch of the Cherokee* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1975), 146-151.

[177] In 1860, the total population, including slaves and intermarried whites, was between 21,000 and 22,000. In 1865, the total population was between 14,000 and 17,000, McLoughlin, *After the Trail of Tears*, 220; 224; Mooney, *Historical Sketch of the Cherokee*, 147.

[178] C.W. West, *Tahlequah and the Cherokee Nation* (Muskogee: Muskogee Publishing Company, 1978), 78.

CHAPTER III

POPULIST REVISION

"and for the purpose of devising the best means for placing a liberal education within the reach, as nearly as possible, of all the children of the Nation, and enabling those who speak only the Cherokee language, to acquire more readily a practical knowledge and use of the English language, there shall be permanently established a board of education, with such powers as shall be conferred by law." –An Act Relating to Education, 21 June 1875.[179]

In the immediate aftermath of the Civil War, the Cherokee political structure experienced a dramatic revision. Cherokee-speaking farmers (who constituted the vast majority of the tribe) began a grass-roots movement to replace the wealthy politicians of mixed-ancestry with their own full-blood leaders. While the Keetoowahs had already gained a majority in the tribal Council in 1866, the 1867 election of Chief Lewis Downing ushered in a populist takeover of all branches of Cherokee government. The Downing and subsequent populist administrations focused on governing for the benefit of all Cherokees. They overhauled the Male seminary to include Cherokees from all classes and skill levels. The Council reinstated the board of education, which implemented three significant changes to the Male seminary: the "indigent" program; the Primary Department; and a manual training element. The Council's message was clear:

[179] *Constitution and Laws of the Cherokee Nation* (hereafter referred to as *CALCN*), Chapter 10, Articles 1, Sec. 1 (St. Louis: R.&T.A. Ennis Stationers, Printers, and Book Binders, 1875), 189.

Cherokee public schools, including the Male seminary, would promote the education of all Cherokee children.[180]

In the late 1860s, tribal populism became an organized social and political movement; it promoted candidates who represented Cherokee-speaking dirt farmers and promised to curtail the power of the rich commercial farmers and businessmen. Contesting the self-promotion of the mixed-blood elite, Cherokee populism resonated with a majority of the tribe. From their perspective, the wealthy, acculturated mixed-bloods had controlled all aspects of national politics far too long. Full-bloods argued that they must wrest political control from the upper-class mixed-bloods (whose policies, they believed, protected their own class interests) and, instead, govern in the interest of the full-blood majority.[181] Once in power, populists quickly realized the seriousness of external threats to sovereignty, including white intruders, railroad trespasses, and the unceasing territorial schemes in Washington, DC.[182]

The end of the war presented the tribe with new challenges to sovereignty. Even though the threat from Congress to turn Indian Territory into a territory of the United States began before the war, the threats became stronger and increasingly difficult to block after the war. This move would end tribal government, laws, and treaty rights. President James Buchanan, who had no interest in Indian sovereignty, urged Congress to incorporate Indian Territory into the Union. Indian Agent George Butler reported to Buchanan that territorial bills garnered strong opposition among all classes of Cherokees. Every year, Congress introduced a territorial bill, and every year Cherokees and other

[180] Ibid., 193, 194, 268.
[181] Circe Sturm, *Blood Politics: Race, Culture, and Identity in the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma* (Los Angeles: University of California Press), 72.
[182] *Catalogue of the Cherokee National Male Seminary: 1884*, 9.

tribes were able to defeat it. The Council allocated a large portion of national funds to keep a committee in Washington full time for the sole purpose of defeating these territorial bills. After the war, it became clear that Congress was even more dedicated to abrogating the treaty system and to passing territorial bills. In the final years of the war, Kansas senators James Lane and James Harlan worked to pass a bill that would turn Indian Territory into a territory of the Union, open it up to homesteaders, railroads, and cattle grazing, and denationalize all of the tribes in the Territory. After the war, senators and congressmen, usually backed by railroad promoters and land speculators, introduced between four and eight territorial bills a year. Indeed, many policies passed by the full-blood-controlled government resembled those of past administrations, including the annual Washington delegation which blocked territorial bills. Nevertheless, the populists' commitment to communal values was strong and their antipathy for free enterprise unquestioned.[183]

In 1867, one year after the Keetoowah-controlled Council chose William Potter Ross to complete John Ross's term, Lewis Downing was elected principal chief. Downing was a full-blood, Cherokee-speaking leader of the populist movement. Once elected, he inherited the difficult task of facilitating the Nation's reconstruction after the Civil War. Although Downing was a founding member of the Keetoowah Society and in favor of populist measures designed to help poor Cherokee farmers, he also made concessions to the Southern Party (the party composed mostly of former Treaty Party members who had sided with the Confederacy), thus making possible successful

[183] Grace Steele Woodward, *The Cherokees* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), 314-320; William McLoughlin, *After the Trail of Tears: The Cherokees' Struggle for Sovereignty, 1839-1880* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 240, 244, 316.

reconstruction. Despite his success with reunion and revitalization, white intruders, railroad trespasses, and congressional territorial bills continued to plague the tribe. In addition, the federal government was unwilling to make the regular payments from the sale of Cherokee land in the East. Thus, the Cherokee delegation in Washington, in addition to staving off territorial bills, worked to obtain these payments.[184]

Faced with these serious threats to tribal sovereignty, most Cherokees understood that unity was crucial to survival and factionalism subsided. Although tensions continued between the wealthy and poor classes, nearly all Cherokees agreed on the importance of public education. In 1871, with an intense focus on improving the quality and accessibility of education, Downing authorized the expansion of the Cherokee public school system. Although Downing died the following year, the interim chief, William Potter Ross, continued Downing's inclusive educational policies.[185]

The National Council, with the approval of newly-appointed interim Chief William P. Ross, resuscitated the board of education to oversee the expansive public education system. By the early 1870s, hundreds of public elementary schools were scattered throughout the Nation, some in the most remote and isolated towns. As part of the effort to improve public education, the board resolved to provide "uniform textbooks, stationary, globes, apparatus, fixtures, and appliances" in all the schools.[186] As stated in "An Act Relating to Education," the principal chief nominated the board members for a three-year appointment, and the Senate (previously known as the National Committee) confirmed these nominations. The board members were expected to be of "liberal

[184] McLoughlin, *After the Trail of Tears*, 244-255.
[185] *CALCN*, 193, 194, 268.
[186] Ibid., 193.

literary attainments, and free from immoral or intemperate habits."[187] Although the board controlled the funds, approval for any increase in funding came directly from the principal chief.[188] In 1873, the Council demanded that "the board of education shall, without delay, cause the Male seminary to be reopened and manned with an efficient corps of teachers."[189] Both seminaries incurred substantial damage during the war (including the loss of the library); nevertheless, in 1874, William Potter Ross approved the reopening of the institutions.[190]

The populist objectives of the Keetoowah-controlled Council had important consequences for the Cherokee Male Seminary. Because many full-bloods took issue with the free room and board granted to families who could have afforded the expense, the Council began charging boarders five dollars a month (forty-five dollars a year). The monthly charge paid for "boarding, washing, lodging, lights, fuel, mattress, room furniture, text-books, ink, paper, pens, pencils, and all necessary supplies."[191] Although the tribe continued to subsidize tuition for all seminary students, by having boarders pay their own living expenses, the Council was able to both appease full-bloods and collect the necessary funds to keep the seminaries in operation.[192]

As part of the initiative to make the seminary accessible to all classes of Cherokees, the Council decided to provide financial assistance to the families who could not afford the forty-five dollars. Students from poorer families were admitted as

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[187] Ibid., 230.
[188] Ibid., 232; *Catalogue of the Cherokee National Male Seminary, 1884*, 7.
[189] *CALCN*, 193.
[190] *Cherokee Male Seminary Catalogue: 1884*, 13.
[191] Ibid.
[192] "An Act Relating to Education," *Compiled Laws of the Cherokee Nation* (Tahlequah: National Advocate Print, 1881), 230 (hereafter referred to as *CLCN*).

"indigents" and received subsidized clothing, food, supplies, and tuition for four years (later changed to five years). According to "An Act in Relation to the Male and Female Seminaries," the board of education was authorized to admit "indigent children, not to exceed in number fifty for the first year, fifty more for the second year, fifty more for the third year, and fifty more for the fourth year," so as to achieve an equal number of indigent and "proper" students at the seminary.[193] Indigent students were almost always from the Cherokee-speaking class, and their parents had to prove that they were unable to afford the cost of the seminary education. The parents also had to attest that there were no public elementary schools near their residence. The Council apportioned a handful of slots for both girls and boys from each of the Nation's nine districts. For example, in the Cooweescoowee district, the largest in the Nation, eight girls and eight boys were selected to enroll as indigent students in the female and male seminaries, respectively.[194] As a local newspaper, the *Cherokee Advocate*, reported, "a certain number of pupils at the high schools are 'indigents' and these are supported entirely by the Nation."[195] The plan was popular. By the fall of 1876, 55 of the 160 Male seminary students were "indigents."[196] By 1886, 115 of the 200 total seminary students were "indigents."[197] According to the Male seminary football coach, John Hough, "all the schools in the Nation was [sic] financed from funds accruing from tribal lands and invested money. All books were furnished free by the Nation and board was so low that even the poorer

[193] "An Act in Relation to the Male and Female Seminaries, and Establishing Primary Departments therein for the education of Indigent Children," *CLCN*, 231-239.

[194] Five girls and four boys were selected from the Canadian district; Four girls and three boys from the Sequoyah district, four girls and three boys from the Saline district, seven girls and eight boys from the Delaware district, seven girls and seven boys from the Tahlequah district, four girls and four boys from the Flint district, six girls and seven boys from the Going Snake district, and five girls and six boys from the Illinois district, *The Cherokee Male Seminary Catalogue: 1886*, 17.

[195] *Cherokee Advocate*, 15 July 1876.

[196] *Cherokee Advocate*, 9 September 1876.

[197] *The Cherokee Male Seminary Catalogue: 1886*, 30.

citizens could avail themselves of the educational advantages offered." Thus, the populists who gained control of the Cherokee government implemented significant educational changes, ensuring that a greater portion of Cherokees would have access to an education at the Male seminary.

The free room and board eased the financial burden of childcare for many poor families. One such parent, Mrs. Annie Berigi, wrote an "indigent request," stating that she was unable to send her fifteen-year-old son to school and wished "to send her son to Male seminary and enroll him as a Primary inmate."[198] Another request came from "Jackson killer," who was unable to support his fifteen year old son and wanted to "send him to seminary."[199]

The Board of Education allowed indigent students at both the Female and Male Seminaries. At an alumni luncheon, one former female seminarian, Ida Wetzel Tinnin, explained, "my grandmother's maiden name was McDonald, and being of Scotch extraction she could not see five dollars per month, nine months in the year, lost to the family income . . . . The five dollars per month for tuition was raised in the latter part of my ten-year stay [in 1898] to the sum of seven dollars and fifty cents."[200] Without the indigent program, Tinnin and many others would have never been able to attend the seminary.

After creating the indigent program, the Council quickly realized that elementary classes would have to be created to meet the educational needs of these students. In

[198] *Cherokee National Records,* "Letter from Clerk E.E. Adams," 31 August 1887.
[199] *Cherokee National Records,* "Letter from Clerk E.E. Adams," 29 April 1887.
[200] Ida Wetzel Tinnin, "Educational and Cultural Influences of the Cherokee Seminaries," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* (Volume 37, 1959), 63.

accordance with the laws passed by the national Council and United States Congress, the board of education was granted seventy-five thousand dollars to establish "in each of the seminaries a Primary Department, for the education of such children as are destitute of the means of support."[201] According to the *Annual Report of the Board of Education*, while non-indigent students had to pass an entrance exam, the indigent students were "admitted without any reference to their standing in scholarship, consequently many of them are required to take up the most Elementary branches, such as are taught in the Primary schools, over the country."[202] These children often lacked a basic, elementary education. To accommodate the needs of the indigent children, the board added a Primary Department to the high school, which taught mostly younger, but also some older students, the English language.[203] The Primary Department offered three years of elementary classes (changed to four years by 1896) and attracted children from the Cherokee-speaking class whose ages ranged from nine to twenty-one.[204]

[201] *CLCN*, 244.
[202] *Annual Report of the Board of Education*, 1887.
[203] William Henry Davis (1875); Rev. Leonidas Dobson (1873); George S. Mason (1873); Spencer S. Stephens (1873); Allison Woodville Timberlake (1875); John Ross Vann (1875).
[204] *Cherokee National Records*, "Letter from Clerk E.E. Adams," 31 August 1887; Devon Mihesuah, "The Boys of the Cherokee Male Seminary," 509.

Figure 2. Primary Students at the Cherokee Male Seminary, courtesy of the Cherokee Heritage Center

An examination of the male seminary catalogues from 1884 to 1896 reveals that the board and administration made regular adjustments to the Primary Department. For example, the 1884 catalogue refers to the Primary Department as the "Preparatory Department" and shows that students in their first year took classes in reading, object lessons, composition, phonetics, arithmetic, and "moulding in sand."[205] Second-year and third-year students took increasingly more difficult versions of the same classes. Students' ages in the Preparatory Department ranged from nine to twenty-one, meaning that older, adult students attended classes and learned alongside much younger students.

[205] Moulding in sand, also known as sand casting, involves a metal casting process in which sand is used as the mold material, *Cherokee National Male Seminary Catalogue: 1884*, 16.

The catalogue also shows an "Intermediate" Department, which presumably prepared students for the rigorous high school-level classes.[206] Thus, the Primary or Preparatory Department included grades one through five, the Intermediate Department was composed of six through eight, and the "seminary proper" included grades nine through twelve.

The 1886 catalogue, however, does not include the "Intermediate" Department. The Preparatory Department offered similar classes, including reading, arithmetic, object lessons, map drawing, and penmanship. In addition, third-year students also studied composition, grammar, and history.[207] The 1888 catalogue, shows that a fourth year was added to the Preparatory Department. With the exception of geography and drawing, the first, second, and third-year preparatory classes remained the same as previous years (reading, arithmetic, object lessons, map drawing, and penmanship). Fourth-year Preparatory students studied advanced versions of those classes as well as United States history and scientific knowledge.[208] The 1896 catalogue makes a distinction between the Primary Department and the Preparatory Department but only lists the classes offered in the Preparatory Department (reading, arithmetic, object lessons, map drawing, penmanship, United States history, and scientific knowledge). According to the catalogue, "The Course in this Department embraces four years and prepares students for the seminary proper. The school is carefully graded. No student below Fourth Reader will be admitted to this Department, not any under 13 years of age."[209]

[206] Ibid., 16-35.
[207] *Cherokee Male Seminary Catalogue: 1886*, 5.
[208] *Cherokee Male Seminary Catalogue: 1888*, 5-6.
[209] *Cherokee Male Seminary Catalogue: 1896*, 3.

The Primary Department's creation was an example of the different ways that the tribe used education to protect themselves in their interactions with whites. Some Cherokees stood to lose money or possessions by not understanding the terms of financial transactions with whites. There were numerous cases of whites running scams and taking advantage of those tribal members with limited English. According to one local newspaper, "the object of the Primary Department was to fill a need long since felt to be pressing; which is to teach our Cherokee speaking population a sufficient knowledge of English to prevent their being imposed upon from ignorance of the tongue in which all kinds of business are almost exclusively transacted."[210] In the Council's estimation, a three-year course in the Primary Department would give any student a sufficient knowledge of the English language.[211]

Another reason for the creation of the Primary Department was the inadequacy Cherokee public elementary schools. Although teaching English typically fell to elementary schools, upon inspection, the board found that the public schools were inadequate, filled with inept teachers and lacking essential supplies. One of the board's ideas to alleviate these problems was to add to the Male Seminary a three-year course in the English language and other elementary subjects.[212] By adding the Primary Department to the Male seminary, the tribe had finally created a successful program for teaching English to Cherokee-speaking children.

For Cherokee-speaking students, the major difference between learning English in the public elementary schools versus the Primary Department at the Male Seminary was

[210] *Cherokee Advocate*, 7 March 1877.
[211] Ibid.
[212] Ibid.

the daily, constant interaction with English-speaking children. Guided by the principle that language immersion was the most effective pedagogical tool for learning English, the board placed Cherokee-speaking children in the boarding school so that they would have regular interaction with English-speaking students.[213] Unlike at the elementary schools, full-blood students lived at the seminary, greatly increasing opportunities to practice their English skills with fellow classmates and teachers. According to the *Cherokee Advocate*,

> it has been found that the only practicable and sure way to learn a language is through personal intercourse with those who speak it. Upon the principle, Cherokee children are taken and placed where they will be in constant—almost momentary communication with children who speak English. Whether they lived under the shadow of a public school house or not is of no consequence to know—through it would be in case of one speaks English and is thereby enabled if he will but attend to get a common education from English teachers and from English text books—teacher and books that can do no possible good to anyone who cannot understand them.[214]

Interim-Principal Chief William Potter Ross agreed. He supported the Primary Department and believed that one of the best ways to learn a language was through daily interaction with those who spoke it fluently. He argued that Cherokee-speaking students should have constant communication with their English-speaking counterparts. Unlike the early years of the seminary, the language immersion strategy meant that school administrators were finally attempting to create policies that would benefit the full-blood tribal majority.

The final significant change made to the Male Seminary was the manual training program. In 1874, the Council selected William P. Boudinot, D.H. Ross, and former

[213] Ibid.
[214] Ibid.

seminary student Joseph A. Scales to serve on a committee to revise, amend, and codify the existing laws as well as to create new laws if needed. One of these new laws pertained to the Male seminary. According to section twenty-two of the Act Relating to Education, "in order to inculcate habits of industry among pupils attending the boarding schools now in operation, or to be here after put into operation, the Board of Education shall have the authority to declare such schools to be industrial or manual labor boarding schools and shall . . . provide the necessary means for promoting the agricultural and mechanical industries."[215] Thus, in addition to supporting the Primary Department, William Potter Ross also pushed for the addition of a manual training element to the seminary. According to the National Board of Education, "not only the elements of gardening and farming . . . but some of the mechanical trades, such as blacksmithing, carpentering, wagon making, shoe making, and like arts, which enter into the daily avocations of life, should be made a part of the regular course of study."[216] Ross's plan was for Cherokee-speaking and poor, mixed-blood children to learn English in the classroom and then speak Cherokee with each other while they learned either a trade or how to farm.[217]

On the surface, Ross's plan seems discriminatory against students from poorer economic backgrounds, and his ideas about manual training were echoed throughout the Jim Crow South. Following Reconstruction, white racists argued that book-knowledge would be lost on the children of ex-slaves—only manual training would help working-

[215] *CALCN*, 194.
[216] *Cherokee Nation Annual Report of the Board of Education*, 1888, 8.
[217] McLoughlin, *After the Trail of Tears*, 319.

class white and, especially, black children.[218] Furthermore, despite the fact that many educational reformers argued that "manual training would evolve into a class-based vocational system, anti-intellectual in tone and undemocratic in practice," vocational or manual training was central to the government-run American Indian boarding schools.[219] For example, at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, boys spent the first half of the school day learning to read and write and the remainder of the day performing manual and farm labor and taking part in military drills. According to Pratt, exposing Indian children to hard work and strict discipline would help them discard tribal traditions and assimilate to mainstream American culture. To the same end, Commissioner of Indian Affairs Thomas Morgan (1889-1893) believed that the goals of Indian day schools and boarding schools were to provide language skills and industrial training.[220] According to historian David Wallace Adams, "boarding schools were established to 'civilize' Indians by severing that native child's cultural and psychological connection to his or her native heritage."[221]

One major difference between these Indian boarding schools and the Male seminary, however, was that Cherokee-speaking students were encouraged to speak their native tongue as well as practice their English skills. According to McLoughlin, William Ross's plan for the Male Seminary involved teachers and students speaking English in the classroom while "full-blood children would speak Cherokee with other students while

[218] William Reese, "The Origins of Progressive Education," *History of Education Quarterly* 41 (Spring 2001), 17.
[219] Ibid.
[220] David Wallace Adams, *Education for Exctinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (Lawrence: University of Kansas, 1995), 94.
[221] Ibid., 6.

they worked."[222] Although not an overwhelming celebration of traditional culture, permission to communicate in Cherokee certainly set the Male Seminary apart from most federal boarding schools.

Some members of the elite class predicted that all of these changes would devalue the prestige of the Male Seminary. One tribal member declared that these changes gave "rise to such a disparity of classification that it has the effect to more or less embarrass the work of the institution as a high school."[223] Nevertheless, most assimilated mixed-bloods supported the changes taking place at the school largely because they fretted that the "traditional" Cherokees arrested the progress of the entire tribe.[224] Indeed, many viewed these modifications with pride. This unique opportunity provided to children from poor families prompted one newspaper editor to pronounce, "in no other country can such advantages be found in a first class institution."[225]

Although the teachers hired in the early years of the school were white and from northeastern institutions, in the later years the board preferred to hire teachers "who are citizens of the Nation."[226] The Keetoowah-controlled government urged the board to hire Cherokees to teach at the seminaries. According to the *Cherokee Advocate*, "before [the war], the principal of the Male Seminary was a white man. His assistants were white men. Now, the Principal is a Cherokee and two out of three assistants are Cherokee also."[227]

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[222] McLoughlin, *After the Trail of Tears*, 319.
[223] *Cherokee Nation Annual Report of the Board of Education*: *1887*, 17.
[224] Mihesuah, "The Boys of the Cherokee Male Seminary," 507.
[225] *Catalogue of the Cherokee National Male Seminary: 1884*, 9.
[226] Ibid., 238.
[227] *The Cherokee Advocate*, 7 October 1876.

The populist movement within the Cherokee Nation had a dramatic impact on the Male Seminary. All of the changes implemented (the indigent program, the Primary Department, the manual/ agricultural training, and hiring Cherokee administrators and teachers) were created to bring secondary education within the reach of all Cherokees. Although William Potter Ross was not himself a populist (he was the wealthiest man in the Nation), as Lewis Downing's successor, Ross approved the Council's inclusive education policies. Although Ross was defeated in the 1875 election, the educational changes that he signed into law remained. His successor, Ochaleta (Charles Thompson), who was a full-blood, Cherokee-speaking populist, made no significant alterations to the Male seminary. On December 8, 1875, Charles Thompson approved an apportioned $10,000 of the national school fund to move the Male high school to a new building. Indeed, every subsequent administration, through statehood, kept the seminaries open and in operation; this fact underscores the significance of the modifications made to the seminary in the early 1870s.[228]

John Ross's original vision of the seminaries, however, was not completely forgotten. The seminary "proper" remained unchanged. The high school continued to offer demanding courses on advanced topics. The seminary continued to prepare young men for either a university education or to serve as teachers in the common schools. Therefore, the later years of the seminary represented both John Ross's and the populists' visions. For students, these competing goals made life at the seminary both frustrating and rewarding.

[228] "Local News," *The Cherokee Advocate*," 7 March 1877.

CHAPTER IV

LIFE AT THE SEMINARY

"It was such a privilege to go to that academy." –granddaughter of former Male seminary student George Robbins[229]

The Male Seminary underwent a drastic revision in the 1870s, and the product was a much more Cherokee-centered school. This "new" seminary not only featured a different curriculum but also different disciplinary measures. Despite all of the changes implemented at the Male Seminary, the original mission of the high school remained. The academy continued to train young Cherokee men as teachers for the public schools and to prepare others for a university education. While John Ross's vision remained intact, it was complicated somewhat by the recent addition of the Primary Department and the influx of a diverse student body. Thus, by the 1870s, the seminary had two strategies for accomplishing the goal of assimilation. The first was to continue nurturing the intellectual capabilities of the most promising and brightest Cherokee youth; the second was to provide Cherokee-speaking children from more traditional backgrounds

[229] Betty Byfield, "Legacy of Learning," *Tahlequah Daily Press*, 19 March 2010.

with an elementary education. These two strategies meant that Cherokees from very different backgrounds were sharing one home. Despite their differences, the young men found common interests.

According to historian Francis Paul Prucha, the rapid increase in industrialization and urbanization at the end of the nineteenth century threatened the Protestant hegemony in the United States. Reformers saw the need to take strict measures to insure conformity. One of the best ways to instill conformity and Americanization was through the public school system. It was through the public school system that reformers sought to Americanize Native Americans. Federal Indian policy at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries focused on the cultural assimilation of American Indians. According to historian David Wallace Adams, "between 1875 and 1928, policymakers attempted to use boarding schools as an instrument to assimilate Indian youth into white civilization. Boarding schools were established to 'civilize' Indians by severing that native child's cultural and psychological connection to his or her native heritage. Schools had a profound impact on children's psychological and cultural being, and were an acculturation force."[230] Historian Margaret Szasz explains that in the 1880s, the federal government provided the first significant federal funding for Indian schools, which were off-reservation vocational boarding schools. By the end of the 1880s, federal schools opened on every reservation, and several off-reservation boarding schools were

[230] David Wallace Adams, *Education for Exctinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (Lawrence: University of Kansas, 1995), 6.

created. Despite some senators' doubts about Native Americans' ability to learn, most voted to fund these schools to spread the values of white society.[231]

The Cherokee Male Seminary reopened as a high school about the same time that Carlisle and other government boarding schools began enrolling students. While the Male Seminary shared similarities with these government-controlled boarding schools, including literacy training and assimilation efforts, the tribe had actually created an academy quite distinct from schools such as Carlisle. Because the Cherokees controlled the seminary, and because populists had taken over tribal politics, the Male seminary was different from federal Indian boarding schools that lacked these influences.

By adding the Primary Department that offered lessons in elementary subjects as well as the English language, the Tribal Council had created a more Cherokee-centered school. In addition to the Primary Department and the indigent program, which enabled students from poorer families to attend the seminary tuition-free, Chief William Potter Ross also recommended that the seminary be declared an industrial school. In 1874, the Keetoowah-controlled Council approved a measure to "declare the boarding schools now in operation to be industrial or manual labor schools."[232] The Board of Education, however, waited until 1887 to implement the law. In its annual report, the board stated "believing that the time has arrived to take the first steps in this direction, we would advise that an appropriation of $100.00 be made for purchasing farming tools and fencing materials."[233]

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[231] Margaret Connell Szasz, *Indian Education in the American Colonies, 1607-1783* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988), 8.

[232] *Cherokee Nation: Annual Report of the Board of Education, 1887,* 17.

[233] Ibid.

The Cherokee Nation in the late nineteenth century was much different from the 1850s. With the addition of intermarried whites and blacks, the population was much more diverse. Members of different tribes as well as former slaves and black and white intruders all relied on intermarriage to access the rights and privileges of Cherokee citizenship.[234] Despite the increasing racial diversity of the tribe, access to an education at the Male Seminary was limited to those with "Cherokee blood." Nevertheless, the addition of the Primary Department and the indigent program brought in a much greater proportion of full-blood Cherokees than in the early years. The addition of the Primary Department also brought to the school children from poor, traditional families. Thus, the changes implemented at the Male Seminary led to a more racially and economically diverse student body.[235]

Whereas in the early years, only a handful of full-blood Cherokees attended the seminary, in the later years, full-bloods comprised nearly 17 percent of the student body. That percentage increased drastically when limited to the Primary Department. Between 1876 and 1882 (of the students whose blood quantum is known) the proportion of full-blood Cherokees who attended the Primary Department was 40 percent (see Tables 1 and 2).[236] Indeed, the Primary Department was comprised mostly of students who were either full-blood themselves or had one full-blood parent.[237] In other words, students who were either full-blood or had one full-blood parent comprised 64 percent of the Primary Department student body. Students who were documented as possessing one-quarter

[234] McLoughlin, *After the Trail of Tears*, 304.
[235] Mihesuah, "The Boys of the Cherokee Male Seminary," 509.
[236] Calculated using T.L. Ballenger's "Names of Students of Cherokee Male Seminary, Tahlequah, Oklahoma, 1876-1909," in the Cherokee National Male Seminary Papers, Northeastern State University Archives, and "The Final Dawes Rolls" at the Oklahoma Historical Society.
[237] Ibid.

Cherokee blood comprised 19 percent; students with a blood quantum of 1/8th made up 6 percent, while students with a blood quantum of 1/16th also comprised 6 percent. Finally, students with a blood quantum of 1/32nd comprised four percent of the Primary Department student body, and this was the lowest blood quantum among the Primary Department students.[238] Unfortunately, many Primary Department students' names were not found on the Dawes roll; therefore, information related to their age, class, and blood quantum is unknown.

The proportion of Primary students who were full-blood or had one full-blood parent contrasts sharply with that of the seminary proper. Several prominent Cherokee names appear on the seminary proper class roster, including Campbell, Foreman, Mayes, Adair, Thompson, Vann, and Ross, highlighting the perception that the "academic" school catered to children of wealthy, acculturated families.[239] Referred to either as the "academic Department" or the "seminary proper," the high school portion of the Male seminary enrolled a much higher proportion of mixed-blood students than the Primary Department. Between 1876 and 1882, students who had less than one-half Cherokee "blood" comprised 70 percent of the seminary proper student body (see Tables 1 and 2).[240] Students who were full-blood or had one full-blood parent made up 26 percent of the seminary proper student body (compared to 64 percent in the Primary Department).[241]

[238] Ibid.

[239] Emmet Starr, *History of the Cherokee Indians and Their Legend and Folklore* (Oklahoma City: The Warden Company, 1921), 232-244.

[240] Calculated using T.L. Ballenger's "Names of Students of Cherokee Male Seminary, Tahlequah, Oklahoma, 1876-1909," and "The Final Dawes Rolls" at the Oklahoma Historical Society.

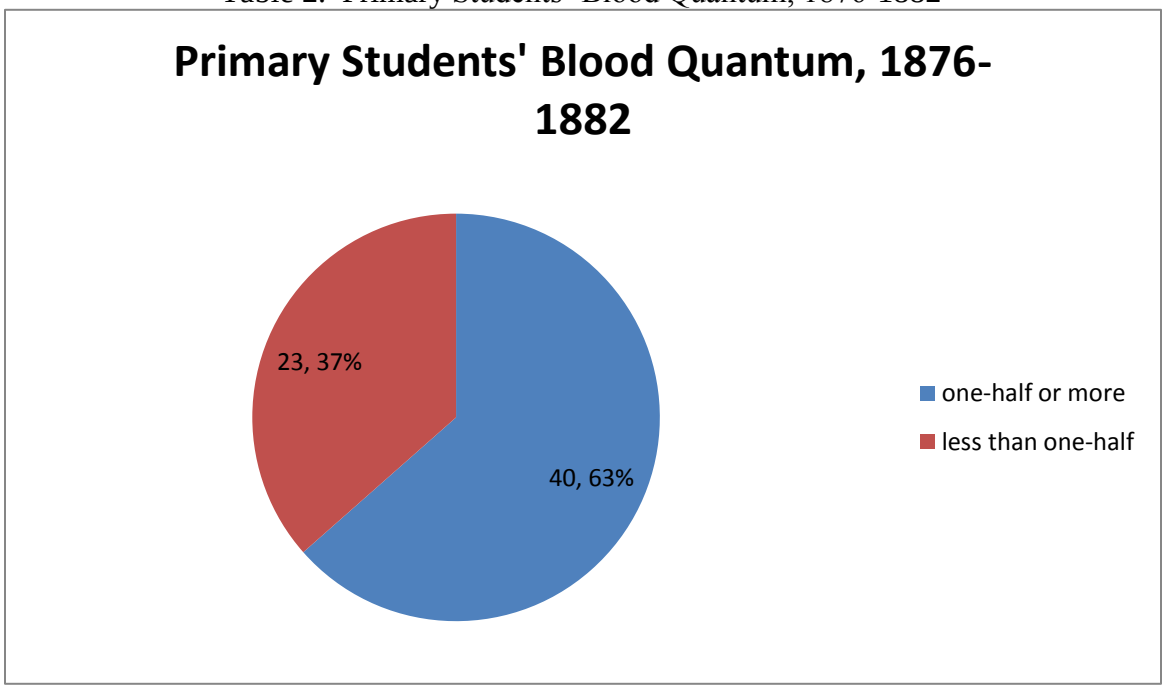
[241] Ibid.

Table 1. Primary and Seminary Proper Students' Blood Quantum, 1876-1882

	Primary Department		Seminary Proper	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Full blood	25	40.0	9	7.2
3/4	6	9.5	6	4.7
5/8	0	0	2	1.6
1/2	9	14.2	18	14.2
3/8	1	1.6	7	5.5
1/4	12	19.0	27	21.2
1/8	4	6.3	17	13.4
1/16	4	6.3	27	21.2
1/32	2	3.1	10	7.9
1/64	0	0	3	2.4
1/256	0	0	1	0.7
Total	63	100	127	100

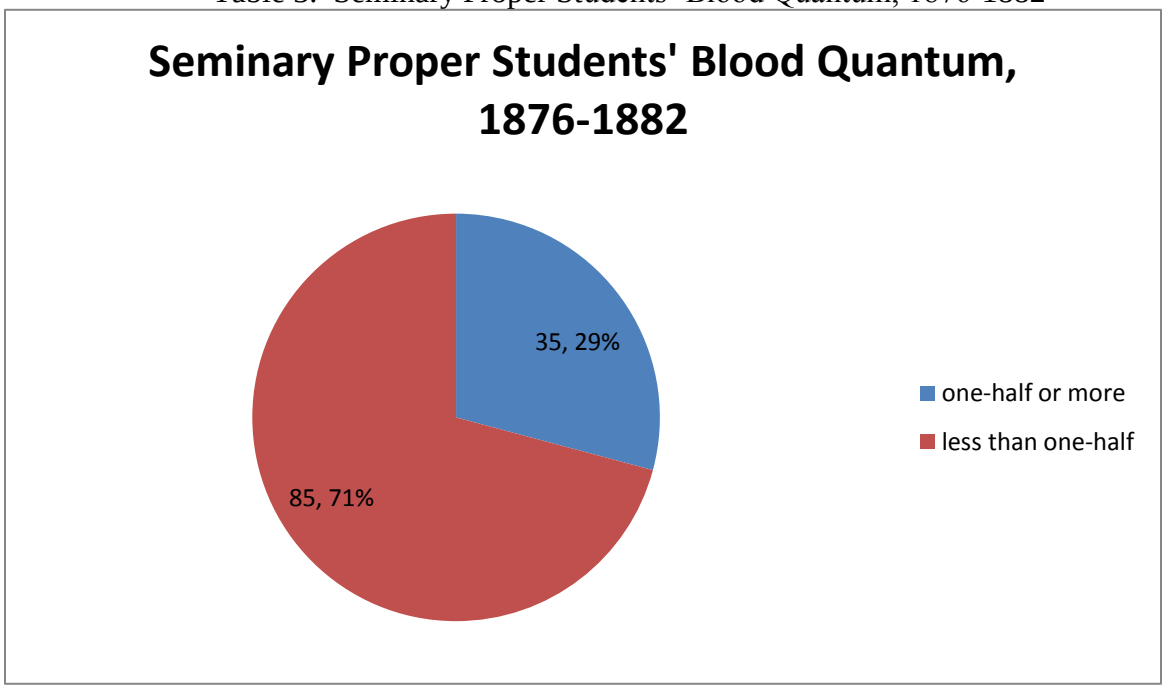
Calculated using T.L. Ballenger's "Names of Students of Cherokee Male Seminary, Tahlequah, Oklahoma, 1876-1909," in the Cherokee National Male Seminary Papers, Northeastern State University Archives, and "The Final Dawes Rolls" at the Oklahoma Historical Society.

Table 2. Primary Students' Blood Quantum, 1876-1882



Calculated using T.L. Ballenger's "Names of Students of Cherokee Male Seminary, Tahlequah, Oklahoma, 1876-1909," in the Cherokee National Male Seminary Papers, Northeastern State University Archives, and "The Final Dawes Rolls" at the Oklahoma Historical Society.

Table 3. Seminary Proper Students' Blood Quantum, 1876-1882



Calculated using T.L. Ballenger's "Names of Students of Cherokee Male Seminary, Tahlequah, Oklahoma, 1876-1909," in the Cherokee National Male Seminary Papers, Northeastern State University Archives, and "The Final Dawes Rolls" at the Oklahoma Historical Society.

The students' ages also varied between the Primary and academic Departments. In the Primary Department, students' ages ranged from five to nineteen. Because all of the Primary students slept on a separate floor from academic students, nineteen-year-olds had to share living quarters with five-year-olds. Compelling older Primary students to attend classes and live with much younger students doubtless created feelings of inferiority for some older Primary students. Their better educated peers attended classes and lived with other young men close to their own age (see Table 4). Students' ages in the preparatory Department ranged from twelve to twenty-five. [242]

Table 4. Primary and Seminary Proper Students' Age

[242] Ibid.

	Primary Department		Seminary Proper	
Age	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
5	6	9.5		
7	2	3.2		
8	2	3.2		
9	3	4.8		
10	6	9.5		
11	9	14.3		
12	3	4.8	10	7.9
13	4	6.3	5	4.0
14	7	11.1	6	4.7
15	8	12.7	16	12.5
16	4	6.3	21	16.5
17	4	6.3	23	18.1
18	3	4.8	14	11.0
19	2	3.2	6	4.7
20			4	3.1
21			10	7.9
22			3	2.4
23			5	4.0
24			2	1.6
25			2	1.6
Total	63	100	127	100

Calculated using T.L. Ballenger's "Names of Students of Cherokee Male Seminary, Tahlequah, Oklahoma, 1876-1909," in the Cherokee National Male Seminary Papers, Northeastern State University Archives, and "The Final Dawes Rolls" at the Oklahoma Historical Society.

Cherokees from different backgrounds were all living together at the Male Seminary. This increased racial diversity underscored the success of the indigent program and the Primary Department. They had been created to provide a foundation in the English language to those Cherokee children who had limited means and did not speak English. The greater proportion of full-bloods and children with one full-blood parent who benefitted from the indigent program suggests that, generally speaking, full-blood Cherokees were less likely to have access to formal literacy training and more likely to be impoverished. The Council had achieved its goal of making education at the seminary accessible to Cherokees of all classes and backgrounds. However, with the majority of full-bloods in the Primary Department, the seminary proper continued to serve mostly Cherokees of mixed ancestry.[243]

The Male Seminary students' experiences varied greatly depending upon their age, ethnicity, upbringing, and whether they were in the Primary (grades one through eight) or academic (grades nine through twelve) Department. Primary students' experiences, despite their age, differed markedly from those in the seminary proper. From the workload to the living quarters, daily life for Primary students was more challenging than for academic students.

All students were required to perform chores, such as sweeping, tending to fires, making their beds, and cleaning their rooms. Daily room inspections insured compliance. In addition to these tasks, Primary students of all ages were given extra chores. In lieu of

[243] Ibid.

paying tuition, room, and board, these students had to perform extra work, including washing dishes, waiting tables, and other dining-room tasks.[244] Primary students who were part of the indigent program faced an even more tiresome schedule than seminary proper students whose parents could afford the tuition. The extra work was just one way that school officials differentiated students by level of education.

The arrangement of the seminary building itself affected the students' experience. The seminary building was expanded in the later years, reaching 183 feet in length and 109 feet in width. The basement was used for laundry, storage, and furnace rooms; the first floor held the library, classrooms, chapel, study hall, a laboratory, the kitchen and dining room, parlor, and rooms for visitors. The bedrooms for seminary proper students were located on the second floor and the bedrooms for Primary students were on the third floor. Dividing student bedrooms based on grade meant that Cherokee-speaking students of all ages, from five to twenty-one, had rooms on the same floor. Poorer students, "because they sometimes did not speak English well and had inadequate educational backgrounds, they were also placed in classes with younger children."[245] The living situation no doubt added to older, Cherokee-speaking students' feelings of ostracism.[246]

Some seminary proper students made derogatory remarks about the fact that poorer students had extra work, attended classes with younger children, and lived on a separate floor. One seminary student remarked that full-blood students were "less intellectual."[247] According to historian Devon Mihesuah, "patronizing remarks from the

[244] *Cherokee National Male Seminary Catalogue: 1886*, 21; *Cherokee National Male Seminary Catalogue*, 1884, 9-10.
[245] Mihesuah, "The Boys of the Cherokee Male Seminary," 509-510.
[246] *Cherokee National Male Seminary Catalogue, 1889*, 14.
[247] Mihesuah, "The Boys of the Cherokee Male Seminary," 509.

more acculturated children often compounded [poorer students'] feelings of inferiority."[248]

Patronizing remarks may have been fueled by the differences in curriculum. The goals of assimilation were not lost in the later years; indeed, the curriculum underscored the administration's commitment to assimilation. The courses offered at the freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior levels were just as challenging and advanced as in the early years of the seminary. Freshman studied algebra, United States history, civil government, physiology, and Latin grammar. Sophomores took courses in algebra, world history, rhetoric and essays, elocution, and Caesar. Juniors learned geometry, geology, botany, chemistry, physics, Cicero, Virgil, bookkeeping, and the history of England. Seniors studied psychology, Shakespeare, teaching methods, English literature, political economy, zoology, logic, astronomy, and trigonometry. According to the seminary catalogue, as "we live in a scientific age . . . an attempt has been made to meet the demands for more science studies."[249] Seminary students learned new scientific knowledge influencing late nineteenth century thought, such as psychology.[250] Indeed, the curriculum was so challenging that, after statehood, the Oklahoma State Department of Education and the State Legislature created a "plan to grant a blanket of sixty-two hours of college credit to the graduates of the Cherokee National Male and FeMale Seminaries."[251]

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[248] Ibid., 510.
[249] *The Cherokee Male Seminary Catalogue: 1889*, 10.
[250] Ibid., 7.
[251] Ida Wetzel Tinnin, "Educational and Cultural Influences of the Cherokee Seminaries," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 37 (Spring 1959), 64.

Another key difference between students' experiences was based on their ethnicity and upbringing, which tended to inform how they responded to the boarding school's expectations and guidelines. Both full-blood and mixed-blood students of various ages attempted to evade school rules, but they may have had different motivations. Faculty meeting minutes indicate that breaches of discipline occurred regularly, and the faculty debated how to keep students in line.[252]

The nature of student behavior and school discipline in American Indian schools has generated several important works. Historian Michael Coleman analyzes Indian schools in the antebellum and post-bellum eras, revealing that students in both periods engaged in similar acts of resistance and rejection. Coleman distinguishes between them, stating that the former "means those forms of pupil opposition to the school and its staff that were compatible with continued attendance," while the latter represents a total rejection of the school.[253] At government boarding schools and day schools, acts of student *resistance* included speaking their tribal language, telling tribal mythology in dorm rooms, stealing, and leaving to attend an annual buffalo hunts or scalp dances.[254] Furthermore, just like in contemporary schools for white children, school authorities at Indian boarding schools strove to keep the sexes separate. And, just like contemporary white students, Indian children looked for ways to circumvent these restrictions.[255] Because these students either remained at or returned to the school, these acts implied resistance rather than total rejection.

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[252] Cherokee National Male Seminary Faculty Meeting Minutes, 25 February 1901.
[253] Michael Coleman, *American Indian Children at School, 1850-1930* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1993), 146.
[254] Ibid., 151-153.
[255] Ibid., 149.

Students at Cherokee Male Seminary in the later years (1872-1910) engaged in similar acts of resistance. Students regularly sneaked to the nearby feMale seminary without permission.[256] One student even skipped a mandatory church meeting to visit the feMale seminary.[257] Other students smoked in buildings, gambled, and stole clothing or farm animals.[258] At the start of the term in 1877, one student was wounded during a knife fight with another student.[259] In both the early and later years, administrators at the Male seminary demanded that each student take an oath of abstinence at the Cherokee Temperance Society meetings in Tahlequah. Many students defied their oath and school policy by consuming intoxicating liquors. In 1877, administrators blamed poor final exams results on "strong drink."[260] Those who broke their oath and consumed alcohol ran the risk of incurring severe penalties, including suspension.[261] For example, student Lundy Hawkins was not allowed to enter the school because he was intoxicated.[262] Student Thomas Moore was suspended for the same infraction.[263]

Taking away privileges was a common punishment for students engaged in acts of resistance. Administrators specified if students ran away or if they simply left the building for town. For example, Henry Claremore left the building after 9 pm for town, and was deprived of all privileges.[264] In September 1900, student Walter Charlesworth

[256] Cherokee National Male Seminary Faculty Meeting Minutes, 25 February 1901, Cherokee Heritage Center, Tahlequah, Oklahoma.
[257] Ibid., 20 September 1899.
[258] Cherokee National Male Seminary Faculty Meeting Minutes, 27 February 1900, Cherokee Heritage Center, Tahlequah, Oklahoma.
[259] *Cherokee Advocate*, 19 September 1877.
[260] Ibid., 11 July 1877.
[261] Ibid.
[262] Faculty Meeting Minutes, 3 September 1900, Cherokee Heritage Center, Tahlequah, Oklahoma.
[263] Faculty Meeting Minutes, 30 April 1901, Cherokee Heritage Center, Tahlequah, Oklahoma.
[264] Faculty Meeting Minutes, 2 May 1899, Cherokee Heritage Center, Tahlequah, Oklahoma.

was deprived of all privileges for going to town without permission.[265] Three months later he left without permission again and again was denied of all privileges.[266] Students E.J. Mayes and Sam Leach were deprived of all privileges for fighting. In addition, they also had to cut and stack one half cord of wood for a month.[267]

These acts of defiance fall into Coleman's definition of student resistance. While these students defied school rules, they were not necessarily rejecting the school's assimilation goals. Interestingly, of the students who engaged in acts of resistance, and of those whose blood quantum is known, only one had a blood quantum of one-half or more, the remainder had less than one half. Thirty percent had a blood quantum of 1/32 or less. It is possible that these students, because they were mixed-blood, identified culturally with both Cherokee and white society. By virtue of their upbringing, they may have more willingly accepted the goals of the boarding school.[268]

Running away, however, may be a sign of rejection of the school and its goals. Unlike Indian schools, running away was not a *chronic* problem in white schools.[269] Nonattendance at Indian schools implied a rejection of not only the school but also the push for assimilation. Just like students in the seminary's early years, students of the post-bellum period chose running away as their main form of rejection. In February 1877, two students aged seventeen and thirteen ran away to return home.[270] By far the

[265] Faculty Meeting Minutes, 12 September 1900, Cherokee Heritage Center, Tahlequah, Oklahoma.

[266] Faculty Meeting Minutes, 11 December 1900, Cherokee Heritage Center, Tahlequah, Oklahoma.

[267] Faculty Meeting Minutes, 20 September 1899, Cherokee Heritage Center, Tahlequah, Oklahoma.

[268] Calculated from the Final Dawes Roll at the Oklahoma Historical Society.

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[270] *Cherokee Advocate*, 28 February 1877.

most commonly-broken school rule was leaving without permission and the offenders who were found and/or returned by their own volition suffered severe punishments. Of the students who left without permission, and of those whose blood quantum is known, twenty-two percent had a blood quantum of one half or more (compared to one student who engaged in acts of resistance). The remainder had a blood quantum of less than one-half. None of these students had a blood quantum of less than 1/16 (compared to over fifty percent of the students who engaged in acts of resistance). While it is impossible to know the intentions of such infractions, the fact that the students who left without permission were more likely to be either full-blood or have one full-blood parent may have important cultural implications. Although there are exceptions to the rule, generally speaking, full-blood Cherokees tended to value traditional culture and resist assimilation. Interestingly, the students who engaged in acts that may be considered *rejection* were more likely to have a higher blood quantum and quite possibly a more traditional upbringing. Thus, it seems possible that these students, by virtue of their background and upbringing, disapproved of the assimilation goals of the boarding school.[271]

Attempting to burn down schools represented the most dramatic form of rejection. For example, in 1910, the Male Seminary burned to the ground, and many believed that the fire was set by two boys who rejected the white atmosphere of the school and wanted to avoid church that morning.[272] Although there is some disagreement over what started

[271] Cherokee National Male Seminary Faculty Meeting Minutes, 1899-1905, Cherokee Heritage Center, Tahlequah, Oklahoma.

[272] Mihesuah, "The Boys of the Cherokee Male Seminary," 515; This explanation for how the fire began has never been confirmed. The granddaughter of former seminary student, George Robbins, explained "I don't think they ever figured out what caused it . . . . Back then, they heated with wood, they cooked with wood," in *Tahlequah Daily Press*, 19 March 2010.[272]

the fire, if the school was intentionally set ablaze by students then it stands to reason that they rejected the school and its mission.

Teachers and administrators at other Indian boarding schools took particular offense to running away and exacted harsh punishments. At federal boarding schools, boys who ran away were often punished by "getting a whipping."[273] Others were spanked and locked up in their rooms.[274] But the Cherokee Male seminary was different. Although a few students who left without permission received corporal punishment, the vast majority were suspended. Between 1899 and 1906, of the sixty-six boys who ran away, fifty-three were suspended. The remaining thirteen were either denied of all privileges or received corporal punishment. The faculty was more likely to use physical punishment for transgressions such as stealing, fighting, gambling, and damaging school property.[275] For example, students Leonard Connor, Bruce Ross, George Blakeney, Claude Wetzel, and Blake Parris all received corporal punishment for stealing a turkey.[276] Also, student Charles Watson received swats with a paddle for playing cards.[277]

The method of using black marks from the early years was also used in the later years. According to the *Cherokee Advocate*, one student, who had received over seventy-five marks, "was suspended last week from attending the institution."[278] The faculty at the Cherokee Female Seminary also used the demerit system. According to alum Ida

[273] Robert Trennert, "Corporal Punishment and the Politics of Indian Reform," *History of Education Quarterly* 29 (Winter 1989), 597.
[274] Ibid., 599.
[275] Faculty Meeting Minutes, Cherokee Heritage Center, Tahlequah, Oklahoma.
[276] Faculty Meeting Minutes, 29 November 1901, Cherokee Heritage Center, Tahlequah, Oklahoma.
[277] Faculty Meeting Minutes, 14 February 1905, Cherokee Heritage Center, Tahlequah, Oklahoma.
[278] *Cherokee Advocate*, 21 March 1877.

Wetzel Tinnin, "demerits prevented one's participation in public affairs such as attending ball games, monthly receptions, shopping trips or eating downtown with friends."[279] Therefore, administrators at federal Indian schools employed different methods of punishment from those at the Cherokee Male Seminary.

Evidence suggests that some students disapproved of corporal punishment. For example, the son of Lieutenant Colonel Oliver Hazard Perry Brewer, Jr. spoke out against the beating of a younger student by the principal and was expelled two months before his graduation. This student went on to graduate from the University of Arkansas and became a Cherokee senator and school board member.[280]

One of the principle goals of the seminary was the assimilation of the tribe, which entailed instilling Anglo-American values in Cherokee youth.[281] Most documents related to the seminary, from school catalogues to articles written about the seminary in the local newspaper, indicated that several Cherokees accepted commonly-held Victorian concepts of gender and masculinity. Beliefs about gender difference and Male superiority were markedly different from views of gender in traditional Cherokee society. As ethnohistorian Theda Perdue has explained, prior to extensive contact with whites, Cherokees subscribed to an egalitarian ethic in which the responsibilities of men and women were valued equally.[282] Implicit in the Male seminarians' statements regarding gender difference, however, was the belief that a thirst for education defined one as

[279] Tinnen, "The Cherokee Seminaries," 66.
[280] Starr, *History of the Cherokee Indians*, 14.
[281] Devon Mihesuah, "'Out of the Graves of Polluted Debauches': The Boys at the Cherokee Male Seminary, *American Indian Quarterly* 15(Autumn 1991), 504.
[282] Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700-1835* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), 26-37.

masculine and, therefore, as valuable. Those who did not seek an education were seen as less valuable because they were less masculine.

Gender historians define valuing masculinity over femininity as gender ranking and explain that gender ranking is one means of preserving social, economic, and political power.[283] These concepts were apparent in the written materials produced at the Cherokee Male seminary. For example, the seminary catalogue stated that the purpose of the daily military drills was "not only to promote a knowledge of military science, but to cultivate a manly bearing."[284] The *Sequoyah Memorial*, the school newspaper edited by the students themselves, featured several articles glorifying popular concepts of manliness and masculinity. One student wrote "[education] is worthy of our sincerest veneration, our most manly actions."[285] Another student applauded Cherokees for their "energetic and manly spirit."[286] Referring to the benefits of education, future principle chief Joel B. Mayes noted "let us touch those strings of feeling whose melodious music vibrates from the very bottom of our simple, yet manly, hearts."[287] Concepts of gender ranking are internalized and perpetuated by members of the society. In this case, some Male seminarians internalized the view that manliness was superior to womanliness.

These notions of gender reflected the views of the editors of the Cherokee newspapers, *The Cherokee Advocate* and the *Indian Arrow*. Indeed, many of these newspapers' editors were Male seminary alumni. An article featuring tips on how

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[283] Judith Lorber, "The Social Construction of Gender," in *Women's Voices, Feminist Visions: Classic and Contemporary Readings*, Susan Shaw and Janet Lee, eds, 4th ed. (New York: McGraw Hill, 2009), 142-145.

[284] *Catalogue of the Cherokee National Male Seminary, 1884*, 37.

[285] *The Sequoyah Memorial*, 2 August 1855.

[286] Ibid.

[287] Ibid.

husbands should treat their wives stated that "the superiority of man has always been acknowledged, but a husband should have manly understanding enough not to assert it over his wife."[288] The article went on to warn husbands that they should rule their homes with gentle authority.[289] Another article in the *Cherokee Advocate* advised young women on how to become suitable wives:

> men who are worth having want women for wives. A bundle of gew-gaws, bound with a string of flags and quavers, sprinkled with cologne and set in a carmine saucer—this is no help for a man who expects to raise a family of boys on bread and meat. The piano and lace frames are good in their places, and so are the frills and tinsels; but you cannot make dinner of the former; nor a blanket of the latter . . . both are necessary to domestic happiness. Render yourself worth catching and you will not need a shrewd mother or brother to help you find a market.[290]

Similarly, another article declared that a "woman's duty is the happiness of her companion" and prompted wives to "arrange your household to suit his tastes and wants."[291] Clearly, late-nineteenth-century American notions of power and dependency between husbands (heads of households) and their wives and children (dependents) were evident in Cherokee society. However, the editors of the *Cherokee Advocate* were acculturated mixed-bloods (such as Principle Chief William Potter Ross, his brother Daniel H. Ross, and Cherokee Senator John Lynch Adair), and their views may not have represented the views of the majority of Cherokees. Like the *Sequoyah Memorial*, the *Cherokee Advocate* indicated that, generally speaking, Cherokees of mixed ancestry

[288] *The Cherokee Advocate*, 26 October 1881.
[289] Ibid.
[290] *The Cherokee Advocate*, 29 April 1876.
[291] *The Indian Arrow*, 7 February 1889.

adopted late-nineteenth-century Anglo-American conceptions of gender roles.[292] These comments also suggest that many students in the seminary proper were part of the segment of the Cherokee populace who were culturally mainstream American. They wore the latest fashion trends, read popular books and magazines, listened to popular music, owned pianos and clocks (a luxury in the late nineteenth century), debated current science and politics, considered social Darwinism, and accepted Victorian standards of morality and gender roles. It is, therefore, not surprising that some seminary students ranked masculinity over femininity.

Gender ranking was also evident in the school's courses and library. The catalogue's description of history courses states, "history of the United States is studied throughout the fourth year. Characters of prominent men are studied from library books. Essays on leading topics and prominent men are required."[293] Seminary students had to look no farther than the school library to reinforce their notions of masculinity. Despite books such as Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*, the vast majority of volumes in every genre were written by men and about men. Novels by Charles Dickens, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Charles Lever, among others, lined the shelves in the fiction section, while the history section featured biographies of mostly European and Anglo-American men, such as Charles II of England, William the Conqueror, Alexander Hamilton, John Marshall, Joseph Bonaparte, Nero, Daniel Webster, and Patrick Henry. With the

[292] Oklahoma Historical Society, *Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*, "Cherokee Advocate," digital:library.okstate.edu/encyclopedia/entries/c/CH016.html.
[293] *Catalogue of the Cherokee National Male Seminary: 1896*, 4.

exceptions of Isabella, Madame Roland, Josephine, Mary Queen of Scots, Cleopatra, and Queen Elizabeth, all 106 history books in the library dealt with men.[294]

The collections in the library are just one example of how John Ross's vision for the seminary was maintained in these years. He wanted the Male Seminary to be a replica of top-tier high schools in the states. Boarding schools in the Northeast, after which the Male Seminary was modeled, also relied heavily upon male-centered textbooks and topics. At the Boston Public Latin School library, in addition to the countless texts on Latin authors, Latin grammar, Latin dictionaries, Latin phrase books, Greek readers, Greek authors, and Greek dictionaries, nearly all of the history books were about notable western and Anglo-American men, such as Charles XII and Andrew Jackson.[295]

While in the later years, the Male Seminary was a much more Cherokee-centered school, there was still a strong ethnocentric emphasis in both the seminary proper and in the Preparatory Department. While the school's reform may have provided full-bloods with greater access to a quality education, several aspects of the school reflected the ethnocentric bent of the early years. Pupils in both studied the history of the United States throughout their fourth year, but no mention was made of Native American or Cherokee history. Perhaps, administrators assumed that students, by virtue of their tribal membership, had a prior familiarity with Cherokee history. Classes in Cherokee history, traditions, or culture were not offered at the seminary.[296]

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[294] Ibid.

[295] Pauline Holmes, *A Tercentenary History of the Boston Public Latin School, 1635-1935* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1935), 316-357.

[296] *Cherokee National Male Seminary Catalogue: 1889*, 6.

The library's collection reflected the school's emphasis on assimilation. Of the forty-three books on religion and philosophy none treated traditional Cherokee religion. With the exception of the Koran and a two-volume work on "the ten great religions," the religious section only featured books on Christianity, including C.S. Lewis's *Problems of Life and Mind* and J. Davis's *History of the Welsh Baptists.* Similarly, most of the historical books dealt with famous and powerful western and Anglo-American Males, such as Julius Caesar, Hernán Cortés, Louis XIV, Thomas Jefferson, and George Washington; none covered notable American Indian figures.[297] In the literature section, all of the collections of essays were written by white European and American men. The only exception to the Eurocentric collections was in the "Miscellaneous" section, which included "Treaties between the United States and the Cherokee Nation," four copies of *The Constitution and Laws of the Cherokee Nation*, and "Laws, the Cherokee Nation."[298]

At the Male Seminary, the process of assimilation also included learning Victorian concepts of race and racial difference. Many mixed-blood Cherokees had long accepted racist views commonly held by white Americans. The introduction of plantation slavery to Cherokee culture was accompanied by the racist paradigm that justified the institution. Like white slave owners in the antebellum South, Cherokee masters accepted the idea of the "inferiority" of the black race to justify their enslavement. The Cherokees held more slaves than any other tribe and slavery among the Cherokee followed the pattern of slavery in the white South. For example, according to anthropologist Circe Sturm, "the growing numbers of black-Cherokee offspring are

[297] Ibid.,33-43.
[298] Ibid.

evidence of biological exchange between black slaves and their Cherokee masters."[299] Furthermore, at least two slave revolts, one in 1842 and the other in 1846, prompted the ruling Cherokees to create a series of harsh slave codes identical to those found in southern states. The concept of racial superiority was one way that Cherokees distinguished themselves not only from blacks but also from other tribes. The Cherokee Constitution granted suffrage to all free Male citizens, "excepting negroes and descendants of white and Indian men by negro women who may have been set free."[300] Although, as part of the 1866 treaty with the United States government, the Council granted former slaves citizenship, they did not obtain equal rights in Indian Territory. Their children attended inadequate schools; just like in the South, schools for black children lacked adequate supplies and competent teachers.[301]

Victorian concepts of racial difference were prevalent at the seminary. The science of the day held that empirical evidence demonstrated the superiority of the white race. This commonly-held scientific racism was based largely on the works of Joseph Arthur, Comte de Gobineau, who put forth a systematic explanation of the superiority and inferiority of the world's races. Based on his pseudo-scientific evidence, Gobineau argued that there were three races, white, yellow, and black, and that white was demonstrably the "superior" race. White Americans used this scientific theory to justify segregation in the South and the denationalization of American Indians.[302] In the Male seminary, students taking human physiology used a textbook by John William Draper,

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[299] Circe Sturm, *Blood Politics: Race, Culture, and Identity in the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), 69.

[300] *The Constitution and Laws of the Cherokee Nation* (Washington, D.C.: Gales and Seaton, 1840), 7.

[301] William McLoughlin, *After the Trail of Tears: The Cherokees Struggle for Sovereignty, 1839-1880* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 253.

[302] Ibid., 376-380.

whose work mirrored that of Gobineau. Draper analyzed skull sizes and other physiological features to explain the "inferiority" of the "Negro" race, whose features, he argued, more closely resembled those of chimpanzees and orangutans.[303] Learning physiology from this text doubtless perpetuated racial prejudice among seminary proper students. This pseudoscience cultivated feelings of racial inferiority among American Indians and prompted many Cherokees of mixed-ancestry to differentiate themselves from full-blood tribal members. Many Cherokees accepted and used scientific racism to understand and explain racial differences in their Nation.[304]

Mainstream American notions of free enterprise and personal wealth were also were emphasized. The principles of capitalism, an economic system which at its core promotes the personal accumulation of wealth, stood in stark contrast to traditional Cherokee principles of communalism. Students at the Male Seminary were advised that "industry, self-reliance, faith and honesty . . . is the surest road to wealth and high position."[305] The National Board of Education reported that "Cherokees need a diversity of pursuits, for both male and female, the healthy development of self-reliance, and the ability to work out their own fortunes and self support with their own hands and brains."[306] For students at the seminary proper, traditional concepts of pooling resources to support all Cherokees gave way to private ownership and individual promotion.

Religious training at the seminary also served as an example of how the original mission of assimilation was maintained. Although the institution was non-sectarian,

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[303] John William Draper, *Human Physiology* (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1858), 582.

[304] Sturm, *Blood Politics*, 68-71.

[305] *Cherokee Advocate*, 26 October 1881.

[306] *Cherokee National Annual Report of the Board of Education: 1888*, 8.

chapel and Sunday service attendance was mandatory for all students. According to the school catalogue, "the institution, being national in its character, is entirely non-sectarian, yet is well provided with devotional services and Sabbath school facilities."[307] Ministers from various local churches alternated officiating at the Sunday services. In addition, a student-run Christian society held prayer meetings every day and Reverend T.M. Rights conducted religious services every Friday evening.[308] Protestant Christianity was a crucial component of mainstream American culture. Mandatory chapel and Sunday worship attendance increased the school's ability to assimilate Cherokee youth successfully.

Christianity had a strong presence of the Male seminary. Students attended mandatory chapel services, prayer meetings, and Sunday worship services. Thus, it is not surprising that some graduates chose careers in the ministry. For example, Henry Smith, who graduated from the Male seminary in 1886, was ordained a minister in Ardmore in 1900. Shortly thereafter, he became the priest at the Episcopal Church; he was the only American Indian priest in Indian Territory.[309]

Male Seminary teachers and principals were committed to maintaining academic excellence and providing moral guidance to students. According to female seminary alum, Ida Wetzel Tinnin, both the Male and female seminary teachers "were dedicated to the cause of education. Their lives were orderly and based on spiritual foundations."[310] Leonard M. Logan served as superintendent of the Male seminary from 1900 to 1904.

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[307] *Cherokee National Male Seminary Catalogue: 1885*, 15.
[308] Ibid., 16.
[309] Florence Caleb Smith, interview with Frank Still, date unknown, Indian-Pioneer Papers, University of Oklahoma.
[310] Tinnen, "The Cherokee Seminaries," 66.

According to one seminary alum, Logan "had love, respect, and almost a reverence of every student" and worked "to prepare the students for a citizenship in which they could establish homes, rear good families, and find a place of service in their community, state, and nation."[311]

Temperance ranked high among the personal virtues prized in the Victorian era, and the board of education took great care to limit students' exposure to intoxicating liquors. In 1902, when reports began circulating of the school steward's alleged drunkenness, the superintendent of schools in Indian Territory, John Downing Benedict, called for an immediate investigation. By 1902, the Cherokee public school system had been taken over by the Department of the Interior, thus the superintendent was not a Cherokee citizen but a federal employee appointed to the position. Benedict was the first non-citizen to serve as superintendent of the Cherokee public schools. In a letter to U.S. Indian Inspector, George Wright, Benedict called for an investigation of J.R. Garret, Steward of the Male Seminary. According to Benedict, "Mr. Garrett has been repeatedly drunk during the past year . . . and it seems to me that we ought to insist that all persons employed in and about the seminaries should be of exemplary character and habits."[312]

Seminary professor R.L. Mitchell and the school nurse, Mrs. Cooper, came to Garrett's defense. Cooper affirmed, "I do not think he was very drunk."[313] In a sworn statement, Professor Mitchell explained that "Mr. Garrett came into my room and said he was feeling badly and laid down and [his] bed which was in my room. He complained of

[311] Ibid.
[312] John Downing Benedict, letter to George Wright, 15 March 1902.
[313] Mrs. Cooper's Sworn Testimony, 24 February 1902.

having pain in his side and said that he thought he was threatened with pneumonia . . . [he] was not intoxicated at that time."[314]

Despite these testimonies, other statements suggested Garrett had been drinking intoxicating liquor while on school grounds. According to the president of the board of education, D.E. Ward, Garrett did "lay up in a teacher's room drunk for three or four days."[315] In March, Garrett submitted his resignation to Principal Chief Thomas Buffington, stating , "I wish by this method to tender to you my resignation as Steward of the Male Seminary to take affect when it suits your pleasure to appoint my Successor or upon June 30, 1902 . . . I assure you that I am truly grateful for the kindly consideration you have shown me."[316] Clearly, neither the Department of the Interior nor the Board of Education tolerated drunkenness among seminary staff.

In addition to temperance, some seminary teachers also viewed the dissemination of Christian principles as vital to the success of the institution. For example, Dr. Almon Bacone, an educator and Baptist minister from New York, taught at the seminary in the 1870s. He believed that American Indian youth "could receive the best training possible in a Christian school."[317] Therefore, he resigned as principal teacher at the seminary to establish a Baptist Academy in Tahlequah, which eventually became Bacone Indian University in Muskogee.[318]

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[314] Professor R.L. Mitchell's Sworn Testimony, 8 February 1902.
[315] D.E. Ward's Sworn Testimony, 24 February 1902.
[316] J.R. Garrett, letter to Thomas Buffington, 22 March 1902.
[317] Ella Robinson, "Baptist Academy: Tahlequah, Indian Territory," Indian-Pioneer Papers, 27 July 1937.
[318] Ibid.

Team sports, especially football, are a "ritualized expression of American identity."[319] Teaching football to Native American students was one way to communicate, affirm, and extend American values. Participating in sports was also a way to equalize students who were from different backgrounds and had different educational abilities. Both full-blood and mixed-blood students played on the Cherokee National Male Seminary baseball and football teams. According to Devon Mihesuah, the Cherokee National Male Seminary football and baseball teams won most of their games. The football team typically defeated rival teams in Indian Territory, surrounding states, and they even played the University of Arkansas.[320] One seminary graduate, Joe Robinson, was such a good baseball player that after his graduation in 1909 he became a professional baseball player. He played professional ball in Hawaii for twenty one years.[321]

In an interview, Coach John Hough, an Englishman from Liverpool, reported that, prior to his arrival in 1888, the seminary had no organized sports. Describing the situation, Hough explained that "after the school hours the boys had nothing to do but sit around in groups or go to their rooms. As they were all accustomed to a free outdoor life, that mode of living did not agree with them."[322] Hough decided to create a football team; this became the first football team at the seminary (football teams had already been organized at Bacone Indian University and Kendall College, both in Muskogee). Hough was the first football coach. According to Hough, the idea appealed strongly to the boys

[319] Andrew C. Billings, Michael L. Butterworth, and Paul D. Truman, *Communication and Sport: Surveying the Field* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 2012), 7.
[320] Mihesuah, "The Boys of the Cherokee Male Seminary," 512.
[321] Joe Robinson Interview, Indian-Pioneer Papers.
[322] Interview with John Hough, Indian-Pioneer Papers, 28 October 1937.

as the Indians, too, are fond of sports."[323] Hough described the team's first game against Kendall College, in which they were matched up against "big husky Indian fellows, averaging 175 pounds in weight," who had no chance against the "slender, active Cherokee boys with an average of 140 pounds."[324] According to Hough, the Male seminary team was never defeated. He goes on to explain:

> Our boys wore red blankets as they came on the field and that was a picturesque sight which seemed to inspire the crowd as well as the boys. All the signals were given in Cherokee, which was quite an advantage as the opposing team of Creek boys could not pick them up. The boys possessed qualities I have never seen in Eastern boys. When they were injured you never knew it as the never stopped or made a complaint and we never knew who was hurt until after the game.[325]

Some of the best players included George Cox, who graduated in 1896, Merritt Eton, who graduated in 1899, Clint Lipe, who graduated in 1900, Walter Smith, who graduated in 1901 and became Country Commissioner of Muskogee County, and Larkin Sevenstar and Lick Paris, both of whom were regularly in trouble at the seminary.[326]

[323] Ibid.
[324] Ibid.
[325] Ibid.
[326] Ibid; CNMS Faculty Meeting Minutes.

Figure 3. Cherokee National Male Seminary Baseball Team, Year Unknown

Courtesy of the Cherokee Heritage Center, Tahlequah, Oklahoma.

Figure 4. Cherokee National Male Seminary Baseball Team, Year Unknown

Courtesy of the Cherokee Heritage Center, Tahlequah, Oklahoma

Figure 5. Cherokee National Male Seminary Football Team, 1901

Courtesy of the Cherokee Heritage Center, Tahlequah, Oklahoma

All students at the Male Seminary, despite grade level, faced grueling daily schedules. Like off-reservation boarding schools of the late nineteenth century, students at the Male Seminary endured a stringent daily schedule that allotted 7.75 hours for exercise and detail (cleaning), 8 hours for classes, and 8.25 hours for sleep. Each minute of the students' lives was planned. According to the school's daily program, students were to wake up at 5:30 am, study from 6:00 to 7:00, have breakfast and clean from 7:00 to 8:30, attend chapel from 8:30 to 9:00, attend classes from 9:00 to noon, break for lunch from noon to 2:00 pm, attend afternoon classes from 2:00 to 4:00, participate in "military

drill" from 4:15 to 4:45, have dinner at 5:00, study from 6:45 to 8:45, and bed down at 9:15.[327]

Figure 6. Primary students in Military Uniforms

Courtesy of the Cherokee Heritage Center, Tahlequah, Oklahoma

Every student was required to participate in military drills. The students received instructions on methods of company, battalions and skirmish drills. These drills, in addition to cultivating a manly bearing, were meant to "engender habits of promptness and obedience, which add materially to the discipline of the institution, and render it in a measure self-controlling."[328] The students drilled twice a week, and those who displayed

[327] *Cherokee National Male Seminary Catalogue: 1884*, 11.
[328] *Cherokee National Male Seminary Catalogue: 1886*, 18.

the most "soldierly bearing" received awards.[329] The drills were the seminary's way of keeping students active and in good health.

One commonality between the Male Seminary and other tribal and federal boarding schools was the pervasiveness of pernicious and widespread disease. For example, at Carlisle, students suffered from periodic influenza, trachoma, and tuberculosis outbreaks.[330] When students became sick, they reported to the medical superintendent. As of 1884, the Cherokee constitution stipulated that "it shall be the duty of the superintendent, as a physician, to properly attend to the inmates of the Male and Female High Schools, and to administer to them without unnecessary delay . . . such medical skill and attention as their condition may require, and to report to the National Council in each year, the general condition, as to the health, etc., of the inmates of said institutions, with such advice and recommendations as he may deem proper."[331] In 1876, sickness swept through the school and prompted many students to return home. The *Cherokee Advocate* reported that "there is much sickness at the Male Seminary."[332] Five days later, the newspaper explained that "sickness still continues at the Male Seminary. The families of the teachers, messrs Thompson and Fields have been attacked severely."[333] The following year, in February, the first case of measles appeared at the female seminary. By April, according to the medical superintendent, sixty-seven girls had contracted measles, two had pneumonia, one had congestion of the brain and spine, and four had died from sickness. Measles had not yet appeared at the Male Seminary and the medical superintendent recorded that all male students were healthy. Within one

[329] *Cherokee National Male Seminary Catalogue: 1884*, 37.
[330] Mary Stout, *Native American Boarding Schools*, 40.
[331] *Cherokee National Male Seminary: 1889*, 15.
[332] *Cherokee Advocate*, 5 June 1876.
[333] Ibid., 10 June 1876.

month, however, the headline in the *Cherokee Advocate* read "Measles! Measles!! Measles!!! At the Male Seminary—57 cases."[334] By July, half of the student body had contracted the measles and several students had died.[335] In 1887, when another outbreak of measles occurred, the school board recommended the construction of a separate building for the disease-afflicted students.[336]

All students, regardless of grade level, maintained a healthy and diverse diet, which included apples, milk, rice, eggs, leafy greens, corn, peas, crackers, tomatoes, raisins, oats, grapes, and peaches.[337] Dozens of grocery receipts indicate that there was no shortage of protein, in the form of salmon, beans, sausage, ham, bacon, milk, and eggs.[338] This evidence suggests that Cherokees at the Male Seminary enjoyed a healthy diet and were exposed to plenty of exercise (in the form of military drills and, for the indigent students, manual labor).

Students at the Male Seminary had varied experiences based on their age, ethnicity, and level of education. Whereas some students viewed the seminary education as a great virtue, others rejected the school and its goals of assimilation. For example, according to Betty Byfield, her grandfather and seminary graduate, George Robbins believed that "it was such a privilege to go to that academy. He loved to learn. He loved to write. He had the most beautiful handwriting. I know he learned a lot somewhere. He was one of those men who couldn't learn enough. He thirsted for knowledge."[339] On the

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[334] Ibid., 11 May 1877.
[335] Ibid.
[336] *Cherokee Nation Annual Board of Education Report*, 16.
[337] Male Seminary receipts, Cherokee National Records, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.
[338] Ibid.
[339] *Tahlequah Daily Press*, 19 March 2010.

other hand, school records show that between 1899 and 1906, the sixty-six boys who ran away rejected the education provided by the seminary. Furthermore, while some older full-blood students likely experienced feelings of ostracism because of lack of formal education, others found camaraderie by playing on the school's football or baseball teams. This evidence suggests that students' experiences at the Male seminary were both positive and negative. The diversity of male seminarians' experiences continued after they left the seminary to pursue their careers.

CHAPTER 5: SEMINARY GRADUATES SERVE THE CHEROKEE NATION AND WORK TO MAINTAIN TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY

"The Cherokee Nation ceased to exist after statehood and all those people who went to the seminaries lost everything. We lost our nation. We lost our land. We lost our capitol." —Deputy Chief Joe Grayson[340]

"Both schools were a credit to the Cherokee Nation, producing outstanding students and leaders in the Cherokee Nation as well as the United States as a whole." – C.W. West[341]

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the Cherokees faced new and powerful threats to tribal sovereignty. White traders and businesspeople married Cherokees to obtain the rights to use common land for farming or ranching, peddled whiskey in Cherokee Territory, and went back and forth across the borders between Indian Territory and Arkansas stealing timber or salt to sell in border towns. Many white settlers took up farming as squatters on Cherokee land, or what they considered "vacant" land. By the 1870s, external forces bearing down upon the tribe were as powerful as they had been in the period before removal. The pressure from homesteaders, cattle ranchers,

[340] Joe Grayson, *Cherokee Phoenix*, http://www.cherokeephoenix.org/18442/Article.aspx.
[341] C. W. West, *Tahlequah and the Cherokee Nation* (Muskogee: Muskogee Publishing Company, 1978), 67.

and railroad companies to obtain large tracts of land in Indian Territory, combined with a new federal Indian policy promoting assimilation, denationalization, and dividing land in severalty created a situation in which the tribe became increasingly reliant upon well-educated, professional Cherokees to preserve tribal self-determination.[342]

The tribal leaders who created and maintained the seminaries realized that any chance for sovereignty depended upon the professional acumen of future generations. Some of the seminary's graduates attended a university and returned to Indian Territory as the Nation's leading politicians, businessmen, doctors, and lawyers. The stories of these seminary alumni illustrate just how successful the school was at fulfilling what many viewed as a pressing social and political need. [343]

Thousands of Cherokee boys and young men attended the seminary between 1850 and 1910. Approximately two hundred graduated. Local newspapers and oral histories tell us about some of the graduates' lives, including their career paths and stances on important governmental policies. This evidence, however, is limited to the more illustrious Cherokees. But even within this relatively small sample of graduates, there is evidence of diversity. There was diversity in the ways that they served their communities. Some helped Cherokee veterans attain their benefits and payments from the federal government; others influenced governmental policies to protect Cherokee interests. There was also diversity in their attitudes toward the best direction for the tribe. Some believed that the allotment would provide individual Cherokees with economic

[342] Grace Steele Woodward, *The Cherokees* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), 314; William McLoughlin, *After the Trail of Tears: The Cherokees' Struggle for Sovereignty, 1839-1880* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 255-256.

[343] Devon Mihesuah, "'Out of the Graves of Polluted Debaches': The Boys of the Cherokee Male Seminary," *American Indian Quarterly* 15 (Autumn 1991), 503; Woodward, *The Cherokees*, 314.

self-sufficiency, while others predicted that unscrupulous speculators would seize the opportunity to pay well-below value for the plots of land. Another fear was that allotment would strip the tribe of its most powerful tool in maintaining independence—the communal ownership of land. Furthermore, some graduates embraced assimilation and reaped the benefits of market capitalism; others were not as inclined to discard of traditional culture. In other words, the seminary did not produce a uniform product. However, the school did yield a group of educated men who served their Nation in a variety of ways.

One of the first goals of the seminary was to produce Cherokee educators who could teach in the Cherokee public school system, including at the seminaries. As stated in chapter Two, John Ross believed that generating quality teachers for the Cherokee public schools was essential to the future success in the tribe, both in terms of creating well-educated leaders of the Nation who could legally combat the federal government as well as creating educated citizens better able to survive and compete in an increasingly white world. In both the early and later years, seminary administrators and faculty designed courses specifically to train young men as educators. Indeed, teaching methods was a required course for all upper classman. The emphasis on education yielded positive results. Many of the school's graduates succeeded in college and became teachers when they returned home. Some graduates taught in local elementary schools for full-blood children. Others became Male seminary teachers, replacing the white, northeastern faculty of the early years. In 1857, John Ross declared that the Cherokee public schools were

> Generally taught by native teachers who were educated at the high schools, and who, while obtaining remunerative employment, are impelled to zeal and fidelity in this work by feelings of kindred association and of patriotic gratitude. Having been fully educated themselves by the Nation, these teachers, Male and feMale, are shedding light upon the minds of their youthful brothers and sisters, and are thus repaying the debt they owe in services above mere pecuniary considerations.[344]

In an attempt to strengthen the tribe's control over its own affairs, the Keetoowah-controlled Council passed a law giving preference to Cherokee citizens who applied for teaching positions in the public schools.[345] Many of these teachers were Male seminary alumni. According to the school catalogue, "in view of the fact that a large number of our graduates take positions as teachers in the Primary schools of the Nation, a course will be given in methods of teaching, including school management. Normal classes in reading, arithmetic and language, will be organized."[346] Seminary instructors also taught methods for teaching kindergarten, a relatively new addition to the public school system in the United States.[347]

Several seminary graduates returned to their alma mater as teachers. For example, Jack Brown, who graduated in 1907, was one of the seminary's teachers in 1910. According to his daughter, Marion Brown Hagerstrand, "he [Brown] did teach there a little while after he graduated. They had people who did that back then."[348]

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[344] John Ross, Report of the Secretary of the Interior, no. 90, 5 October 1857.

[345] *Annual Report of the Board of Education: 1887*, 19, University Archives, John Vaughan Library, Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, Oklahoma.

[346] *Cherokee Nation Male Seminary Catalogue: 1889*, 11, University Archives, John Vaughan Library, Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, Oklahoma.

[347] Ibid.

[348] Marion Brown Hagerstrand, *Tahlequah Daily Press*, 19 March 2010.

Brown, like many Cherokees, was committed to education, and even may have sold his allotment "in order to be able to go to school."[349]

Spencer Stephens, who graduated in 1856, also taught at the Male Seminary. Spencer was raised on a farm near Tahlequah and spent much of his boyhood with future-Principal Chief Dennis Bushyhead. Spencer attended Cherokee public schools and, later, the Male seminary. Shortly after graduation, he enlisted and fought for the Union Army during the Civil War. After the war, Spencer got married (his wife graduated valedictorian from the female seminary), and he became a teacher at the Male seminary and at the Cherokee orphan asylum. He eventually earned the position of Superintendent of all Cherokee schools, serving from 1867 to 1869. He also served as a member of the National Board of Education. In 1882, he taught courses at the Teachers' Institute in Tahlequah, where future teachers learned teaching methods along with how to teach Cherokee-speaking children English. His children attended Cherokee public schools, and two of them also became teachers. Spencer's life reflects the intentions of tribal leaders; he received a quality education in Cherokee Territory and used his education for the betterment of the entire tribe.[350]

Another seminary graduate who taught in Cherokee public schools was Samuel McGhee, who graduated in 1891. McGhee was born in 1872 in a town his father founded, Dodge, Indian Territory. Later, he moved back to Dodge and taught at a public elementary school at Cave Springs. Furthermore, after moving to Little Timber Hill,

[349] Ibid.

[350] Spencer Seago Stephens, interview by Mary J. Stockton, 14 July 1937, Indian-Pioneer Papers, University of Oklahoma; C.W. "Dub" West, *Tahlequah and the Cherokee Nation* (Muskogee: Muskogee Publishing Company, 1978), 67.

McGhee established the McGhee Cherokee National School, which functioned as both a school and a church.[351]

Seminary alumnus William Wirt Hastings is another example of a seminary graduate who became an educator. Hastings was born in Arkansas in 1866. While attending the Male Seminary, the local newspaper reported that he "received a grade of 100 in all his subjects."[352] The paper also noted that Hastings was the lawn tennis champion at the school. After graduating from the Male Seminary in 1884, Hastings taught in the Cherokee public schools for two years and then earned his law degree from Vanderbilt University. In 1890, he was appointed a member of the Cherokee board of education, and that same year he became the superintendent of Cherokee public schools.[353]

One of Hasting's most beloved projects was the Sequoyah Orphan's Training School. Founded in 1871, the orphan school was originally housed in the Male Seminary building. When the seminary reopened, however, the orphan school had to find a new building, which eventually burned down. When Hastings was elected to the United States Congress, he appropriated funding ($25,000) for a tract of land and a new building for the school. His involvement in the maintenance of the orphan school generated positive results. By 1925, the school had "725 acres of land, four dormitories, school

[351] Belle McGhee, Interview with Nannie Lee Burns, 28 May 1937, Indian-Pioneer Papers, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma.

[352] West, *Tahlequah and the Cherokee Nation*, 69.

[353] Todd Kosmerick, "William Wirt Hastings," in *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*, http://digital.library.okstate.edu/encyclopedia/entries/h/ha051.html, Oklahoma Historical Society; W.W. Hastings, "Information taken from Form filled out by W.W. Hastings," 15 January 1937, Indian-Pioneer Papers, University of Oklahoma.

buildings, a $15,000 hospital, a dining hall, cottages for employees, a home economics building, ice plant, barns, power plants and a gymnasium."[354]

Graduating in the same class as William Wirt Hastings, Jeff Thompson (J.T.) Parks also served the Nation as an educator. Born in 1862 in the Delaware District of the Cherokee Nation, Parks lived through the Civil War and witnessed federal soldiers burning his family's house and property. He attended elementary schools in Missouri and, later, Cave Springs school in present-day Bunch, Oklahoma and the Male Seminary, where he was president of the Cherokee Debating Society. After graduating from the Male Seminary in 1884, Parks taught at an elementary school in a full-blood Indian community, where he said he ate mostly deer and turkey. He also taught at Honey Creek and Olympus schools, both of which are near present-day Grove. Parks eventually returned to the Male Seminary, serving as a teacher for six years.[355] In an interview, Parks stated that he devoted his life to ensuring that "the Cherokee people [were] properly protected."[356] After teaching at the seminary for six years, Parks began practicing law in the Cherokee Courts in 1890 and in the United States Courts in 1896. Parks went on to serve the nation in a variety of public office positions, including district clerk of Tahlequah district, President of the Cherokee Board of Education (1898-99), Superintendent of the Cherokee Orphan Asylum (1904-05), Mayor of Tahlequah (1913-15), County Judge of Cherokee County, and District Judge of the First Judicial District of the state. His lifetime of service to the Cherokee Nation reflect the goals of the seminary

[354] *The Muskogee Times Democrat*, 8 April 1934, Grant Foreman Collection, Manuscripts, Box 18, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[355] Jeff Thompson Parks, interview by Wylie Thornton, 6 September 1937, Indian-Pioneer Papers, University of Oklahoma.

[356] Ibid.

and its creator. Similar to Chief John Ross, Parks believed that "education is the salvation of these [Cherokee] Indians."[357]

Principal Chief Joel B. Mayes was another seminary graduate who went into education. Born in Georgia in 1833, Joel B. Mayes came with his family to Indian Territory when he was five years old. In 1856, Mayes was among one of the first graduating classes at the Male Seminary. Like many other seminary graduates, Mayes began teaching at a Cherokee elementary school immediately after graduation. Also similar to other seminary students, when news of the Civil War reached Indian Territory, Mayes enlisted and fought for the Confederate Army. After the war, Mayes was appointed to several local political positions before making the decision to run for the office of chief.[358]

John West is another example of a former seminary student who passed on his education to future generations. He and his wife opened their home to Cherokee orphans, providing not only a home to these children but also an education. He kept in contact with all twelve of these children (six Cherokee, five white, and one African American) well into their adulthood. Without regard to race or ethnicity, West took in orphan children and used his education to further the education of others.[359]

One of the first issues seminary graduates faced was protecting Cherokee veterans' rights. The federal government was chronically late in issuing compensation to Cherokee Civil War veterans, if payments were made at all. At least two seminary

[357] Ibid.
[358] John Bartlett Meserve, "The Mayes," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 15 (March 1937), 56-65.
[359] John West, Interview with James Buchanan, 15 September 1937, Indian-Pioneer Papers, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma.

graduates, having witnessed firsthand the devastating impact of the Civil War on Cherokee society, spent years trying to secure benefits and payments for Cherokee veterans.

Joseph Absalom Scales, a former seminary student from the early years, was dedicated to helping Cherokee veterans. As a young child, Scales became an orphan when his mother died on the Trail of Tears. He was raised first by his grandmother, and after her death, his uncle. Scales attended Cherokee public elementary schools, the Ozark Institute (a high school for boys near Fayetteville), and the Male seminary. From 1856 to 1858, he served as sheriff and prosecuting attorney of the Canadian District of Indian Territory, and when news of southern secession reached the Cherokee Nation, Scales enlisted in the Confederate army under the command of General Stand Watie. Scales was eventually promoted to the rank of captain.[360]

Because the war left the Nation in ruins (buildings, homes, barns, crops, and livestock were destroyed), Scales worked toward rebuilding Indian Territory and helping Cherokee veterans. In 1865, Watie appointed Scales to meet with the interim chief, Lewis Downing, to reach a peace agreement between the two Cherokee factions (those in the Southern Party who sided with the Confederacy and those in the John Ross Party who allied with the Union). After several meetings, the members of the Southern Party were able to achieve readmission to citizenship in the Cherokee Nation along with a proclamation of amnesty. As part of a commission appointed to go to Washington,

[360] "Joseph Absalom Scales" by Carolyn Thomas Foreman, in the Grant Foreman Collection, Box 35, at the Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Scales met with congressmen in an attempt to secure payments and annuities due the Cherokees for their participation in the war.[361]

Principal Chief John Ross's nephew, Joshua Ross, is another example of a seminary graduate who assisted Cherokee veterans. Joshua Ross was among the seminary's first graduating class in 1855. In 1834, when he was only one-year-old, his parents relocated from Alabama to Indian Territory and established their home with other "old settlers." Joshua attended Cherokee public elementary schools, graduated from the seminary in 1855, and attended the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. After graduating from Emory and Henry College with high honors, he returned to the Nation and began his lifetime of service to the Cherokees. At the request of several seminary alumni, Joshua took a teaching position at the Male Seminary. After teaching there for several months, he resigned to assist Cherokee Civil War veterans in securing their pensions. Because he possessed the complete rolls of those Indians who had served in the war, and because he spoke fluent Cherokee, Creek, and English, he provided invaluable assistance to American Indian veterans.[362]

One of the goals of the seminary was to produce Cherokee political leaders who would protect tribal interests in dealing with the federal government. The sale of the Cherokee Outlet was one event in which seminary graduates turned politicians attempted to protect the tribe. Seminary alumnus, Joel B. Mayes, who was elected principal chief

[361] Ibid.

[362] In 1872, construction of the Katy Railroad, which cut straight through Indian Territory, established the town of Muskogee. Joshua and his family settled in the little village, where he opened the first grocery store in the area and planted the first orchard. According to his daughter, Joshua "gave liberally of this time and means to all public enterprises that tended to the up-building of the town and country," Susie Ross Martin, interview by Ella Robinson, 11 June 1937, Indian-Pioneer Papers, University of Oklahoma.

in 1887, faced federal interference in tribal affairs. He opposed the sale of the Cherokee Outlet, the western-most region of Cherokee territory coveted by speculators, railroad owners, white squatters (who were already living there illegally), and the federal government. According to ethnohistorian Rose Stremlau, Mayes "criticized the federal government for urging the National Council to sell the Cherokee Strip, the lands west of the Arkansas River, without putting the issue before the Cherokee people."[363] Mayes feared that the sale of the Outlet was unconstitutional and set a dangerous precedent.[364]

Mayes was under considerable pressure to sell the Outlet quickly. One newspaper editorial complained that "it would take five or ten years to do all Mayes thinks is necessary before the Strip can be sold. Bosh! You cannot hoodoo the people in that shape . . . . Congress will extend her laws over that country and ask within the courts to settle the matter."[365] Despite pressure from some Cherokees to sell the land quickly, Mayes resisted and worked to get the best possible price.[366] According to one local newspaper, "Chief Mayes was offered $50,000 cash to sign the bill and refused with politeness."[367]

Mayes and Joseph Scales, who was on the committee to dispose of the Cherokee Outlet, were in agreement on waiting for the best price. In a letter to the tribe, Scales wrote

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[363] Rose Stremlau, *Sustaining the Cherokee Family: Kinship and the Allotment of an Indigenous Nation* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2011), *274.*

[364] Ibid.

[365] Joel B. Mayes Biography, Federal Writers Project Collection, Box 21, Folder 12, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[366] Meserve, "The Mayes," 56-62.

[367] The Official Site of the Cherokee Nation, http://www.cherokee.org/AboutTheNation/History/Chiefs/24527/Information.aspx

> I favor the sale of the lands lying west of the Arkansas River, because they must be, in the near future, abandoned by the cattlemen; be left, unproductive, upon our hands, be open to inroads by the greedy and lawless hordes of Kansas and adjacent states. I believe, however, when we are offered a fair price, it will be wise to sell—especially, if in the arrangement we can strengthen our rights—not of soil, but political—east of the ninety-sixth degree. It ought not to be considered a party question—all should desire the fairest price possible, and endeavor to get it.[368]

Although the sale of the Outlet represented a crucial step towards the denationalization of the tribe, because the sale seemed inevitable, these two leaders worked to get the best deal possible for the tribe.

Moreover, Scales pushed for cooperation between Cherokees and whites, suggesting that the funds acquired from the sale of the Outlet be used to create schools where Cherokee children could learn English and white children Cherokee. He argued that future generation needed to be "brought nearer together in sympathy, language, and interest."[369] Thus, Scales believed that the Outlet funds contribute to the continuation of the education of Cherokees.

One of the most important issues facing Cherokee leaders in the late nineteenth century was the threat of allotment. Well-educated Cherokee lawyers were essential to blocking the various and relentless efforts on the part of the federal government, railroad companies, white settlers, and ranchers to wrest control of Cherokee land and resources. Less than ten years after Congress passed the 1887 Allotment Act (which initially did not apply to the Five Tribes), the Dawes Commission began making overtures to the Cherokees to divide their land in severalty and become American citizens. Most Cherokees, including some seminary graduates, resisted allotment. Some even refused to

[368] Joseph Scales, as quoted in Carolyn Thomas Foreman, "Joseph Absalom Scales," 17.
[369] Ibid., 18.

sign up on the rolls and receive their parcel of land. To fracture the tribal land base, they believed, negated the traditional philosophy that all Cherokees shared the Nation's resources. Moreover, many feared that allotment would ultimately weaken the Nation's political independence.

After the passage of the Dawes Act, graduates who had become legislators worked to define Cherokee citizenship in preparation for the seemingly inevitable allotment of Cherokee land. Issues of racial prejudice and ethnic identity influenced these deliberations. Although the 1887 Dawes Act did not apply to the tribes of Indian Territory, many viewed the allotment of Cherokee land as inevitable and contemplated how to achieve the best possible deal for the tribe. While the influx of intermarried whites and the sizable segment of freedmen vied for the rights and privileges of citizenship (which would eventually include a privately owned plot of land), Cherokee leaders worked to resolve who should be considered members of the tribe.

While intermarried whites and Cherokee freedman demanded to be included in the enrollment process, seminary alumnus William Hastings and other legislators worked to limit citizenship to what he called "pure" Cherokees, or those with Cherokee "blood." He appeared before the Freedman commission and prevented freedmen from joining enrollment.[370] According to a local newspaper, "Cherokee still boast of the 'purity' of their rolls, and give the major share of the credit to 'Bill' Hastings."[371] Similarly, Joseph Scales opposed defining freedmen as Cherokee citizens. Upon learning that the freedmen were likely to receive plots of Cherokee land as part of the allotment act, Scales argued,

[370] *The Muskogee Times Democrat*, 8 April 1934, Grant Foreman Collection, Box 18, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.
[371] Ibid.

"I do not believe the negro entitled to a cent of our money, or to a foot of land."[372] Seminary graduate and principal chief Samuel Mayes held similar ideas about racial difference. He recalled that his father owned between fifteen and twenty slaves, who he called "niggers."[373] It is possible that the former students' training at the Male seminary influenced their views on race. At the Male seminary, the process of assimilation involved instilling Victorian concepts of race and racial difference in the minds of Cherokee young men. As explained in the previous chapter, seminary students taking human physiology used a textbook by John William Draper, who analyzed skull sizes and other physiological features to explain the "inferiority" of the "Negro" race.[374] Learning physiology from this text likely perpetuated racial prejudice among seminary proper students and may have influenced their views of freedmen and citizenship.

Seminary graduates who became tribal leaders also protected the tribe against whites who attempted various schemes to access to tribal land and resources. For example, seminary graduate and chief Samuel Mayes encouraged the National Council to pass an act stating that intermarried whites were not entitled to any Cherokee land.[375] Moreover, he appointed a delegation to travel to Washington in an attempt to get governmental assistance in removing white intruders from Indian Territory.[376]

Similarly, seminary graduate William Presley Thompson also worked to define Cherokee citizenship. After graduating from the Male Seminary, Thompson became

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[372] Joseph Scales, as quoted in Carolyn Thomas Foreman, "Joseph Absalom Scales," 18.

[373] Emmett Starr Collection, Box 48, Samuel Houston Mayes Folder, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[374] John William Draper, *Human Physiology* (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1858), 582.

[375] Morris L. Wardell, *A Political History of the Cherokee Nation, 1838-1907* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1938), 323.

[376] West, *Tahlequah and the Cherokee Nation, 97.*

involved in tribal affairs and served on the Citizenship Committee of the Cherokee Nation (this committee was created to determine who qualified as a Cherokee citizen because so many white interlopers were attempting to attain citizenship and rights to land and other resources). It was this committee that prevented whites who intermarried into the tribe from receiving land allotments.[377]

Seminary graduate Joseph Scales also played an active role in determining Cherokee citizenship. He also served as a member of the Cherokee Citizenship Court. As such, he voted in 1886 to accept the "Munsee or Christian Indians into the Cherokee Nation and to confer upon them all the rights and privileges of Cherokee citizens."[378] The motive for accepting the Munsee (Delaware) Indians as Cherokee citizens, according to the Cherokee delegates, was "a sincere desire to do good to all civilized Indians."[379] In exchange, the Delaware agreed to pay four thousand dollars to the national fund within sixty days.

The Curtis Act of 1898 (the amendment to the Dawes Act, which included the Five Tribes in the allotment process) was one of the most obvious and egregious threats to tribal self-determination, and Cherokee lawyers fought persistently against it. While the Dawes Act did not apply to the Cherokees, the Curtis Act dissolved tribal courts completely, surveyed tribal land, and required that rolls be prepared to break up tribal lands and give the head of each family a 160-acre plot. In a final strike against tribal sovereignty, the Curtis Act stipulated that the federal government, through the Bureau of

[377] J. Berry King, "Judge William Pressley Thompson," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 19 (March 1941), 1-4.
[378] Carolyn Thomas Foreman, "Joseph Absalom Scales," 11.
[379] Ibid., 11.

Indian Affairs, would appoint Cherokee chiefs.[380] It essentially "brought a halt to tribal activities" and forced the Cherokees into negotiations with the Dawes Commission.[381]

In 1898, Male Seminary graduate and Principal Chief Samuel Mayes "approved an act authorizing the appointment of seven men to meet the Dawes Commission."[382] This act also condemned the Curtis Act as a violation of previous treaties between the United States and the Cherokee Nation. The issues discussed at the meeting included railroads, value of lands to be allotted, intoxicating liquors, white intruders, and freedmen.[383] On January 14, 1899, after days of deliberation, the delegates and commissioners reached an agreement, and Chief Mayes issued a date at which the tribe would vote for ratification. Despite opposition from many full-blood Cherokees, the tribe voted in favor of ratification.[384]

The Curtis Act authorized the Dawes Commission to begin making a roll of Cherokees with or without the assistance of the tribe, a blow to self-determination. The Dawes Commission made the Cherokee citizenship rolls of 1880 the basis of allotment. As Attorney-General for the Cherokee Nation, William Wirt Hastings travelled to Washington on numerous occasions representing the tribe, fighting against the allotment of Cherokee land. Hastings appeared before the Dawes Commission, making it clear that the Cherokees opposed allotment and did not recognize the commission's authority to determine Cherokee citizenship.[385] Hastings, along with other Cherokees, believed that it

[380] Meserve, "The Mayes," 62-65.
[381] Wardell, *A Political History of the Cherokee Nation*, 320.
[382] Ibid, 321.
[383] Ibid.
[384] Ibid., 322-323.
[385] West, *Tahlequah and the Cherokee Nation*, 151; 282; Wardell, *The Political History of the Cherokee Nation*, 346.

was the tribe's responsibility to define citizenship, and when the commission created the Cherokee Enrollment Division and sent staff into fourteen locations in the Cherokee Nation, Hastings participated in the process as a tribal representative.[386]

The seminary was designed to instill mainstream American values, such as the personal accumulation of wealth, in the minds of Cherokee young men. Not all graduates, however, demonstrated an acceptance of American notions of wealth and progress, thus providing another example of how the seminary did not produce a uniform product. For example, some seminary alumni opposed the intrusion of railroads and the development railroads brought. Robert Sanders was one such alumnus. In an interview in 1937, Sanders, who attended the seminary in the 1880s, recalled his childhood in Sweet Springs, where he was raised by his parents in a long cabin and was homeschooled by his father. He described how throughout his youth the plentiful flora and fauna of the "Cherokee hills" allowed for good hunting, but bemoaned "destruction which civilization has needlessly wrought."[387]

Former student John West echoed the sentiments in Robert Sanders's interview. West, who attended the seminary in the late 1880s, discussed at length the Cherokee hills

[386] Kent Carter, *Dawes Commission: and the Allotment of the Five Civilized Tribes, 1893-1914.*, 114.

[387] In addition to opposing white settlement, Sanders was also committed to Cherokee education. Interestingly, the only reference Sanders made to his own career and contribution was that his main pursuit in life had been farming. The person conducting the interview, however, concluded "due to the fact that Mr. Sanders is somewhat timid and reluctant in referring to his own virtues, he failed to tell me of his devotion to the city of Vian. The entire block upon which stands the two beautiful brick and stone school buildings that are a credit to the town, were given by him." Not only did Sanders receive a quality education, he was committed to future generations of Cherokees also having access to a quality education. It is interesting that he does not discuss the education at the Male seminary or his career; he devotes the entire interview to describing his childhood and describing in detail the animals and plants of the Cherokee hills prior to the onslaught of railroads, speculators, and the land run, Robert Sanders, interview with James Buchanon, 17 September 1937, Indian-Pioneer Papers, University of Oklahoma.

prior to statehood. Born and raised in Porum, Indian Territory, West described his boyhood home as "wonderful country."[388] He recalled

> It was sparsely settled, open range for stock and the prairies covered with blue stem grass as high as a horses back. All kinds of game such as deer, turkey, prairie chicken, etc., were here. Wild fruit and nuts grew in abundance and the Indians and early settlers put forth every effort to protect those natural resources. . . . I have seen this country grow from the free and open range country to its present state of development. With the advancement of civilization, gradually has disappeared the liberties and opportunities of the redman and the pioneer.[389]

On the other hand, some seminary graduates amassed sizable personal wealth and welcomed the benefits of market capitalism. Many Seminary graduates used their education in the concepts of capitalism and the market economy to benefit economically themselves. Joseph Rogers was one such alum. Rogers's father served as a surgeon for the Confederate army in the Civil War. Born in Missouri in 1858, Rogers attended elementary school and then ran away from home sometime during his adolescence to Indian Territory. Despite running away, he continued his education and graduated from the Male seminary in 1878. Shortly after graduation, Rogers opened a store adjacent from the Frisco railroad in Catoosa. A few years later, Rogers moved to Adair and opened a drug store. In 1899, the Rogers family settled in Nowata, where they built a modern farm on Mrs. Rogers' allotment. The farm was equipped with gas for lighting, a telephone, and running water (luxuries in late nineteenth-century Indian Territory).[390] In addition, Rogers was elected to a few minor political offices throughout his lifetime.

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[388] John West, interview with James Buchanan, 15 September 1937, Indian-Pioneer Papers, University of Oklahoma.

[389] Ibid.

[390] Vernon Purlee interview, 5 May 1938.

Thus, Rogers both served his community as a marshal and a local political leader, and he also became an affluent businessman.[391]

John Lovett, who graduated from the seminary in 1900, is another example of a seminary graduate who not only worked for the tribe but also acquired personal wealth. Lovett lost both of his parents as a child and was raised in the Cookson Hills by a man named E.L. Cookson, who, according to Lovett "gave me enough education to keep me from going bad like most of the boys did who were brought up under the old environment in those wild hills. I saw plenty of boys go bad."[392] Lovett, a full-blood Cherokee orphan, attended a "full blood Indian school operated by the Indian Department," where he witnessed a traditional Cherokee doctor heal a classmate's severe snake bite with roots. In an interview, Lovett explained that whites were not allowed to attend his elementary school, and the subject he learned included spelling, reading, writing, and arithmetic. Interestingly, he reported that the children did not learn English at this school. Lovett learned English at some point in his childhood, probably from his adopted father, and graduated from the Male seminary in 1900. He served as the county clerk in Cherokee country until 1914. Shortly thereafter, Lovett became a school teacher in Cherokee County, joining the ranks of the other seminary graduates who became Cherokee public school teachers. By 1930, Lovett had acquired some amount of personal wealth in the form of cattle. He explained, "I had in the Cookson Hills two hundred and forty white-faced cattle, mostly cows, nineteen mules, three cow ponies for round-ups

[391] Ibid.

[392] John Lovett, interview with Wylie Thornton, 25 July 1937, Indian-Pioneer Papers, University of Oklahoma.

and four mares but I lost my profit when the crash came."[393] Despite his financial losses, Lovett's life exemplifies the potential of a seminary education. Lovett was a full-blood orphan who, with the help of his father and the education provided by the seminary, became a school teacher and a wealthy rancher.[394]

Indeed, many of the graduates discussed, including Joseph Scales, Joel Bryan Mayes, and Samuel Houston Mayes (who had eleven brothers, and all but one attended the Male seminary), were members of the elite, wealthy class of Cherokees who distinguished themselves from other "wild" tribes. For example, as a member of the General Council of the Indian Territory (an international Council composed of delegates from the tribes "legally resident" in the Indian Territory), Joseph Scales voted for a resolution "tendering to the wild tribes of the Plains the hand of friendship, and recommending to them the prudence of refraining from acts of hostility among themselves, as well as against the citizens of the United States."[395]

Scales was a prominent member of the tribe, and as such he received substantial benefits. For example, the National Council granted him a five-year, tax-free lease on land in the Canadian District, which included a lease in relation to the minerals on the land. He also enjoyed the free use of all the timber on the land as well as salt. This agreement was not only beneficial to Scales but also to the tribe. When the five years was finished, the improvements made to the land reverted to the Cherokee Nation.[396]

[393] Ibid.
[394] Ibid.
[395] Carolyn Thomas Foreman, "Joseph Absalom Scales," 12.
[396] Ibid., 15.

Not all seminary alumni were opposed to allotment or statehood, nor were they concerned with maintaining traditional culture. The wife of seminary graduate Samuel McGhee, for example, reported "happy days" when her husband and his brothers "allotted themselves and their families on and around Little Timber Hill."[397] According to Joseph Roger's daughter, he supported statehood and felt that it was "inevitable and . . . probably the best deal that the red man would be able to get."[398] Indeed, Rogers took an active part in the establishment of statehood.[399]

In addition to serving the tribe through politics, law, and education, some seminary graduates also believed that preserving Cherokee history and traditional Cherokee culture was vital to the long-term success of the tribe. For example, seminary alumnus Joshua Ross was interested in preserving American Indian culture. He served as the first secretary of the Indian International Fair Association and helped to organize an annual fair in which tribes came together and celebrated their different cultures. The International Indian Fair was held in Muskogee, and according to those who attended, it was a success.[400] Furthermore, according to his daughter, "he retained all the characteristics of an Indian and remained true to all their traditions."[401] He gave his children and grandchildren Cherokee names. He also devoted much of his later life to writing a history of the Cherokees in Oklahoma.[402]

[397] Belle McGhee interview, 28 May 1937.
[398] Vernon Purlee, interview with Mary Dorward, 5 May 1938, Indian-Pioneer Papers, University of Oklahoma.
[399] Ibid.
[400] West, *Tahlequah and the Cherokee Nation*, 53.
[401] Ibid.
[402] Ibid.

Of all the seminary graduates, Emmet Starr was doubtless the most committed to preserving Cherokee history. Starr was born in 1870 in Goingsnake District, Indian Territory and spent his boyhood there. Graduating from the seminary in 1888, he made a life-long career of studying and writing Cherokee history. His major work, *History of the Cherokee Nation* (1921), was the first exhaustive work on Cherokee history and genealogy, and it is still used today. The work includes nearly four hundred pages of genealogical notes and biographical sketches. This book also contains one of the largest collections of Cherokee laws, treaties, letters, and other Primary source material in one volume. Nearly four hundred libraries have copies of this tome, which underscores its lasting impact. Generations of historians and those researching their ancestry have relied upon this important work. His other works include *Cherokees "West": 1794-1839* (1910), *Early History of the Cherokees* (1917), *Old Cherokee Families: Notes of Dr. Emmet Starr* (1921).[403]

According to historian Morris Wardell, "upon the admission of Oklahoma to the Union, the Cherokee Nation furnished leaders whose ability made them formidable opponents or effective advocates in both state and national affairs."[404] For example, after statehood, in 1914, William Hastings announced his candidacy for the United States House of Representatives and served in that position for eighteen years. As a congressman, Hastings successfully lobbied for funding for the construction of a new post office for Tahlequah and for improved infrastructure for the region, including the extension of Highway 51 to connect Wagoner and Stillwell through Tahlequah. Perhaps

[403] Mary Jane Stockton, "Story of Emmett Starr," 26 April 1937, Indian-Pioneer Papers, University of Oklahoma.

[404] Wardell, *A Political History of the Cherokee Nation*, 349.

most importantly, he secured the creation of an Indian hospital in Tahlequah. When he died on April 13, 1938, the newspaper heading read "HASTINGS MOURNED BY ENTIRE STATE" and continued "Mr. Hastings served the Cherokee Nation as Attorney General, Superintendent of Education, and was attorney for the Cherokee Nation in making up its final rolls, allotment of lands, and cases before the Court of Claims and the Supreme Court of the United States. . . . He was one of Tahlequah's foremost business men, serving as a member of the board of directors of the First National Bank and as its president."[405]

Another seminary graduate who continued to serve the tribe after statehood was William Thompson. After graduating from the Male Seminary in 1884 at the age of seventeen, Thompson studied law with his friend and fellow graduate, William Hastings, at Vanderbilt University. In addition to living as roommates, Thompson and Hastings joined the same literary clubs, debating clubs, and fraternity. According to Thompson, because of their Male seminary education, he and Hastings were better prepared for law school than most of their classmates. After graduating from Vanderbilt in 1889, Thompson started his first law office in Muskogee, Indian Territory. Two years later, he moved to Tahlequah to form the Boudinot, Thompson, and Hastings law firm.[406]

In addition to his law profession, Thompson was active in Cherokee political affairs. He served as a Clerk to both the Lower House and the Senate in 1889 and 1890. He was also secretary of the treasury for two years and executive secretary of Principal

[405] *The Muskogee Times Democrat*, 8 April 1934, Grant Foreman Collection, Box 18, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[406] They both received considerable attention because of their Native American heritage and were even asked to deliver a speech in Cherokee at a local girls' school. Because neither Thompson nor Hastings spoke Cherokee, they decided to invent sounds and words for an ignorant audience, Berry J. King, "Judge William Pressley Thompson," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 19 (March 1941), 3.

Chief C.J. Harris (1891-1895). Perhaps most importantly, he was also an attorney for the Cherokee Nation in Tahlequah. As such, he appeared as a Cherokee representative before Congress and worked to smooth the tribe's transition to their new status as citizens of the State of Oklahoma. He later became the mayor of Tahlequah and helped build the first telephone system in Indian Territory. Between 1923 and 1926, Thompson served on the Oklahoma State Supreme Court. According to his son-in-law, Thompson always maintained "loyalty for the Cherokee Nation, its people, its traditions and the section of this State upon which its history has been impressed."[407]

After statehood, former seminary students protected Cherokees in a variety of careers, including law enforcement. The federal government was not the only threat to Cherokees in the late nineteenth century. Some white traders made careers of peddling whiskey and stealing from Cherokee citizens. Former seminary student Alfred Pickens Seabolt had first-hand experience with such criminal activity and devoted his life to law enforcement. Seabolt was born in 1870 in Indian Territory and was raised by a single mother. Both of his parents had moved to Indian Territory from the East along the Trail of Tears when they were children, and although his father died when he was only five, Seabolt learned much about Cherokee culture and history from his mother. During the Civil War, Seabolt's father had affiliated himself with the "Pin Indians," and fought for the Union Army. After the war, according to his mother, the men who had fought for the Union were constantly in jeopardy from ex-Confederates. She explained that during Reconstruction, "a horrible and tragic reign of terror prevailed" in Indian Territory. It was during this turbulent time that Seabolt began attending school, first at local

[407] Ibid., 8.

elementary schools and then the Cherokee Male seminary in the 1880s. Seabolt himself recalled that during this time the area in which he lived "was infested with horse thieves, whisky-peddlers and all other manner of vile characters" who sometimes knocked on his mother's door and demanded food for themselves and their horses.[408] These experiences sparked his interested in law enforcement, and soon after he graduated from the seminary, he became the Deputy Sheriff of Sequoyah County. He temporarily took a respite from law enforcement in 1920 when he began farming, but he quickly reentered the field. Soon thereafter, he became Deputy Sheriff of LeFlore County and then Justice of the Peace in his precinct.[409]

Not all of the seminary's graduates applied their education to benefit the tribe. Indeed, at least one graduate committed various crimes, including fraud. In 1900, seminary alumnus Thomas Triplett appeared before a United States Grand Jury and pled guilty to his connection with the Cherokee auditor's fraud. In this scheme, $194,365 was stolen from the Nation. While serving as district clerk of Tahlequah district, it was his responsibility to issue national certificates to compensate jurors, witnesses, guards, and all other court expenses. After the national certificates had been issued, the clerk "mailed a report of them, giving numbers, dates, amounts and names of persons in whose favor they were issued. This report was sent to the Cherokee auditor who recorded it, and speculators who bought the certificates, would send their certificates to the auditor to have them compared with the clerk's reports and if found to compare, the auditor entered the amount thereof to the credit of the person filing certificates with him and sent the

[408] Alfred Seabolt Pickens, interview with Gomer Gower, 1 February 1938, Indian-Pioneer Papers, University of Oklahoma.

[409] Ibid.

party a receipt. This receipt was compared with the entry on the auditor's books, and if found correct the legislature ordered the principal chief to issue a national warrant for that party, drawing 6 per cent [*sic*] interest from date until advertised for payment."[410] Thomas Triplett was charged with fraudulent entry of records. Triplett was one of several prominent Cherokee officials under investigation for committing fraud and stealing from the tribe. President William McKinley appointed a commission of three Cherokee officials and two inspectors from the Interior Department. The commission's investigation found eleven indictments against Triplett on charges of forgery and signing forged papers. Triplett was expected to serve a term of five years in the penitentiary.[411]

Many graduates acquired an advanced education at the seminary and put what they learned to use fighting the external and internal threats to tribal sovereignty. Although these alumni used their education to serve the Nation, their ideas about how to best serve their tribe were varied. Some opposed allotment fiercely; others welcomed the individual ownership of land. Some regretted the impact "civilization" had on the "Cherokee hills." Others were wealthy businessmen who lived opulent lifestyles. Despite coming from different backgrounds and representing various factions of the Cherokee populace, some dedicated their lives to serving their communities and the larger Nation. With the exception of those who sought to swindle the tribe of funds (and some who were bent on denationalization for their own personal gain), the majority of

[410] "The number of certificates issued for the six years immediately previous to the passage of the Curtis Act on June 28, 1989, abolishing the Cherokee courts, amounted to $339,839.46; the commission found that genuine national certificates were issued during that period amounting $65,946.43, and that the balance of this amount were fraudulent claims. The committee found that there was a balance of illegitimate claims for which warrants had been drawn of $194,365.44," *The Globe-Democrat*, 7 November 1903, J.C. Starr Papers.

[411] Ibid.

this sample of seminary graduates fulfilled the promise of the Male Seminary—they turned their education into a tool for serving Cherokees and protecting tribal sovereignty.

CONCLUSION

"May 7th has a very definite place in the hearts of the Cherokees." –Minta Ross Foreman[412]

"My father, being a school superintendent, always said every child needs to be in school, except on May 7." –Marion Hagerstrand, daughter of a Cherokee Male seminary student[413]

The Cherokee Male Seminary was not the only academy in the region. Throughout the nineteenth century, the five tribes in Indian Territory created academies and boarding schools with the hope that well-educated tribal members would defend tribal sovereignty. Between 1844 and 1859, the Chickasaws opened five boarding schools. Between 1842 and 1846, the Choctaw General Council created eight academies: Spencer Academy, Fort Coffee, Koonaha Female Seminary, Ianubbee Female Seminary, Chuwahla Female Seminary, Wheelock Female Seminary, Armstrong Academy, and Norwalk Academy. The Choctaw schools served as models for those in the Creek and

[412] Minta Ross Foreman, "Reverend Stephen Foreman: Cherokee Missionary," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 18 (September 1940), 230.

[413] Marion Hagerstrand, *Cherokee Phoenix*, http://www.cherokeephoenix.org/18442/Article.aspx

Seminole Nations. In many respects, however, all of these academies stood in stark contrast to the Cherokee Male Seminary.[414]

First, unlike other academies in the region, the Cherokee seminaries did not contract with Christian missionaries. In 1844, Spencer Academy (Choctaw) was opened under the direction of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions. Later that year, the Methodists created an academy for Choctaw youth at Fort Coffee; two years later, they opened a school for Choctaw girls near Fort Coffee. The Chickasaws received financial assistance from various Protestant denominations to open the Bloomfield Academy for Chickasaw females; a Methodist minister was chosen as its superintendent.[415] As Devon Mihesuah remarked, "unlike other Indian Territory boarding schools . . . the Cherokee schools did not contract with missionaries and [in the early years] did not include manual training."[416] As missionary Elizur Butler explained, "when regulations were made for the seminaries no provision was made for any religious instruction."[417]

The Cherokee national Council maintained control of every aspect of the seminaries until 1898. While a handful of other boarding schools were temporarily controlled by their tribes (with the exception of Bloomfield, which was under tribal control from 1865 to 1907), the Cherokee seminaries had been regulated by the tribe right until the Curtis Act dismantled all tribal institutions, including the seminaries. The Curtis Act transferred control of all Cherokee schools from Indian leaders to Interior

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[414] James W. Moffitt, "Early History of Armstrong Academy," in *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* 21 (March 1943), 88.

[415] Amanda Cobb, *Listening to Our Grandmothers' Stories: The Bloomfield Academy for Chickasaw Females, 1852-1949* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 40-41.

[416] Devon Mihesuah, "'Out of the Graves of Polluted Debauches': The Boys of the Cherokee Male Seminary," in *American Indian Quarterly* 15 (Autumn 1991), 504.

[417] Elizur Butler to S.B. Treat, 13 February 1851, American Board for Commissioners of Foreign Missions Papers, Lamont Library, Harvard University.

Department agents. Thus, for nearly thirty years (1851-1898) the Cherokee National Board of Education controlled all tribal schools, including the seminaries, unlike the Choctaws, who gained control of their schools from the missionaries in the early 1890s only to lose it again to the federal government in 1898.[418]

Secondly, other Indian academies in Indian Territory were not college preparatory schools; the Male Seminary was.[419] John Ross purposefully designed the Male Seminary to prepare young men for a university education and instituted coursework so advanced as to encourage seminary graduates' pursuits in higher education. Indeed, the curriculum was so challenging that, after statehood, the Oklahoma State Department of Education granted sixty-two college credit hours to graduates of the Cherokee seminaries. The college preparatory element of the school was beneficial to some seminary students, who went on to attend various universities, including Vanderbilt University, University of Arkansas, Emory and Henry College, Bacone University, and Kendall College, among others.[420]

Thirdly, other regional Indian academies "differed substantially from the Latin grammar school model widespread in the early republic."[421] The Cherokee Male Seminary, however, mirrored Latin grammar schools. The committee chosen by Chief John Ross to develop a curriculum at the Male Seminary used Latin grammar schools

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[418] Brad Agnew, "Sustaining the Cherokees Lamp of Enlightenment: the Establishment of Northeastern State Normal School," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 86 (Winter, 2008-09), 388; Amanda Cobb, *Listening to Our Grandmothers' Stories: The Bloomfield Academy for Chickasaw Females, 1852-1949* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 2-7; W. David Baird, "Spencer Academy: Choctaw Nation, 1842-1900," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 45 (Spring 1967), 25-43.

[419] Amanda Cobb, *Listening to Our Grandmothers' Stories: The Bloomfield Academy for Chickasaw Females, 1852-1949* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 46.

[420] Ida Wetzel Tinnin, "Educational and Cultural Influences of the Cherokee Seminaries," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 37 (Spring 1959), 64.

[421] Cobb, *Listening to Our Grandmothers' Stories*, 46.

such as Boston Latin School and Lawrenceville Academy as the blueprints for the Cherokee high schools. The Male Seminary mirrored the Boston Latin School in terms of curriculum, textbooks, and library books. Students at both schools learned Latin, Greek, French, Caesar, Virgil, algebra, geometry, and history.[422] Students at both schools learned from the same textbooks, including "Greenleaf's *National Arithmetic*, Davie's *Algebra*, McEllicott's *Analytical Manual*, Newman's *Rhetoric*, and Russell's *Elocution.*"[423] Both schools' libraries held texts on Latin authors, Latin grammar, Latin dictionaries, Latin phrase books, Greek readers, Greek authors, and Greek dictionaries, and nearly all of the history books were about notable western and Anglo-American men. Thus, the Male seminary was different from other tribal academies in that it continued the Latin grammar school model.[424]

The only Indian academy whose curriculum resembled those of the Cherokee seminaries' was the Bloodfield Academy for Chickasaw females. While it was under the control of missionaries, the school's curriculum offered all of the "standard" classes, including reading, writing, math, history, etc., but did not include the more advanced courses offered at the Male Seminary.[425] However, the Chickasaw tribe gained control of the female academy in 1865 and kept control until 1907. Under tribal control, the academy did offer some advanced classes, including physiology, algebra, Latin, Caesar, civil government, natural philosophy, and American literature.[426] While the Male

[422] *The Sequoyah Memorial*, 2 August 1855.
[423] Ibid.
[424] Pauline Holmes, *A Tercentenary History of the Boston Public Latin School, 1635-1935* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1935), 316-357.
[425] Cobb, *Listening to Our Grandmothers'* Stories, 14; The *Sequoyah Memorial*, 2 August 1855.
[426] Cobb, *Listening to Our Grandmothers' Stories*, 58.

Seminary and Bloomfield share some of the same courses, the former offered a greater number of advanced classes:

Table. 5. Male Seminary Academic Department Schedule

	Ancient Languages	Modern Languages	English	History	Mental Science	Mathe-matics	Natural Sciences
Freshman	Latin. Greek.		English Grammar. Geography	U.S. History		Arithmetic. Algebra	Physical Geography Physiology
Sophomore	Caesar. Anabasis		Composition and Rhetoric.	English History		Algebra. Geometry.	Chemistry. Natural Philosophy.
Junior	Cicero. Ovid. Thucydides.	French. German.	English Lit. American Lit.	Roman History. Gen. History	Political Economy Moral Philosophy.	Trig.. Anal. Geom.	Botany. Geology.
Senior	Virgil. Livy. Homer	Moliere. Goethe.	Criticism.	Gen. History. Grecian History	Mental Philosophy. Logic.	Surveying and Calculus.	Astronomy Zoology.

Without the influence of the Latin grammar school model, the curriculum at other tribal academies differed markedly from the Male Seminary. Missionaries, who administered and partially funded boarding schools in Indian Territory, created a curriculum that would shape Indian youth into model Christian citizens. For example, according to historian James Moffitt, Armstrong Academy "had as its objectives the Christianizing and civilizing of the Choctaws on the manual labor plan."[427] According to the missionaries in charge of these schools, American Indian children needed to learn

[427] Moffitt, "Early History of Armstrong Academy," 89-90.

both the basics (reading, writing, arithmetic) and manual labor.[428] There was no manual or agricultural element at the Male Seminary in the early years, and although these programs were added in the 1870s, the seminary proper retained its stringent and advanced coursework. Students continued to read "Xenophon (the Anabasis), Thucydides, Livy, Homer, Virgil, Ovid, Cicero, Caesar, Moliere, and Goethe—Greek, Latin, French, and German. . . . . On the whole, the schools were equal to any colleges in the United States at that time."[429]

In addition to other Indian Territory academies, federally-controlled Indian boarding schools cropped up throughout the region in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the late nineteenth century, white reformers set out on an educational crusade to transform young American Indians into mainstream American citizens. The federal government took a multi-pronged approach to resolving the Indian problem. In addition to dividing commonly-owned land into individual plots through the Allotment Act, United States congressmen and reformers turned to assimilation through education as the most effective way bring cultural and societal transformation to Indian reservations. The federal government centered most of its efforts on boarding schools. Administrators removed thousands of Indian youth from their families and communities and placed them in these off-reservation institutions. According to K. Tsianina Lomawaima, "tribal/communal identity, primitive language, heathen religion: these pernicious influences would be rooted out and effaced in the counstruction of a new kind

[428] Henry Benson, "Life Among the Choctaw Indians," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 4 (June 1926), 156-161.

[429] Hugh T. Cunningham, "A History of the Cherokee Indians," in *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 8 (December 1930), 419-420.

of American citizen."[430] While there were federal boarding schools in Indian Territory, including Chilocco in northeastern Oklahoma and Rainy Mountain on the Kiowa-Comanche-Apache Reservation in western Oklahoma, the Male seminary differed from these institutions both in goals and administration. Federal schools were designed to absorb Indians into the American mainstream; they were driven by the theory that "Indian children, once removed from the savage surroundings of the Indian camp and placed in the purified environment of an all-encompassing institution, would slowly learn to look, act, and eventually think like their white counterparts."[431]

The Male Seminary differed drastically from federal boarding schools. Sally J. McBeth summarizes the federal Indian boarding school experience, explaining that "native languages were forbidden, corporal punishment was common, bathing and toilet facilities were often inconvenient and unsanitary, and academic subjects lasted only half the day. The other half was devoted to agricultural or home economic 'arts' in the form of work detail to finance some of the school's operating expenses."[432] Similarly, David Wallace Adams describes the federal boarding school as an institution which carried out the government's "civilization" process

> by removing Indian children from their native environment, stripping away all outward vestiges of traditional identity, and then exposing them to an instructional program equally divided between academic and industrial training, supplemented by routinized chore work. All this took place in a military-like institutional setting characterized by drill and marching, constant monitoring, and harsh discipline where the very acts of

[430] K. Tsianina Lomawaima, *They Called it Prairie Light: the Story of Chilocco Indian School* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994, xi.

[431] Adams, *Education for Exctinction*, 43.

[432] Sally McBeth, "Indian Boarding Schools and Ethnic Identity: An Example from the Southern Plains Tribes of Oklahoma," in *Plains Anthropologist* 28 (May 1983), 122.

> eating, sleeping, and hygiene were regulated by bugles and bells driven by the precise measurements of the white man's clock.[433]

There was certainly an assimilationist element to the Male Seminary, from the curriculum to the mandatory chapel services; however, tribal leaders also aimed to produce educated Cherokees to protect political tribal sovereignty. The latter goal was absent from federal boarding schools.[434]

The curriculum at the Male Seminary diverged markedly from the federal boarding schools. Federal boarding schools such as Chilocco, Haskell, and Rainy Mountain were established as agricultural and industrial schools. At Rainy Mountain, students learned vocational "skills in the form of farming and industrial arts for the boys and domestic training for the girls. To these were added lessons in the rudiments of history, grammar, arithmetic, civics, the English language, and the truths of the Christian religion."[435] Chilocco was established in 1884 as an agricultural school, and each student was assigned his or her own garden plot; boys older than eleven were assigned small fields. According to Lomawaima, "the school furnished seed, horses, farm machinery, and other necessary equipment and instruction, and the boys received one fourth of the market value."[436] To these lessons were added English, math, science, and social studies.[437] The federal government created the Haskell Institute (originally named United States Indian Industrial Training School) that same year in Lawrence, Kansas, where children from various tribes learned "English (reading, composition, grammar, and

[433] David Wallace Adams, "Beyond Bleakness: The Brighter Side of Indian Boarding Schools, 1870-1940" in *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences*, Clifford E. Trafzer, Jean A. Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc, eds. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 35.
[434] Ibid.
[435] Ellis, *To Change Them Forever*, 111.
[436] Lomawaima, *They Called it Prairie Light*, 18.
[437] Ibid., 66.

spelling), vocational arithmetic, industrial geography, agricultural botany, farm and household accounts, history, soil and soil fertility, farm and household physics and chemistry, rural economics, insects and insecticides, field crops, and plant disease," all of which correlated with the school's industrial and agricultural training.[438] In other words, Haskell offered a curriculum of English language, academic, moral, and industrial training as well as teacher and business training.[439]

Furthermore, discipline and punishment was considerably harsher at government-run boarding school than at the Male Seminary. Although there was a military element at the Male Seminary, the school was much less militaristic than federal boarding schools. For example, at Haskell boarding school, students awoke to bells, performed daily military drills, and responded to whistles and bugle calls. Haskell administrators used child labor to keep the school operating; students worked as farmers, bakers, building and furniture repairmen; they milked cows and washed and ironed laundry.[440] At Chilocco, one student recalled that the school "was run sort of like a military institution, actually. You *marched* everywhere! You marched to *school*, you marched to the dinners: breakfast, lunch and *dinner*."[441] The Chilocco bugle sounded twenty-two times a day, demanding that children line up and march.[442]

In terms of punishment, there were some similarities between Chilocco and the Male Seminary, including a loss of privileges and hard labor. One major difference was the punishment for going AWOL; students at Chilocco who left without permission were

[438] Myriam Vučković, *Voiced from Haskell: Indian Students between Two Worlds, 1884-1928* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2008, 96.
[439] Stout, *Native American Boarding Schools*, 48.
[440] Idid., 49-50.
[441] Noreen, as quoted in Lomawaima, *The Called it Prairie Light*, 102.
[442] Stout, *Native American Boarding Schools*, 70.

incarcerated in a small, dark room for two to three days.[443] According to historian Mary Stout, "serious offenses such as drunkenness or running away might result in time spent in the lockup room or, for boys, assignment to the rock pile, breaking down big rocks with a sledgegammer to go into the rock crusher."[444] On the other hand, Male seminary students who left without permission were almost always expelled.

Perhaps the most notable distinction of the Cherokee Male Seminary is the direction it took in the 1870s. Tribal leaders, through the National Board of Education, added a Primary Department to the academic school, thus creating an institution that included all of the elements just described. At the seminary proper, students were prepared for university and studied difficult subjects that would challenge today's average college student. The Male Seminary shared some commonalities with federal boarding schools but should be placed within the mid-nineteenth century tribal boarding school movement, in which various Indian Territory tribes invested in education for their children to retain sovereignty.

Every year on May 7, the descendants of the Cherokee Seminary students meet in Tahlequah to celebrate their ancestors,' and their tribe's educational accomplishments. The annual meeting is a testament to the tribes' continued emphasis on the importance of education and also a celebration of traditional tribal culture. In 2011, the Cherokee National Youth Choir sang the national anthem and other songs in Cherokee, Miss Cherokee discussed her experiences with the annual Trail of Tears bicycle trek, and the key-note speaker, Leslie Hannah, spoke on the importance of Cherokee education. This

[443] Lomawaima, *They Called it Prairie Light*, 106.
[444] Stout, *Native American Boarding Schools*, 70.

meeting shows that acculturation and tradition are not exclusive and competing forces but instead coexisted and overlapped in Cherokees' daily lives.[445]

Students at the Male Seminary lived with acculturation and tradition every day. Seminary students attended the most progressive institution in the Nation; the Cherokee seminaries were the quintessence of "civilization." The school building itself was one of the most impressive structures in the Nation. The stately three-story brick building lined with Doric columns resembled prestigious academies and universities in the states. The seminary building itself was a symbol of the advancements achieved by the Cherokees. Beyond the physical structure, the difficult curriculum—akin to that of the best northeastern academies—provided young Cherokee men with the knowledge, ideas, and skills that allowed them to thrive in American society. Nearly every component of mainstream American culture was present at the seminary. Prevailing American religious views, scholarly ideas, economic theories, forms of entertainment, concepts of race and gender, styles of clothing, and sports were the very essence of the seminary experience. John Ross and others created the seminaries to assimilate Cherokee youth. In many ways, the seminaries achieved this goal.

An examination of seminary documents indicates that some students who attended the Male Seminary did assimilate to mainstream American culture. After graduating, some continued attending Protestant church services, at least one graduate even became a minister. Henry Smith, who graduated from the Male seminary in 1886, was ordained a minister in Ardmore in 1900. He became the priest at the Episcopal

[445] Seminary graduate Jack Brown began the organization in 1975, Jamie Custer, "Descendants of Cherokee Seminary Students Hold Annual Meeting," *The Cherokee Phoenix* 18 May 2010.

Church, the only American Indian priest in Indian Territory.[446] Others, like Joseph Rogers and Joseph Ross, became successful businessmen. Many lived in comfortable homes furnished with luxuries, including pianos and clocks.[447] Some students espoused Victorian notions of race, ethnicity, and gender and expressed these sentiments in letters, editorials, and speeches.

Evidence of Cherokee traditions, however, can also be found in seminary documents. Testimony is sometimes obvious, as in the case of graduates' interviews discussing their traditional upbringing. Other times, tradition is implied, as in the cases of the full-blood Primary students who started school speaking only Cherokee. Only a handful of the hundreds of full-blood students left written or spoken records of their seminary experience, but we can surmise that a portion, if not most, of these children and young men were raised in traditional Cherokee homes. Precisely how these students reconciled the progressive education with their traditional identity is unknown, but they lived with tradition and progress every day.

More traditional, Cherokee-speaking families had long been frustrated with the quality of education offered at the mission schools and the Cherokee national public schools. While the formative years of the Male Seminary continued to neglect the needs of full-blood children, tribal leaders in the 1870s made significant changes to the school, insuring that all classes of Cherokees would benefit from the seminaries. The changes generated positive results. In the later years, the seminary finally produced bilingual Cherokee teachers. By 1887, there were eighty-nine native Cherokee teachers in

[446] Florence Caleb Smith, interview with Frank Still, date unknown, Indian-Pioneer Papers, University of Oklahoma.

[447] The 1890 Cherokee Census, Cherokee National Records, Special Collections, Edmon Low Library, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma.

Cherokee public schools, thirty-three of which were bilingual. Twenty of the thirty-three were educated at the Male Seminary.[448] Thus, the seminary was successful at fulfilling one of its goals: to produce competent Cherokee teachers who would take what they learned at the seminary back to full-blood communities and teach Cherokee-speaking children English and provide them with an elementary education.

In the end, the school served two purposes. It created professionals who helped the tribe and it taught English to Cherokee-speaking students. The seminary trained dozens of teachers for the Cherokee public schools. It prepared young men for a university education, and some of these men became the tribe's leading politicians and businessmen. The seminary also housed hundreds of Cherokee-speaking children, who gained an elementary education. The school offered Cherokees a way to master various disciplines and learn to compete in mainstream American society.

The legacy of the Male Seminary is the tribe's emphasis on education. According to the Board of Education, "Cherokees are themselves largely engaged in educating their own people, and that our higher schools are sending forth the majority of those engaged in this patriotic work."[449] When describing the Cherokees' commitment to education, Male seminary coach John Hough was impressed with the tribe's "intense interest in their schools and churches. Anything that they could secure that would be of benefit too [sic] their schools was readily adopted as they considered nothing to [sic] good for them."[450] This emphasis on education continues today.[451]

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[448] Cherokee Nation, *Annual Report of the Board of Education*, 1887.
[449] *Annual Report of the Cherokee Board of Education*, 11.
[450] Interview with John Hough, Indian-Pioneer Papers, 28 October 1937.
[451] *Tahlequah Daily Press*, 19 March 2010.

As historian Carolyn Ross Johnston explains, "in the federal boarding schools such as Chilocco and Carlisle, as well as in the Cherokee seminaries, American Indians took what they needed, but they did not abandon their traditional cultures . . . they appropriated knowledge and became familiar with white American values and morals. Some used this knowledge to defend tribal interests and identity . . . they saw education as a vehicle of mobility and considered white values as something to be learned and then used to benefit their own interests."[452] This description is the very essence of acculturation. The Male Seminary fostered the acculturation of the tribe and educated several generations of Cherokees, some of whom dedicated their lives to serving their Nation. Those who sought an education at the seminary, however, did not necessarily abandon their traditional culture. And the descendants of seminary students gather annually to celebrate traditional culture as well as the benefits education has brought to the Cherokee people.

[452] Carolyn Ross Johnston, *Cherokee Women in Crisis: Trail of Tears, Civil War, and Allotment, 1838-1907* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2003), 107.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. List of Students who Received Punishments for Breaking School Rules, 1899-1906.

Joe Adair
Richard Askisson
Claude Ballard
James Ballard
Sequoyah Barker
Frank Blackstone
A.L. Bawerberg
William Bertholf
Joe Billingslee
George Blackstone
Geo Blakeney
John Brown
Balles Caywood
Jim Chamber
Ras Chamberlain
Dave Chandler
Walter Charlesworth
Cyrus Choteau
Henry Claremore
Robert Cobel
Lenord Connor
Tom Cook
Levi Cookson
John Cooper
Walter Cornatzer
Jesse Covel
Alvin Cromwell
Lee Crow
Jameson Davis
Joe Downing

John Duck
Steve Edwards
Elmer Fields
Pesay Foreman
Allen Foster
Joe Foster
Henry French
Vann Fuller
Rob Garrett
Sim Garrett
S.T. Garrett
Franklin Gibson
Joe Glad
Oce R. Gourd
Gunter Gulager
Geo Hare
Sulie Harlin
Chester Harris
Parker Harris
Lundy Hawkins
Arthur Holland
Robert Holland
Geo Hummingbird
Jesse Jackson
Jesse James
Ed Johnson
Tom Johnson
Wm King
H.Y. Landrum
Sam Leach
D. W. Life
Julius Linder
Ted Lindsey
Wm Lindsey
Lee Locents
James (Loury or Lowry)
Jorris Lundy
Jackson Lurk

Jeter Lynch
Jesse Mackham
Clarence Mackhand (Macklam?)
Jas Markham
Adair Mayes
E.J. Mayes
Joel B. Mayes
Richard Mayes
Richmond Mayes
Will McClelland
Joss McMakin
Dennis McNair
Owen McNair
Davis McPherson
Lewis McPherson
Vern McPherson
Charles Miller
Ed Mills
Lee Mitchell
Tom Moore
Clause Netzill
James Nix
Will Nix
Ben Parris
Blake Parris
Jesse Parris
Tom Pettit
Arthur Ragar
Gordon Raines
Gordon Ramer
Austin Reagan
Frank Riley
Penn Roland
Cornelius Ross
Bruce Ross
L.S. Seranstars (Sevanstars?)
Will Slotis
Dave Smith

Elbert Snider
Floyd Snider
Roger Starer
Tom Starnes
Carl Starr
Milo Starr
Dave Sunday
Wallace Tiffany
Will Thompson
Owen Thornton
Sewell Tucker
Nelson Tyler
Claude Vann
Willie Vann
Karl Ward
Henry Ward
David Welch
C.D. West
Robert Walker
Charles Watson
Claude Wetzel
Geo Whitemore
Claude Wilder
Dewitt Williams
Karl Wood
Henry Woods

Appendix 2. List of Male Seminary Students from 1876-1882

Name	Years Attended	Age	Blood Quantum	Primary or Academic
Adair, A.F.	767778	18	1/16th	
Adair, E.S.	78	24	3/8th	
Adair, James M.	76			
Adair, John H.	76			
Adair, John R.	82	16	1/4th	
Adair, Luther M.	76	17	1/8th	
Adair, Samuel H.	77	17	1/8th	
Adair, R.E.	78-81	16	1/16th	
Adair, Thomas J.	767778	21	1/16th	
Adair, W.P.	76-82	16	1/16th	
Alberty, B.W.	76	24	1/8th	
Alberty, E.C.	77	16	1/8th	
Alberty, Moses	76-82	12	1/8th	
Aiken, Frank	76			
Antoine, James	81	9	1/16th	Primary
Bailey, George	78	17	half	Primary
Baldridge, James	77	19	3/4th	Primary
Baldridge, Smith	76			
Ballentine, Jonathan	76			
Ballard, Alexander	76			
Barns, James	8081	17	3/4th	Primary
Batt, C.	798081	15	full	Primary
Baugh, Joel	7778	18	1/256th	
Beck, John H.	76-82	17	1/4th	Primary
Beck, Thomas	77	14	full	Primary
Bell, James W.	76			
Bell, Martin	77	16	1/32nd	
Bell, Watie	76-82			
Benge, Martin	767778	16	1/32nd	
Benge, Ross	767778	15	half	
Bethel, William	77	15	1/4th	Primary
Bible, John	8081	8	1/8th	Primary
Bird, Daniel	8182	14	full	Primary

Bird, Jackson R.		76			
Bird, Wm. H.		76	12	full	
Blair, W.	79-82		13	3/4th	Primary
Boudinot, Frank		77	10	half	Primary
Boudinot, Richard		767778	20	half	
Bray, John		8182	11	1/16th	Primary
Breedlove, W.W.		79	17	1/16th	
Brewer, George		78	11	1/8th	Primary
Brewer, John		76			
Brewster, Jefferson		76			
Brown, John		76			
Brown, M.R.		78	22	half	
Bryant, Benjamin		80	18	1/8th	Primary
Buffington, J.R.		82	18	3/8th	
Bumgarner, J.D.		76			
Bumgarner, J.L.		78	22	1/4th	
Bluejacket, Wm.		76	12	1/32nd	
Butler, John	77-82		14	half	
Butler, George		78	17	1/8th	
Butler, James		8182	21	half	
Campbell, Geo.		76	12	1/16th	
Candy, Thos. L.		76			
Carey, T.H.		76			
Carey, Wm. V.		76			
Carlile, John		76	16	1/16th	
Carlile, Thomas	76-82				
Chamberlain, A.F.		76			
Chamberlain, H.E.		76			
Chamberlain, R.L.		76			
Chambers, J.P.		76			
Chambers, Wm.		7677	18	3/8th	
Clark, Taylor		77	15	1/4th	
Clay, James	77-82		11	3/4th	Primary
Cloud, Henry V.		76	5	3/4th	Primary
Cobb, A.C.	80-82		15	1/32nd	
Cobb, J.B.		78	15	16-Jan	
Coleman, Samuel		76	17	full	

Collins, Clark	798081	12	1/16th	Primary
Coody, John H.	76	21	1/4th	
Cookson, Joseph	767778	22	1/16th	
Couch, J.F.	82	16	1/16th	
Cordry, W.S.	76			
Cordry, William	76			
Cristie, James	77	5	half	Primary
Crittenden, Geo. A.	77	14	1/8th	
Crittenden, Richard	76			
Crossland, William	79	16	1/4th	Primary
Cunningham, A.C.	76			
Cunningham, Ross	76			
Dannenberg, Nathan	76			
Dew, Wm.	76			
Dick, Andrew	798081	14	full	Primary
Dirteater, Charles	81	15	full	Primary
Dirteater, Robin	81	9	full	Primary
Drew, Geo M.	76			
Drew, Richard	76			
Duncan, John E.	76	15	1/16th	
Downing, Alex	81	16	3/4th	Primary
Downing, James	76			
Downing, Thomas	80	15	7/8th	
Duncan, J.E.	78	17	1/16th	
Duncan, John C.	76	16	3/8th	
Downing, Thomas	76	11	7/8th	Primary
Daniels, Robert	76	16	half	
Easkee, Washington	76			
Fields, Albert S.	76			
Fields, Austin O.	76			
Fields, Thomas F.	76	23	1/4th	
Fields, Joseph A.	76			
Fields, Thomas J.	76			
Fields, Wm. S.	76			
Fields, Richard	76	19	1/4th	
Fisher, James	77	23	full	
Foreman, Cephas	76			
Foreman, Charles	78	18	full	

Foreman, William		76			
Fowler, C.C.		76			
Fulsom, John		78	10	3/8th	Primary
Gann, C.H.		77	13	1/4th	
Garrison, Butler		76			
Ghormley, E.C.		80	23	1/8th	
Gibson, John	78-82		17	1/16th	
Gourd, Elias		80	10	1/4th	Primary
Greenway, Alonzo		76	15	1/8th	
Griffin, Thomas		76			
Halfbreed, Webster		8081	10	half	Primary
Hanks, C.	79-82		21	3/4th	
Hastings, William		82	15	1/32nd	
Hare, Jesse		76			
Hendricks, John	76-81		11	1/4th	Primary
Hendricks, William		81	14	half	Primary
Hensley, Andrew		76			
Harris, Colonel		76			
Henry, Thomas	76-82		18	3/4th	
Henry, Levi		76			
Henson, Sam		80	13	full	Primary
Henson, Tom		80	14	3/8th	
Hayes, Tilden S.		76			
Hicks, Edward		78	13	1/4th	
Hill, J.H.		78	12	1/8th	
Hitchcock, T.B.		77	18	1/4th	
Hood, John		76	17	1/4th	
Howdeshell, William		82	17	1/32nd	Primary
Jennings, Geo A.		76			
Johnson, Geo.		76			
Johnson, John		76			
Jonnycake, Isaac N.		7677	17	3/4th	
Jordan, John		8081	16	1/4th	
Kelley, William		80	15	1/4th	Primary
Ketchum, Thomas		78	22	full	
Keys, Riley		77	17	1/4th	
King, Edward		81	7	1/4th	Primary
Lamar, James		82	13	1/4th	Primary

Lamar, Jesse	80-82		15	1/16th	Primary
Landrum, Benjamin S.		76	20	1/4th	
Landrum, Cicero		76	17	3/8th	
Large, W.		7980	11	Jan-64	
Leach, J.R.		79	16	1/16th	
Lee, David		77	15	1/4th	
Lee, William		76			
Lipe, J.G.		79	13	1/4th	
Looney, William		76	11	5/8th	
Lyman, L.		798081	10	1/4th	
Manning, Johnson		7980	21	1/8th	
Martin, Warren		76	16	half	
Mayfield, J.R.	79-82		21	1/16th	
Mays, Richard		76			
Mayes, Samuel		82	16	1/16th	
Mays, Walter A.		76	15	3/8th	
Mays, William		767778	5	full	Primary
McCoy, Arch		77	21	1/4th	
McCoy, Charles		78	19	1/4th	
McCracken, Rufus		82	17	1/4th	
McDaniels, Alex		76			
McDaniels, Thomas		76			
McDaniel, Claudius H.		76			
McDaniels, Jno. M.		76			
McKinney, Dennis		78	16	1/8th	
McLane, Jesse		76			
McLoughlin, Benj.		76			
McLoughlin, George		81	15	full	Primary
Meigs, John H.	76-82		17	1/8th	
Melton, W.T.		8081	18	1/8th	
Mills, F.M.	76-82				
Mills, William		80	25	1/8th	
Muscrat, Calhoun		77787980	15	full	Primary
Nash, Lewis		77	7	1/32nd	Primary
Owens, Charles		81	16	full	Primary
Parks, Jeff	80-82		18	1/16th	
Pathkiller, Johnson		767778	18	half	Primary
Perry, S.M.		78	20	1/8th	

Pettit, Charles		4	21	1/4th		Father-Farmer
Petitt, Joseph		76				
Pheasant, Geo.		76	8	full	Primary	
Pool, Charles		80	21	1/32nd		
Poorboy, Isreal		7778	11	half	Primary	
Potts, Nathaniel		76				
Purcell, Charles		79	16	1/16th		
Redbird, Jackson		77	23	full		
Ridge, Aeneas		76				
Riley, James		76				
Roach, Thomas		79	17	half		
Rogers, A.L.		76	16	1/32nd		
Rogers, H.M.		78	15	1/32nd		
Rogers, W.C.		76	27	1/4th		
Ross, Charles	78-82		10	half	Primary	
Ross, Lewis		82	13	1/4th		
Ross, Philip		88				Father-Attorney
Ross, Silas		76	18	3/4th		
Ross, John H.		76				
Rowe, Joseph V.		76				
Sanders, Alexander		76				
Sanders, Frank		76				
Sisson, Charles H.		76	17	1/16th		
Smith, Edward		76	18	half		
Scott, Walter		76				
Scraper, Albert		76				
Sanders, Frank		76				
Sanders, Nicholas		76	15	3/4th		
Sanders, W.F.		77	17	half		
Scott, French		79	11	half	Primary	
Sevier, John A.		76				
Shell, Charles	77-82		11	full	Primary	
Shell, William	76-81		4	3/4th	Primary	
Shelton, Harvey	80-82		17	1/16th		
Sixkiller, Joseph	80-82		14	full	Primary	
Smith, W.C.		80	16	1/4th		
Spears, John		76				

Squirrel, Martin	787980	12	full	Primary	
Stand, Robin	77	12	3/4th		
Starr, James	76	19	full		
Starr, Jesse	76	17	full		
Starr, Ellis	77	18	1/4th		
Starr, Robert	78	16	full	Primary	
Starr, Samuel	77	18	1/4th		
Sullivan, Jeff	77	14	1/8th		
Sullivan, Willis	77	16	1/16th		
Tassel, Jackson	76				
Taylor, Albert	80-82	10	1/4th	Primary	
Tehee, Alexander	76	5	full	Primary	
Tehee, Charles	76				
Thompson, Jno. L.	76				
Thompson, Robt. J.	76				
Thompson, Jos.	80	15	1/16th		
Thompson, Walter A.	76-82				
Thornton, Marion	76				
Thorne, William	78	19	1/4th		
Thornton, Nicholas	76				
Timberlake, John	77	17	half		
Toney, Levi	76	17	full		
Triplet, Thomas	80-82	11	full	Primary	
Tucker, Samuel	80	14	half		
Turner, Jackson	76				
Turner, Jesse	767778	15	full	Primary	
Tyner, James F.	7980	19	half	Primary	Academic
Tyner, Lewis	80	14	1/8th		
McCracken, James	76				
Vann, Charles	798081	14	half		
Vann, John J.	76	19	half		
Vann, Robert	76	5	full	Primary	
Vann, Lucullus	76				
Vore, Irving	76				
Walker, Richard	76				
Walker, Lewis	79	17	1/64th		
Walkingstick, Charles	82	40	full	Primary	
Walkingstick, Samuel	82	14	full	Primary	

Ward, James D.		76			
Ward, Joel	76-82		17	1/32nd	
Ward, Wm.		78	21	1/4th	
Ward, Y.C.		76			
Warspeaker, Wm.		76			
Waters, Stand M.		76			
Watie, Thomas		78	21	full	
Whiteturkey, D.W.		76	18	half	
Whitmire, Eli		767778	23	half	
Whitmire, Walter		78	17	half	
Welch, John					
Welch, James		81	15	1/16th	
Wells, George		76			
Whirlwind, Lewis		82	18	full	Primary
Wilkinson, Richard		76	16	1/32nd	
Williams, Geo. A.	78-82		12	1/8th	Primary
Williams, Joseph		76	16	1/16th	
Wilson, Albert		82	16	1/16th	
Wilson, D.W.C.		79	9	1/4th	Primary
Wilson, E.	7677787980				
Wilson, Robert		76			
Wilson, Rory		82	14	1/4th	Primary
Wolfe, Jackson		8081	13	1/4th	Primary
Woodall, Charles		76			
Woodall, James B.		77	15	1/16th	
Woodall, T.F.		8081	20	half	
Wyly, Percy	77-82				
Wyly, R.L.		82	19	1/16th	

VITA

Natalie Panther

Candidate for the Degree of

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Thesis: 'TO MAKE US INDEPENDENT': THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG MEN AT THE CHEROKEE NATIONAL MALE SEMINARY, 1851-1910

Major Field: History

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M.A. in History (2007)
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Fort Lewis College, Durango, CO
B.A. in Psychology, History minor (2003)

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PUBLICATIONS

"Frontier Thesis," in *Encyclopedia of Local History*, editors Carol Cammen and Amy H. Wilson (Landham, MD: Alta Mira Press, 2013), 203.
Review of Leonard Lambert Jr.'s *Up From These Hills: Memories of a Cherokee Boyhood* in *Chronicles of Oklahoma* XC (Fall 2012), 364.