

TO CHANGE THEM FOREVER: SCHOOLING ON
THE KIOWA-COMANCHE RESERVATION,
1869-1920

By
RICHARD CLYDE ELLIS

Bachelor of Arts
Lenoir-Rhyne College
Hickory, North Carolina
1980

Master of Arts
University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Greensboro, North Carolina
1986

Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate College of the
Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for
the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
May, 1993

TO CHANGE THEM FOREVER: SCHOOLING ON
THE KIOWA-COMANCHE RESERVATION,
1869-1920

Thesis Approved:

L. G. Moses

Thesis Advisor

James H. Huns

Michael M. H. H.

John Paul Bischoff

Donald D. B.

Dean of the Graduate College

PREFACE

During the late nineteenth century no solution to the so-called "Indian Problem" was mentioned more often than education. Policymakers believed that the attempt to transform Indians and bring them into American society could be most effectively achieved in the classroom. Particular emphasis was given to reservation boarding schools where students could be separated from their families for as long as ten months a year and exposed to a wide variety of academic and practical lessons. In the ordered environment of the boarding school, discipline, habits of industry and hygiene, vocational training, and cultural reorientation would combine to produce a changed race. Armed with the skills and knowledge necessary to forge new lives, Indians would be able to take their place in the American mainstream.

It was an ambitious but flawed plan. Indian education usually sounded better in theory than it was in fact. Despite the rhetorical flourishes of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, in reality the program never really enjoyed the kind of success that reformers and policymakers envisioned. Although they depended on it to bring Indians into the American mainstream, government officials rarely gave the Indian school system the support it needed. The failure to do so had enormous implications. It meant that the government's ambitious hopes for civilizing the tribes according to Angloamerican values would never be fully

realized; worse, it made it possible for Indians to maintain their cultural identity in varying degree on reservations across the country.

Given the importance attached to schools in the campaign to transform Indians, it is surprising that historians have given them relatively little attention. Major off-reservation schools such as Carlisle and Phoenix have attracted notice, but reservation schools have not. This is unfortunate, for reservation boarding schools were the critical link in the government's civilization program, yet we know little about them or the students who attended them. This study is an attempt to examine how education worked on the Kiowa-Comanche Reservation in western Oklahoma during critical period of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Created in 1867 by the Treaty of Medicine Lodge Creek, the Kiowa-Comanche Reservation was home to some of the most troublesome Indians on the Southern Plains. The Kiowas and Comanches were among the last of the region's tribes to accept reservation life, and even after agreeing to it, they proved to be a difficult, recalcitrant people. Determined to settle and civilize them according to Angloamerican notions of work and culture, the United States government promised a school and teacher for every thirty school-age Kiowa and Comanche children, of whom there were about 600. Convinced of the urgency of introducing those tribes to Christianity, farming, and private property, the government promised extensive support for such endeavors. Indeed, here was a laboratory in which to test the effectiveness of the forced assimilation campaign spearheaded by the schools.

One of the reservation's three boarding schools was located at Rainy Mountain, about thirty miles west of the agency office at Anadarko. The school

operated between the fall of 1893 and the spring of 1920 and in most respects was a typical reservation boarding school serving a typical collection of Indian children. By combining a vocational education program with limited academic instruction, the Rainy Mountain School sought simultaneously to educate and transform the children who enrolled there. Hailing such an approach as nothing less than an emancipation from a backward life, government officials regarded schools like Rainy Mountain as gateways to civilization. The sixth-grade education available there guaranteed an independent, self-sufficient future for a race of people elevated out of savagery by the lessons of discipline and hard work. At least that was how the Indian Office saw it.

It was never that simple. Government negligence and Indian resistance combined to hamper the program from the very beginning. Understanding why the Indian Office proved reluctant to support the Indian schools offers insight into the nature of policy making during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; it also reveals important limitations in the definitions that contemporaries attached to terms like "civilized Indians" and assimilation. Knowing how Kiowa children fared at Rainy Mountain has important uses beyond an understanding of the facts of Indian education; it also addresses issues of cultural identity and survival that historians have been reluctant to discuss.

Chapters one and two are a summary of the policy decisions and developments that created the Indian school system during the nineteenth century. Chapter three introduces the Kiowa-Comanche Reservation and examines the early history of schooling there by placing it in the wider context of the reservation's somewhat difficult circumstances. Chapter four turns to Rainy

Mountain School and is a discussion of its early years. Chapter five focuses on student life at the school and rests heavily on oral history. Interviews with former students from the Rainy Mountain, Riverside, and Fort Sill boarding schools form the basis for exploring day-to-day life in the schools. Chapter six examines the changing attitudes inside the Indian Office during the Progressive era that marked a redirection of educational policy. Such changes eventually doomed Rainy Mountain. Chapters seven and eight assess the school's last ten years and its closing.

Because this study employs terms that often resist objective definition, it seems well to clarify a number of them. Euroamerican refers to the western European ideas on race and culture that influenced Indian affairs in America from the sixteenth century forward. Angloamerican refers more specifically to the cultural milieu produced by the British colonial experience. The dangerously objective terms "civilization" and "civilizing" are used in the context of Euro and Angloamerican policy making based on ideas that government officials universally accepted. These included an emphasis on the revealed truths of Christian (usually Protestant) religion, the assumed superiority of Western culture, and the widely shared belief that elevating Indians from their savage state into something approximating the heritage of the West was justifiable and benevolent. "Assimilation" and "acculturation" are used as measurements of cultural change and adaptation. The former describes the total transformation of Indians envisioned by policymakers; the latter describes the accommodation that actually occurred.

Historians have debts. I express my sincerest thanks to Dr. George Moses,

who agreed to assume direction of this project from Dr. W. David Baird. Dr. Baird encouraged me to attend Oklahoma State and was instrumental in directing my training as a historian of American Indians and the American West. Although he was not able to see this project through to completion, Dr. Baird deserves my gratitude and much of the credit for my understanding of American Indian history. Dr. Moses has directed this dissertation with great thoughtfulness and encouragement. His sharp editorial skills and understanding of American Indian history have contributed more than he knows to this study. To Drs. Paul Bischoff, Donald Brown, Richard Rohrs, and Michael Smith of Oklahoma State University, I wish to extend my deepest gratitude for helping to direct my graduate education and for bringing their considerable intellectual acumen to this dissertation. I also take pleasure in acknowledging the cooperation of the staff at the Oklahoma Historical Society's Division of Indian Archives, particularly to William Welge, who first suggested Rainy Mountain as a topic, and to Judith Michener who was unstinting in her help at the archives.

Without the help and support of many Kiowa people, this project would not have been possible. I am especially indebted to Parker McKenzie, whose knowledge of Rainy Mountain School gave me a rare insight into his life as a student there nearly ninety years ago. I cannot fully express my thanks to the members of the Harry Tofpi, Sr., family. Their willingness to make me and my wife part of their family has taught me about the richness and vitality of Kiowa life today.

Finally, my wife Mary has endured the project longer than she should have had to endure it but has been unfailingly supportive during the months required to

finish it (except when the muffler fell off of the car). Her editorial skills and sense of good history have helped to make this project worthwhile.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. "THE GRAND OBJECT:" THE FORMATIVE YEARS OF INDIAN EDUCATION	1
II. "IT IS A REMEDY FOR BARBARISM:" THE CREATION OF AN INDIAN SCHOOL SYSTEM	23
III. THE KIWAS AND THEIR AGENCY	63
IV. "THERE ARE SO MANY THINGS NEEDED:" AN INAUSPICIOUS BEGINNING	102
V. "WE HAD A LOT OF FUN, BUT, OF COURSE, THAT WASN'T THE SCHOOL PART"	140
VI. SHIFTING PRIORITIES: THE PROGRESSIVE ERA	189
VII. DECLINING FORTUNES	223
VIII. "THE KIWAS NEED THEIR SCHOOL, THEY CANNOT VERY WELL GET ALONG WITHOUT IT"	257
CONCLUSION	282
WORKS CITED	289

CHAPTER I

"THE GRAND OBJECT:" THE FORMATIVE YEARS OF INDIAN EDUCATION

On a clear, windy afternoon in August of 1990, ninety-two-year-old Parker McKenzie, a Kiowa Indian from Mountain View, Oklahoma, pointed to the ramshackle remains of the Rainy Mountain Boarding School and said, "that was where I got my start." The ruins to which he pointed lay in the center of what had once been the campus of a reservation boarding school. Between 1893 and 1920 it started hundreds of young Kiowas like McKenzie toward what the government hoped would be a transforming experience. Here, in a remote corner of the sprawling Kiowa-Comanche Reservation, government teachers struggled for nearly three decades to make the vision of a new Indian race a reality. Crowded into the school's dormitories and classrooms, generations of Kiowa children toiled to become the sort of civilized, competent citizens that the government wanted them to be. Working in the shadow of the mountain after which the school was named, young Kiowas were encouraged to work diligently toward becoming culturally indistinguishable from the whites who surrounded them.

The price of their transformation was the forfeiture of what made them Indian. Youngsters like McKenzie were to emerge wholly changed and permanently transformed. The goal was to prevent them from "going back to the

blanket," a term of derision applied to backsliders who could not resist the temptation of returning to native ways. Once given the liberating experience of the school, youngsters were to return to their communities as beacons of change and examples of proper living. Schooling was intended to do much more than simply inculcate Indian children with white educational goals, it would be the definitive moment in the metamorphosis of a people. Writing to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1899, Rainy Mountain Principal Cora Dunn spoke bluntly of the school's mission: "Our purpose," she wrote, "is to change them forever."¹

Despite the certitude that Dunn and her colleagues brought to Rainy Mountain, the process would rarely be so straightforward. Exigencies of time and distance, limited support, and small budgets would all combine to make Rainy Mountain School, and others like it, struggling outposts in the Indian educational system. The Kiowas, too, would stamp the school with a peculiar mark, for not all or even most of the children who attended there ever succumbed fully to the government's hopes. Many, like Parker McKenzie, emerged from the school ready to move into the non-Indian world to lead meaningful lives as acculturated Indians. Yet, they did not forget or give up what had made them Kiowa. Despite the best efforts of its teachers, Rainy Mountain School produced students who learned English but retained Kiowa, accepted non-Indian values but combined them with their own, took jobs in the white community but did not become wholly part of it. Ironically, though Rainy Mountain functioned precisely in the way that many administrators hoped it would, it did not destroy Kiowa culture among its students. It helped, in fact, to ensure its survival.

Rainy Mountain School was part of a system of government boarding schools operating on reservations all across the country in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Collectively, they served as the government's primary agency for Indian cultural transformation. Speaking in 1895 at the Lake Mohonk Conference, an annual meeting of Indian reform advocates begun in 1883, United States Commissioner of Indian Education W. N. Hailmann preached a philosophy that reached back to the age of Jefferson. "Give us your children," he implored Indian parents. "We will give them letters and make them acquainted with the printed page. . . . With these comes the great emancipation, and the school shall give you that."² The "great emancipation," or something akin to it, was summed up by Hailmann and his colleagues as the inevitable absorption by white America of its Indian wards. The process entailed a complete cultural, intellectual, spiritual, and material transformation. It was to be a transformation that replaced what most whites regarded as depraved and savage institutions with ones that faithfully mirrored (or at least as faithfully as crude savages could) the Christian mores that dominated American thought.

Most policymakers and reformers hoped to produce a truly assimilated Indian population, that is, one that was culturally indistinguishable from its white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant model. As envisioned by the Indian office beginning in the late eighteenth century, native values and institutions would be replaced by Euroamerican ones. Policymakers agreed the little if anything in Indian culture was worth saving and deemed the process they envisioned both prudent and humane. It was, after all, sometimes necessary to save the Indians from themselves. Indeed, the alternatives were stark. To many observers, the choice

was between the uplifting experience of schools and the gospel, or the extinction that was the fate of all backward races. To civilize them therefore, meant exposing them to the rudiments of the Christian faith, to habits of industry and Euroamerican agriculture, and to the discipline and self-discovery of the schoolroom. Enlightenment optimism suggested that such change could be effected by manipulating environmental and institutional influences. Such thinking, however, proved to be badly flawed.

In reality, what occurred in most places and at most times was acculturation, a process that entailed something less than the total reordering of native society desired by whites. Instead of radical change, contact usually produced accommodation and change on both sides. Though they were usually loath to admit it, Euroamericans quickly discovered that natives were extraordinarily able to resist change when it threatened their sense of identity or cultural foundations in ways that would destroy them as a people. For their part, Indians often engaged in a pattern of response that embraced certain things, such as trade goods or alliances or even religion, but did not do so in ways that fundamentally changed their sense of identity. Of course, most tribes had been doing this sort of thing for generations; contact with Euroamericans meant simply that the pace accelerated and came to include developments that had not existed in pre-Columbian times. Thus, acculturation through syncretic institutions and value systems, and not outright assimilation, characterized the Indian world.³

That rarely happened. It certainly did not occur to the degree envisioned by the Indian Office. For the Kiowa children who attended Rainy Mountain School, acculturation meant accepting the rhythm and routine of the boarding

school but not the core of its value system. In sociological terms, they did not internalize its lessons or take up its cultural baggage, but combined useful elements of it with the more meaningful Kiowa culture that defined them as people. In doing so they carefully and willfully joined elements of both cultures, neither wholly surrendering theirs nor completely taking on that of whites. It was this syncretic culture that allowed them, and continues to allow them, to survive in an occasionally hostile environment.

Although the process of assimilation as the government saw it embraced a variety of means, none was more important, or problematic, than education. Of the government's various programs it alone promised a systematic, uniform standard against which progress could be measured. Schools could be built anywhere and everywhere; they could be opened to students of all ages; they could accommodate both boys and girls; and they could act as the most powerful engine possible of the cultural transformation that policy makers devised for Indians. More importantly, education targeted children, those who were most vulnerable to change and least able to resist it, or so the government thought. Education, as Robert Utley has observed, "represented the most dangerous of all attacks on basic Indian values, the one most likely to succeed in the end because it aimed at the children, who had known little if any of the old reservation life."⁴ Hailing the classroom as the laboratory of permanent change, reformers, educators, and politicians alike believed that "education is essential to civilization." In 1892 Commissioner of Indian Affairs Thomas J. Morgan boldly stated that there were "no insuperable obstacles in the way of blending Indian children with white children."⁵ Moreover, success in the classroom promised to smooth the way for a

new kind of Indian, the sort who would not be identified with any kind of "Indian problem." Who could not see literate, scripture-quoting Indian children and believe that the future was in good hands? No other institution left reformers so convinced, according to Frederick Hoxie, that "they had a method of molding people anew."⁶

Unfortunately, rhetoric rarely matched reality. The years during which Rainy Mountain operated were unique for their optimism and general support of reform. And even then there were problems so serious that they crippled the Indian schools. The long view, moreover, reveals an ambiguous attitude and sense of cynicism concerning Indian education. And, by extension, it raises troubling questions about race, assimilation, and the real versus imagined goals of the Indian service. From the age of Jefferson through that of Wilson, the government implored, pleaded, and forced Indians to give up their children and place them in schools. Yet once they got them, the government was more often than not at a loss to make good on its promises. This was especially so at out-of-the-way schools such as Rainy Mountain, where the contradictions of Indian education were painfully revealed. In reality, Indian schools rarely managed to achieve the kind of total transformation envisioned by policy makers. Though scores of children may have left government schools stripped of their ethnic identity, many more resisted the efforts to surrender their culture. Large numbers of them, therefore, kept some degree of control over their cultural identity. Boarding schools such as Rainy Mountain succeeded most often in introducing Indian students to a new way of life that did not come at the expense of what made them Indian.

Ironically, hundreds of Kiowas left Rainy Mountain with many of the skills they were intended to learn, but they lived their lives based on cultural institutions and values that largely withstood the government's assimilation programs. Far from solving the Indian problem, Rainy Mountain rarely ever had the chance to remold its students into new citizens. Two reasons account for the limited success: insufficient support from a government that almost never matched its rhetoric with meaningful action, and significant resistance from the Kiowa community. Kiowa parents were willing to place their children in school but nevertheless made sure that language, culture, and institutions remained intact to one degree or another. The history of Indian education in general, and of Rainy Mountain in particular, reveals not only a government at odds with itself over educational policy and administration, but more importantly an Indian community that resisted as much as it could the twin goals of assimilation and absorption.

The civilizing policies of the period during which Rainy Mountain operated were the products of a process that reached back more than two centuries. (The impulse to civilize the tribes after the fashion of other christian Euroamericans characterized Indian-white relations from the very beginning.) Obviously there were differences in approach. The Spanish, for example, employed an approach that can only be described as cruelly oppressive, and which, in relative terms, treated Indians more harshly as a rule than did the French or British. Though there were lapses by both sides, British-Indian relations during the formative colonial era, for example, ran largely according to such thinking. American leaders generally accepted the British approach after the Revolution and based subsequent decisions on it for a century to come. Both the ideology and

administration of the British system, in fact, became staples in the American approach to the Indian question. Instead of developing a policy that strove to destroy the tribes, the United States opted for one driven by the determination to civilize natives according to Enlightenment optimism. It was a policy aimed at transforming the nation's Indian wards from rude sons of the forest into self-sufficient yeoman farmers. Although officials argued about the degree to which this might actually be possible, the merit of such an approach enjoyed general support. Overall, American policy makers in the early national period and the years that followed rejected the attempts at extermination with which they have been charged ever since. "Among the responsible and respected public figures in the first decades of United States developments," notes historian Paul Prucha, "there was a reasonable consensus that was the underpinning of official policy toward the Indians." And that "reasonable consensus" meant civilizing and assimilating Indians, not killing them.⁷ The only problem was that for much of the period under review, policymakers neither clearly defined nor consistently enacted the measures they felt were necessary to civilize and assimilate the tribes.

At a bare minimum American leaders envisioned a process entailing the radical cultural transformation of natives from their original state into one approximating the culture of other Americans. This would be accomplished through instruction in reading, writing, Euroamerican agriculture, domestic arts, and the Christian religion.⁸ Though it was a policy that reflected a narrowly defined sense of cultural worth, it generally also rested on the notion that benevolent paternalism could successfully replace inferior and imperfect native values with the more enlightened ones of the West. Left to their own devices,

Indians could only be expected to lead degenerate lives that threatened not only their own well-being but also that of their civilized white neighbors. The cultural superiority that had helped to produce the age of conquest now loomed as a staple in the difficult transition for Indians from savagery to civilization.

The answer to such a crisis was the introduction among the tribes of learning, industry, discipline, and Christian morality. That such a state of affairs might only be achieved forcibly was beside the point; as Kiowa children learned at Rainy Mountain, what they were getting was good for them, whether they liked it or not. More importantly, such thinking appeared early in the colonial era and became a staple of the American government's long-term Indian policy. Accepting it as an obligation to extend the fruits of civilization to Indians, the government of George Washington's day established patterns that extended virtually unchanged to future generations of policymakers. Writing to Francois-Jean Chastellux in 1785, for example, Thomas Jefferson argued that "the proofs of genius given by the Indians of N. America, place them on a level with whites in the same uncultivated state. . . . I believe the Indian then to be in body and mind equal to the white man."⁹ It was a bold statement, one that confirmed a largely generous spirit toward Indians, at least as far as the Sage of Monticello was concerned. As long as they lived peacefully and accepted certain requirements of a civilized lifestyle, there was a place for Indians in the republic. Resistance meant well deserved punishment, but Jefferson and his colleagues believed that coercion would rarely be necessary. Though the optimism of the Jeffersonian position would be battered heavily in the decades to come, nothing ever quite managed to eclipse it. Believing that Indians could and should be brought into civilized

society, Jefferson was an eloquent advocate for policies that sought peaceful solutions to the Indian question. Settle them, school them, above all teach them to farm and the issue would resolve itself. As for the remnant that resisted time would eventually rid the country of it as well.

The church and the schoolroom were the twin agents of transformation in the nineteenth century. By then, each had been deemed indispensable to the other in the work at hand. Since the days of John Eliot in Massachusetts Bay, determined missionaries had stood firm in their belief that faith without intellectual growth was seed on rocky soil. As Margaret Szasz has argued in her work on colonial Indian education, the injunction to educate Indians was taken up with great fervor in the British colonies. Indian education "lay at the cutting edge of cultural interaction in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. . . . Colonial Euroamericans and Indians deemed . . . education as the ultimate tool for achieving cultural change among Indian people." Whether in Puritan New England or the Carolinas, one of the highest callings for colonial missionaries, Szasz argues, was to teach, and thus to civilize, the Indians.¹⁰

But that was not all. What good would it serve to have literate but unregenerate natives? Surely education must aim toward some greater purpose. Thus the relationship between education and salvation was as clear for Indians as it was for Puritans in Massachusetts. Writing in 1823, for example, Thaddeus M. Harris made reference to that earlier era and told his listeners that "the Gospel, plain and simple as it is, and fitted by its nature for what it was designed to effect, requires an intellect above that of a savage to comprehend. Nor is it all to the dishonor of our holy faith that such men must be taught a previous lesson, and

first of all be instructed in the emollient arts of life."¹¹ Here, then, were the two necessary components of a godly, civilized life. The school would provide the training, the church the guidelines and examples.

Although advocates of the Gospel and literacy among the Indian might disagree over which should come first — prayer book or spelling book — the goal was universal, a transformed (usually Protestant) native who, according to Robert Berkhofer, would be brought "not merely to unite with the white man in the worship of God, but cooperate with them in the business of agriculture and trade" as well.¹² It was an important idea, for missionaries and teachers reflected universally the substance of policy. It was also an enduring idea, deeply influenced by the New England ethos of an educated elect. Separation of church and state would have no meaning in Indian education from either an ideological or institutional point of view. From the beginning, the transformation of the Indians rested squarely on cultural institutions and values that combined carefully the forces of education and Christianity. Sanctioned by the government, such an approach was designed to produce a particular kind of assimilated Indian. Together, the church and school came to be the most influential and critical agents of change until the middle of the twentieth century.¹³

Schools like Rainy Mountain operated as government-run, publicly-funded institutions. In reality, they often resembled the mission schools in which teachers labored to educate and convert, and where, notes Paul Prucha, it was difficult to know where one ended and the other began. Education was deliberately immersed in religion and vice-versa. For those who worried about the constitutional separation of church and state (and the critics were so few as to be

invisible), proponents could always buttress their approach with the solemn assurance that joining church and school together was surely not the same thing as sanctioning one religion over another. As long as one was not a Catholic interested in joining what was, and remained, a Protestant-dominated policy, this defense was acceptable. Not surprisingly, says Robert Berkhofer, "missionaries found themselves, as one confessed, 'entirely unable to separate religion and civilization.'" Thus, a good Indian was a copy of a good white man. "In the school and in the field," noted one Methodist missionary, "our aim was to teach the Indians to live like white people."¹⁴ Anything less was unacceptable. Policymakers measured worth by the degree of change and adaptation; the absence of meaningful change meant a sort of cultural and moral deficiency that was intolerable. An educated, Christian (usually Protestant) Indian was the unalterable goal.

(By far the most promising source for teaching Indians "to live like white people" was a school system that could subject every Indian child to rigorous indoctrination. Hoping to remold youths before the uncivilized life became too deeply developed, missionaries like Gideon Blackburn promised to solve the problem if given the proper tools. Writing in 1807, Blackburn assured a colleague that his task was "not only to rescue the rising race from savage manners, but also to light up beacons, by which the parents might gradually be conducted into the same field of improvement."¹⁵ What other course could offer the salvation of an entire race? Moreover, such an approach maintained the already close association between Christian missions, the education of Indians, and evolving national policy. Such a relationship effectively promoted a benevolent solution to

the Indian question. By advocating education early in the lives of Indians, Blackburn and others also set a precedent that survived well into the twentieth century.

The formative period in Indian education was anything but systematic and often proved to be little more than a patchwork effort. For all of their confidence, education advocates often had an imperfect sense of direction. The most important early attempts came from the mission schools and private academies, the forerunners of a government supported Indian education system. Because the private academies and mission schools aimed at "piety . . . traditional learning, and . . . industrious work habits," writes Prucha, the government happily and actively supported them.¹⁶ And because they reflected an already significant tradition handed down largely from the New Englanders, such schools represented an important and venerated tradition. Moreover, the combination of practical knowledge leavened with Christian values promised results that answered the most pressing criticisms of Indian life — indolence and unchristian savagery.

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions was prominent among the various groups which petitioned the government for permission to build schools. Few groups equaled its prestige and energy in endeavoring to build schools. Moreover, its approach to schooling Indians reflected the standard philosophy. In 1816 it requested authority to open its first school, which it did at Brainerd, Tennessee. Led by Cyrus Kingsbury, arguably one of the most eminent proponents of an Indian school system during the era, Brainerd became a model for the schools that followed it. Addressing the function of the school as he saw it, Kingsbury wrote to the Board in November

1816 and informed them that:

I considered it to be the grand object of the present undertaking to impart to them that knowledge which is calculated to make them useful citizens, and pious Christians. In order to do this, it appeared necessary to instruct them in the various branches of common English education; to form them to habits of industry, and to give them a competent knowledge of civilized life.¹⁷

Kingsbury petitioned the government for approval of his school on the grounds that extending such lessons to Indians was "not only a dictate of humanity, and a duty enjoined by the Gospel, but an act of justice."¹⁸ Such sentiments became the stock and trade of Indian schools across the country by the end of the century.

To make such a vision a reality, Kingsbury and others petitioned the government for aid. What they wanted was government assistance sufficient to underwrite dozens of Indian schools throughout the country. The system for which missionaries clamored found remarkable support at high levels inside the federal government. Thomas L. McKenney, the Superintendent of Indian Trade from 1816 to 1822, was notable in the early attempt to develop an Indian school system. Like Kingsbury, he was an ardent proponent of Christianization and education and saw in them the most promising solution of all to the Indian question. He sought openly to align church and state to accomplish the task. Indeed, he so thoroughly advocated such a system that according to Paul Prucha, McKenney usually "sounded . . . more like a missionary than a public official."¹⁹

Already committed to using the well-entrenched factory system as a civilizing influence, McKenney viewed Indian schools as natural additions to such a program. He urged the expansion of the factory system to "serve the great object of humanity" by using it to encourage cultural transformation. With

Jefferson, he believed that fostering economic dependence among the tribes could be used ultimately as leverage in the attempt to force assimilation. Jefferson thought that using the system to encourage large debts among Indians might prove expedient in forcing land cessions and other concessions. Of course, such developments were counted on to drive a cultural wedge into the tribes.

McKenney saw an Indian school system as another component in a program designed to transform the tribes humanely and quickly. And to accomplish the task, he advocated seeking out missionary societies that would run the schools under his supervision. Profits from the factory system ought to be used, said McKenney, to create "a monument more durable and towering than those of ordinary dimensions, a monument as indestructible as justice, interesting as humanity, and lasting as time."²⁰

The necessity of political compromise denied McKenney the comprehensive school system he wanted, but he did not come away empty-handed. And what he got became the foundation of a nationwide Indian school system. On March 3, 1819, an act "making provision for the civilization of the Indian tribes adjoining the frontier settlements" became law.²¹ The "Civilization Fund," as it was called, provided an annual appropriation of \$10,000 to be distributed at the President's discretion to the various mission societies engaged in work among the Indians. It was a modest sum, even by the day's standards; still it would push forward the work of schooling and civilizing as never before. Though it was clearly better than nothing, McKenney and others scoffed at the sum. When queried by the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs as to what he thought a fair appropriation should be, he replied emphatically: "One hundred thousand dollars, annually. It is little

enough since we got the Indians' land for an average of two and three quarters cents the acre."²² The relatively meager appropriation of 1819 belied the government's professed intention to elevate its wards to meaningful participation in white society. From the very beginning, rhetoric ran aground on the shoals of political expedience and partisanship.

Despite the dearth of funds, the precedent had been set by a Congress apparently ready to solve peaceably the Indian question, if such a thing was possible. Progress was glacially slow, but proponents could point yearly to results that deflected all but the most determined critics. By 1824, five years after the act's passage, twenty-one Indian schools were open, eighteen of them under the auspices of the civilization fund. Moreover, Indian students seemed capable, and occasionally eager, in their pursuit of a formal education. "The acquisition of an English education," reported the House Committee on Indian Affairs in 1824, "exceeds the most sanguine expectations that had been formed."²³ Rising to the challenge, McKenney, following his appointment as head of the Office of Indian Affairs, issued what Prucha describes as a "blistering circular" to superintendents and agents reminding them that it was their duty to "sanction and second this plan of renovating the morals and enlightening and improving these unfortunate people." Apparently, McKenney's broadside had some effect; by late 1824 he listed thirty-two schools with 916 students. Six years later, fifty-two schools held 1512 students.²⁴

Although hardly comprehensive, here was proof to critics and advocates alike that the classroom was the best path to civilization and the solution of the vexing Indian question.²⁵ He could not accurately predict the legacy of his early

work, but McKenney had in fact laid the foundation for a philosophy that within a generation would become the unquestioned centerpiece of the government's assimilation program. Within a decade and a half, virtually all treaty provisions would regularly authorize annuities for education and obligate the government to provide educational facilities and opportunities for its wards. Yet, at its birth, the system also reflected a supreme irony. By 1830 Congress would vote for Removal. In doing so it exposed the two poles of Euroamerican attitudes: the first was inclusionist and strove to absorb Indians at the price of their culture; the other was exclusionist and sought to move them beyond the boundaries of Euroamerican civilization. If McKenney laid the foundation, there were already dangerous cracks. Never particularly well directed, Indian education soon faced a deeply ambivalent environment that hobbled it even more thoroughly.

Out on the Southern Plains the Kiowas were still largely an unknown and undisturbed people. Indeed, not until the 1830s did the white frontier begin materially to interfere with their lives. But plans were already being established and confirmed that would challenge the autonomy and independence of tribes like the Kiowas. Although the establishment of Rainy Mountain School lay sixty years in the future, what Jedidiah Morse called "the grand object . . . the work of educating . . . nearly one half a million Indians . . . [a task] great, arduous, and appalling" was under way.²⁶ An era had begun from which few could escape. They could not yet know it, but the Kiowas and their world would shortly begin to change and wither, and their children would find themselves in schools that promised salvation if they would agree to destroy what made them who they were.

Notes

1. Cora Dunn to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, September 4, 1899. Rainy Mountain School Records: Record Group 75, National Archives, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

2. *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs* (hereafter cited as *ARCIA*), 1896: 1016; Fred Hoxie, *A Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate The Indians, 1880-1920* (Cambridge: Oxford University Press, 1898), 190.

3. Scholars often tend to be vague in their use of terms like assimilation and acculturation. I rely on the interpretations of Ralph Linton and Edward Spicer which reflect quite accurately what happened in the Indian schools and in the Indian communities on the Kiowa-Comanche reservation in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Especially good discussions of acculturation and culture change may be found in Linton, ed., *Acculturation in Seven American Indian Tribes* (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1940), see especially chapters 7, 8, and 9 in which Linton discusses acculturation and the processes of culture change. A more recent discussion may be had in Edward H. Spicer, ed., *Perspectives in American Indian Culture Change* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961). Spicer's essay on the process of culture change in chapter 8 is especially good. See also Fred W. Voget, "The American Indians in Transition: Reformation and Accommodation," *American Anthropologist* 58(April 1956): 249-263; Anthony F. C. Wallace, "Revitalization Movements," *American Anthropologist* 58(April 1956): 264-281; James Clifton, "Alternative Identities and Cultural Frontiers," in *Being and Becoming Indian:*

Biographical Studies of North American Frontiers, edited by James A. Clifton (Chicago: Dorsey Press, 1989): 1-37). Recent scholarship in Indian history reveals a rich tradition of resistance and accommodation that confirms an accommodative versus an assimilative process following contact. Representative examples are Neal Salisbury, *Manitou and Providence: Indians, Europeans, and the Making of New England, 1500-1643* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982); Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991); R. David Edmunds, *The Shawnee Prophet* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983); Gregory Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance: The North American Indian Struggle For Unity, 1745-1815* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992); Joseph B. Herring, *The Enduring Indians of Kansas: A Century and a Half of Acculturation* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1990); William Hagan, *United States-Comanche Relations: The Reservation Years* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990); Morris W. Foster, *Being Comanche: A Social History of an American Indian Community* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1991).

4. Robert M. Utley, *The Last Days of the Great Sioux Nation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), 37; Francis Paul Prucha, *American Indian Policy In Crisis: Christian Reformers and The Indian, 1865-1900* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1976), 265.

5. *ARCIA*, 1892: 5.

6. Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 190.

7. Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians*, 2 vols. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), I, 136; *idem.*, *American Indian Policy in the Formative Years: The Indian Trade and Intercourse Acts, 1790-1834* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962). See also Reginald Horsman, *Expansion and American Indian Policy, 1783-1812* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992).

8. Prucha, *The Great Father*, I, 136. See also Robert M. Berkhofer, *Salvation and the Savage: An Analysis of Protestant Missions and American Indian Response, 1787-1862* (New York: Atheneum Press, 1976), 1-15.

9. Thomas Jefferson to Francois-Jean Chastellux, June 7, 1785, *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, 18 vols., Julian Boyd, ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950-), VIII, 186; Prucha, *The Great Father*, I, 136. For a less optimistic analysis of the era see Bernard Sheehan, *Seeds of Extinction: Jeffersonian Philanthropy and the American Indian* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973).

10. Margaret Connell Szasz, *Indian Education in the American Colonies, 1607-1783* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988), 4. See especially chapters 3 and 4.

11. Theodore M. Harris, "A Discourse Preached November 6, 1823," cited in Berkhofer, *Salvation and the Savage*, 4.

12. Berkhofer, *Salvation and the Savage*, 4-7, 8.

13. See Szasz, *Indian Education in the American Colonies*, chapter 2. For

assessments of the emerging character of Indian education in the formative era, see Lawrence Cremin, *American Education: The Colonial Experience, 1607-1783* (New York: Harper and Row, 1970); Elma E. Gray, *Wilderness Christians: The Moravian Mission To The Delaware Indians* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1956); R. Pierce Beaver, "Methods in American Missions to the Indians in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: Calvinist Models for Protestant Foreign Missions," *Journal of Presbyterian History* 47(Summer 1969): 124-148; Robert Berkhofer, "Protestants, Pagans, and Sequences Among the North American Indians, 1760-1860," *Ethnohistory* 10(Spring 1963): 201-269; Francis Jennings, "Goals and Functions of Puritan Missions to the Indians," *Ethnohistory* 18(Summer 1971): 197-212; William S. Simmons, "Conversion From Indian to Puritan," *New England Quarterly* 52(June 1979): 197-218; Norman E. Tannis, "Education in John Eliot's Indian Utopias, 1646-1675," *History of Education Quarterly* 10(Fall 1970): 308-323.

14. Berkhofer, *Salvation and the Savage*, 10.

15. Blackburn to Jedidiah Morse, 10 November 1807, in *The Panoplist*, III (December 1807): 322-323, cited in Berkhofer, *Salvation and the Savage*, 17, n.3.

16. Prucha, *The Great Father*, I, 146. See also Szasz, *Indian Education in the American Colonies*, 25-46.

17. Robert S. Walker, *Torchlights To The Cherokees: The Brainerd Mission* (New York: MacMillan, 1931), 22.

18. Cited in Prucha, *The Great Father*, I, 147.

19. *Ibid.*, I, 148-154. See also Herman Viola, *Thomas L. McKenney: Architect of America's Early Indian Policy, 1816-1830* (Chicago: Swallow Press, 1974), especially chapter 3, "The Factories and Indian Reform," 21-46.

20. Prucha, *The Great Father*, I, 149. McKenney to Henry Southard, 15 January 1818, cited in *ibid.*, I, 150. Southard was Chairman of the House Committee on Indian Affairs and an ally of McKenney's.

21. 3 *United States Statutes*, 516-517.

22. Prucha, *The Great Father*, I, 151, n.40. See also Viola, *McKenney*, 41-43.

23. *Annals of Congress*, 17th Congress, 2nd Session, 1792-1801; *House Report* no. 92, 18-1, serial 106.

24. Prucha, *The Great Father*, I, 152.

25. *Ibid.*, I, 152; *ARCLIA*, 1830: 166-168. For a more critical analysis, see Loring B. Priest, *Uncle Sam's Stepchildren: The Reformation of United States Indian Policy, 1865-1887* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1942), especially 132-154. Priest comments that "although education should have been recognized as an essential part of any intelligent Indian policy, the United States did not offer satisfactory opportunities for instruction until late in the nineteenth century," 132.

26. Prucha, *The Great Father*, I, 157-158.

CHAPTER II

"IT IS A REMEDY FOR BARBARISM:" THE CREATION OF AN INDIAN SCHOOL SYSTEM

Though far from being systematic or comprehensive, the fledgling Indian school system established during the first third of the nineteenth century continued to gain strength and stature over the next four decades. Its role in the struggle to transform the tribes, especially those on the Great Plains, became unassailable by the time of the Civil War. Commenting on the situation as it appeared in 1866, Commissioner of Indian Affairs Dennis Cooley asserted that education was virtually "the only means of saving any considerable portion of the race from the life and death of [the] heathen."¹ Cooley's observation, made in the wake of the opening of the trans-Mississippi West, underscored the urgency of a civilizing agenda that came to rest increasingly on education. Indeed, the responsibility of the government to protect and assimilate the West's Indian multitudes helped to ensure the survival of the bureau's Indian school system.

The opening of the trans-Mississippi West beginning in the 1830s and the existence there of some 360,000 Indians confirmed the need to implement policies that could first contain and later transform those people. Though the military played an important role in pacifying the region, the army rarely if ever dominated government relations with the tribes. Indeed, even in the years immediately

following the Civil War when the army's primary task was safeguarding the way west, the military almost never dictated policy but rather responded to it. Less confrontational, more benevolent efforts came to typify post-war policy. To be sure, the threat of military confrontation was often present; the reservation system and its array of programs were much more important to the policy kit than the army.

Opening the trans-Mississippi West to extensive Euroamerican settlement inaugurated a new kind of Indian problem, one that differed in kind and scope from anything experienced in the East. The 360,000 Indians in the West differed profoundly from eastern peoples in ways that made the solution to the problems they posed enormous. The diversity and military strength of the western tribes, for instance, posed serious threats to the orderly movement of the line of white settlement. The so-called "Indian Barrier" across the west was palpably real in some regions, especially in such places as Texas, where the Kiowas and Comanches hampered exploration and settlement for much of the period between 1830 and 1870. Civilizing the West's Indians according to leaders of federal policy, as opposed to simply exterminating them, continued to be the government's goal; but the magnitude of the task and its urgency made the situation somewhat different from anything previously attempted.²

Among the various western developments that influenced policymakers and reformers in the years immediately after the Civil War, two were especially important for their effect on Indian education. They were the reservation system and U.S. Grant's Peace Policy. Each played a central role in the development of a systematic Indian school system. The reservation provided the locale and

population, and the Peace Policy provided ideology, rationale, and administrative framework. Together they represented the benevolent paternalism that came increasingly to characterize the government's civilization program in the late nineteenth century.³

The idea of reservations was hardly new. Indeed, reservations had been used in one form or another and with varying degrees of success all over North America since the colonial era. As early as 1763, for example, the Proclamation Line that followed the crest of the Appalachians had designated white from Indian land and had been intended to segregate potentially hostile communities from one another. The steady westward movement of white settlers flawed the idea from the beginning, but policy makers clung to variations of it for the next century and a half. The creation of Indian Territory in 1825 stood as the logical if somewhat unwieldy extension of such thinking; untold thousands of Indians might be relocated there with rights granted in perpetuity thus guaranteeing a permanent Indian domain. The removals of the next decade confirmed the practicality of such thinking. In fact, agreement was general that the combination of systematic land cessions coupled with removal to the trans-Mississippi West would solve the Indian problem once and for all. Though some pockets of resistance survived in the East, removal seemed to settle the issue; few whites contemplated the need for similar operations in the future as it seemed unlikely that the West would ever be filled by whites. Since the 1820s the West had been stigmatized an arid wasteland fit for the Indians who knew no better way of life. Removed there, they would be out of the way of whites and safely isolated.

Removal treaties during Andrew Jackson's presidency did not necessarily

point to a reversal of the government's policy assumptions. Assimilation remained the long-term goal and was to be achieved through the same sort of agencies and plans as before. On the other hand, removal revealed a deep sense of ambiguity concerning the nature of the process and the time necessary for carrying it out.

With little of Jefferson's Enlightenment faith in the essential goodness of Indians, Jacksonians assigned assimilation secondary importance. Once the primary task of removal had been achieved, only then might missionaries, teachers, and others begin the laborious process of transformation. Responding to Cherokee concerns in 1835, for example, Jackson spoke clearly:

I have no motive, my friends, to deceive you. I am sincerely desirous to promote your welfare. Listen to me therefore while I tell you that you cannot remain where you are now. Circumstances that cannot be controlled . . . render it impossible that you can flourish in the midst of a civilized community. You have but one remedy . . . and that is to remove to the west. . . . And the sooner you do this the sooner will commence your career of improvement and prosperity.⁴

The solution to the Indian problem which removal represented was illusory. Even before the plan was an established fact other events had begun to open the West to white settlement. The opening of the frontier called into question the very policy of leaving the trans-Mississippi West largely to the tribes, for the government soon discovered that far from being a wasteland, much of the West was mineral-laden and rich in raw materials. And all of it lay under the control of Indians who were not much interested in being shuffled off to Indian Territory.

Ironically, the events that pushed open the West were simultaneous with the triumph of removal. The opening of the Santa Fe (1821), Oregon (1834), California (1841), and Mormon (1847) trails spurred overland migration and brought tens of thousands of non-Indian settlers westward into Indian country.

The Texas revolution of 1836, the annexation of Oregon in 1846, and the Mexican Cession of 1848 confirmed American claims on the West and initiated a new era of state building and expansion. Between 1840 and 1860 alone more than 300,000 settlers pushed beyond the fabled 100th meridian and established themselves all across the so recently maligned West. Suddenly the comfortable assumptions of the Jacksonians fell apart in the face of new realities. The concentration of thousands of eastern natives inside the Indian Territory, so recently lauded as the supreme achievement of Indian policy, paled in comparison to the problem of controlling and civilizing the West's vast Indian population.⁵

Not surprisingly, the solution to the West's Indian question appeared in a modification of previously tested ideas and policies. The regional reservations that eventually dotted the West, for example, were not an entirely new concept. Richard White has observed that the reservation system which emerged after the Civil War "was an improvisation. . . . Reservations evolved on an ad hoc basis as a way to prevent conflict and enforce a separation of races."⁶ Yet, they also reflected the Jeffersonian notions of benevolent paternalism and peaceful, if coerced, assimilation. As institutions of near total control (at least in theory), reservations could be counted on to bring the acculturative powers of church, school, and state to bear on all Indians, especially the young.

In the trans-Mississippi West, the process of subduing Indians and bringing order to the region was unwieldy. Thus assumptions guiding it changed repeatedly, especially with regard to the details of Indian policy. Prior to the 1850s, for instance, policymakers believed in what Ray Allen Billington has labeled "One Big Reservation" modeled after Indian Territory and located at some

geographically convenient spot. The rapid extension of the frontier, however, brought remarkable levels of resistance from the tribes and led to the conclusion that a simplistic solution like another Indian Territory would never succeed. "The mass migration across the Plains," wrote Billington, "the development of freighting and express lines, the plans for transcontinental railroads all demonstrated during the early 1850s that the policy of 'One Big Reservation' was destined to speedy extinction."⁷

Indeed, as early as the 1840s serious discussions in Washington suggested the establishment of not one but two Indian territories. A northern counterpart to the one already established on the Southern Plains would place the tribes out of the way of whites and would, like its model, facilitate the march toward civilization. "It may be said," noted Commissioner of Indian Affairs William Medill in 1848, "that we have commenced the establishment of two colonies for the Indian tribes . . . one north, on the headwaters of the Mississippi and the other south, on the western borders of Missouri and Arkansas."⁸ Moreover, added the commissioner one year later, concentrating the tribes would remove the temptation on their part to eke out a living according to traditional ways, or to resist "concentrating and applying themselves with any regular or systematic effort to agriculture and other industrial pursuits." Calling them colonies instead of reservations, Medill's plan aimed generally at placing Indians on small tracts of land, safe from white contact, where they could be taught Angloamerican farming. Robert Utley has commented that such a policy "met both moral and practical objectives," for it simultaneously cleared the plains and advanced the work of regenerating the tribes.⁹

Determined to inaugurate such a policy, the Indian Bureau engaged in a series of negotiations across the Plains that produced two significant treaties. In September 1851 government officials induced the Sioux, Cheyenne, Arapaho, Crow, Gros Ventre, Assiniboine, Arikara, and Shoshone people to accept fixed tribal boundaries spelled out in the Fort Laramie agreement. Two years later similar terms were reached with the Kiowas, Comanches, and Apaches at the Treaty of Fort Atkinson. Although not reservations in the sense that later came to define them, the territory defined by the two treaties surely reflected the spirit and intent of government policy; Utley has observed that although not intended specifically to facilitate "control and civilization of the Indians . . . they laid the foundations for future reservations."¹⁰ In time, the colonies, as Medill called them, would give way to dozens of smaller reservations onto which tribes were collected, either singly or in manageable numbers. By the early 1860s Commissioner of Indian Affairs William P. Dole took it as an article of faith that systematic reservations represented "the fixed policy of the government. . . . The change from savage to civilized life," he wrote,

is very great and is, at best, beset with difficulties As the ultimate object . . . should be to better their condition, it will be my duty . . . to . . . secure for them reservations . . . as will . . . remove the obstacles in the way of their advancement, and present to them the greatest inducements to abandon savage and adopt civilized modes of life.¹¹

By the close of the Civil War a national system of reservations designed to accelerate the civilizing process had won the support of policymakers and reformers. Government officials and interested friends of the Indian alike agreed generally that such a system promised the best hope for civilizing and saving,

literally, the nation's Indian wards. Treaty negotiations reflected a clear intent to use reservations as the pivotal component in the civilizing process. Agreements made with the major Plains tribes at Medicine Lodge Creek and Fort Laramie in 1867 and 1868, for example, provided what government officials believed were conditions for peaceful coexistence and gradual change.¹² Reviewing the situation as it appeared at the end of the 1860s, the Board of Indian Commissioners noted that "the policy of collecting the Indian tribes upon small reservations . . . seems to be the best that can be devised."¹³

Along with the belief that reservations provided the solution of the Indian question came a notably optimistic, even philanthropic, tenor in the language of policy. Advocates of reform tended generally to see enormous promise in the reservation system and its various programs and had a sense of enthusiasm and energy that was unmatched in later years. The most well known of the programs and plans in this era was the Peace Policy, an approach reflecting what Frederick Hoxie has defined as "the widespread interest in transforming Indians into 'civilized' citizens. Fueled by the memory of the Civil War and a self-serving desire to dismantle the tribal domains, politicians and reformers fashioned an elaborate program to incorporate Native Americans into the nation."¹⁴

Unfortunately the enthusiasm would not last much beyond the turn of the century. Still, the decades following the Civil War marked a high point in Indian reform. Rainy Mountain School was established as a result of this concern for reform; thirty years later it closed when the energy driving that reform played itself out and schools like it fell victim to an official pessimism and the redefinition of what assimilation meant in the modern world.¹⁵

Grant's Peace Policy reflected a peculiar concern for humanitarian reform inside the Indian Office and among outside observers as well. Driven in part by the climate of moral reform that had appeared during the war over the issue of slavery, the crusading fervor of the era was easily transferred to Indians and their plight. Having dealt successfully with slavery's blight, reformers turned their attention to Indian affairs — a topic that caused passions to run high. No one could reasonably deny that there was cause for alarm, nor could the Indian service boast of a particularly clean or honorable record. The Sioux uprising of 1862, the Sand Creek debacle two years later, and the general state of unrest and violence all across the frontier pointed to a potentially disastrous situation. Indeed, as Prucha has observed, by 1865 Indian affairs in the West "were at a crisis."¹⁶

How to solve the crisis without resorting to extreme or costly measures? An important turning point came in early 1865 when Congress created the Doolittle Commission. Named for the Wisconsin senator who chaired the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, the Doolittle Commission spent two years investigating conditions on reservations and in communities all across the West. Its report, issued on January 26, 1867, was a near indictment of the Indian service and called for an end to the "aggression of lawless white men." It also called for systematic inspections of reservations and decried their unbelievably tawdry conditions. It provided important momentum and renewed vigor for reform and rejected the idea that force could solve the dilemma. The Doolittle Commission marked the start of a new approach to Indian affairs that emphasized peace and justice. Moreover, it stood in bold contrast to the demands of some military authorities who sought a quick and decisive application of force against the tribes

and who hoped for military control of the reservations.¹⁷

Buttressed by a general suspicion of the army's ability to pacify the West, civilian reformers soon gained near total control of Indian policy making. Following the publication of the Doolittle report in 1867, for instance, Congress moved quickly in support of more peaceful approaches to Indian affairs than ever before. On July 20, 1867, it established the Peace Commission, a careful combination of military and civil leaders whose major task was to determine the cause of unrest on the frontier. Given the authority to write treaties and even to designate reservations, the commission combined military firmness with humanitarian leniency in the hope of producing permanent solutions to the benefit of Indians and whites alike. The commission's first reports of negotiations with the Sioux and Cheyenne on the Northern Plains, for instance, boasted that it had attempted "the hitherto untried policy . . . of endeavoring to conquer by kindness."¹⁸ In fact, the treaties signed at Medicine Lodge Creek and Fort Laramie in 1867 and 1868 seemed to herald a new approach. Although the peace they brought was temporary, the treaties, and the mood that they represented, suggested a more progressive spirit among white policymakers who sincerely hoped to inaugurate a more peaceful era.¹⁹

Indian policy reform quickened in 1869 following Grant's elevation to the presidency. Hardly an expert on the Indian question, the new president proved willing, even eager, to entertain various suggestions pertaining to Indian affairs. The turning point occurred in January 1869 when a delegation of Quakers approached Grant with the seemingly novel idea of basing Indian policy on peaceful rather than adversarial relations. Appoint men with strong religious

convictions, they told Grant, and a more enlightened and successful policy would follow, the benefits of which would redound to the whole country. "Gentlemen," Grant is reputed to have replied, "your advice is good. I accept it. . . . If you can make Quakers out of the Indians, it will take the fight out of them. Let us have peace."²⁰ Four weeks later Grant uttered the words which thereafter identified the policy. "All Indians disposed to peace," he said, "will find the new policy a peace policy." But so none could mistake his intentions, Grant also added a warning: "Those who do not accept this policy will find the new administration ready for a sharp and severe war policy." Grant followed this with the appointment of ten men "eminent for their intelligence and philanthropy to exercise joint control with the Secretary of the Interior" as members of a group called the Board of Indian Commissioners. Like the Peace Commission, this group had potentially far-reaching powers that allowed them to "concern themselves with the whole range of policy, especially the performance of superintendents and agents." In truth, the board had little direct power beyond oversight of contracts and annuity disbursements. Pursuing the new approach with enthusiasm, Grant handed an increasingly large share of control to the Peace Commission, Board of Indian Commissioners, and other groups that joined in the Peace Policy's direction. By 1872 some seventy-three agencies were in the hands of various church groups, leading to what Prucha has said was a policy that ought to have been called the "'religious policy' instead of the Peace Policy."²¹

The Peace Policy became the benchmark of federal policy until the late 1880s. In spirit it represented the benevolence of a government trying to do right by its Indian wards. At its best, it promised and occasionally delivered more

enlightened policies than otherwise would have been the case. At its worst, it symbolized the lack of vision and absence of understanding that crippled the Indian Office for most of the late nineteenth century. Initially little more than a broad articulation of what reformers generally wanted, the policy finally gained a sense of definition in 1873 when Secretary of the Interior Columbus Delano outlined its provisions in his annual report. The program had five major components. First, reservations would remain the centerpiece of the government's civilizing program. They were, Delano insisted, places where "humanity and kindness may take the place of barbarity and cruelty." Second, discipline ought to be swift and severe but it ought to be joined to humane treatment as well, "thereby teaching . . . that it is better to follow the advice of the Government, live upon the reservations and become civilized, than to continue their native habits and practices." Third, there had to be strict accountability for funds and the supplies purchased with them. Fourth, "competent, upright, moral, and religious" agents should be employed and lead the way in running the agencies. Fifth, churches and schools would be built to help Indians attain the comforts and benefits of a Christian life and "thus be prepared ultimately to assume the duties and privileges of citizenship."²²

It was a program that reflected the belief that having failed to settle the Plains thus far, "the time had come," according to historian Robert Trennert, "for the sword to give way to the spelling book."²³ In general, then, the Peace Policy and the post-war years represented a determination to reject confrontation and to emphasize kindness and justice. Limited in its ability to achieve that kind of change, Prucha has argued that the Peace Policy nonetheless succeeded in

"arousing public opinion in support of the Indians and the need for fair treatment."²⁴

By the time of Grant's administration, then, critical ideological and policy decisions were in place that dominated the Indian service for the next three decades. With the reservation as a laboratory of change, and a more benevolent, largely civilian directed civilizing agenda at hand, the solution to the Indian question seemed but a matter of time. Even more important, the most promising component of the plan was already tried and tested: Education for the Indian masses soon became the hallmark of Indian policy for the decades to come.

The time had come to make good on the promise of civilizing the Indians. Policymakers in Washington generally agreed that education pointed the way toward the quickest, most enduring success. "Any plan for civilization which does not provide for training the young," wrote Commissioner of Indian Affairs Edward Smith in 1873, "is short-sighted and expensive Four or five years of this appliance of civilization cures one-half of the barbarism of the Indian tribe permanently."²⁵ Advocates of Indian education believed the schools to have unique, even fantastic, qualities when it came to the transformation of Indians. Writing in 1889, United States Commissioner of Education William T. Harris observed that:

the new education for our American Indians as it has been founded in recent years by devoted men and women, undertakes to solve the problem of civilizing them by a radical system of education not merely in books, nor merely in religious ceremonies, but in matters of clothing, personal cleanliness, matters of dietary [sic], and especially in habits of industry.²⁶

Indian education pioneer Richard Henry Pratt put the matter more bluntly when

he said that on the matter of civilizing Indians "I am a Baptist because I believe in immersing the Indians in our civilization and when we get them under holding them there until they are thoroughly soaked."²⁷

The rhetoric of Indian education reveals a righteous certitude. Nothing seemed more important than the moral transformation that awaited Indians in the schools. Indeed, it was just that kind of far-reaching change that most education officials privately and publicly admitted was the crux of the program. Without a thorough footing in the values and ideas of Americanism, Indian students would never really become part of the mainstream.

Real momentum for a comprehensive Indian education system came during the tenure of Secretary of the Interior Carl Schurz (1877-1881). An outspoken advocate of sweeping reform and of a nationwide reservation school system, Schurz outlined his vision in 1877. His program included much of what reformers had already identified as critical for a successful educational program: the exclusive use of English language instruction; compulsory education; an extensive system of boarding schools; manual and industrial training for the boys, domestic training for the girls, and religious training for all. Moreover, instead of dallying, Schurz urged the government to commit significant funds to such a program and to accept the burden of doing so for at least the next decade and a half.²⁸

In 1880 Schurz decried the disgraceful lack of support for education on many reservations and noted how the commissioner's report for the same year described the "utterly insufficient . . . means at the disposal of the department." The commissioner went on to state that in 1880 fully "15,000 Indians at seventeen agencies have no treaty school funds whatever." Surely the importance of having

at least one boarding school at each agency "need not be argued," especially when at no more than fifteen out of sixty-six agencies could the government be said to have made adequate provision. Echoing Schurz's call for action, the commissioner concluded that "the necessity for increased and increasing appropriations . . . is manifest and urgent."²⁹

Schurz gained legitimate acclaim for his attempts to clean up the fraud-ridden Indian office and to build a national Indian school system. By far the most important and successful advocate for Indian schools, however, was Thomas Jefferson Morgan, a man Prucha has called "the first significant national figure in the history of American Indian education" and to whom is given much of the credit for creating educational policies that shaped the coming generations of students.³⁰ Beginning with his appointment in 1889, Indian education assumed absolute primacy in the government's civilizing program.

An ordained Baptist minister and professional educator, Morgan brought administrative experience and a reformer's zeal to the Indian Office. Announcing in 1889 that the "anomalous position heretofore occupied by the Indians in this country cannot much longer be maintained," Morgan embarked on a program that he promised would "turn the American Indian into the Indian American."³¹ Speaking to the Lake Mohonk Conference of Friends of the Indian in 1889, Morgan outlined his philosophy of Indian education:

When we speak of the education of the Indian, we mean that comprehensive system of training and instruction which will convert them into American citizens. . . . Education is the medium through which the rising generation of Indians are to be brought into fraternal and harmonious relationships with their white fellow-citizens, and with them enjoy the sweets of refined homes, the delight of social intercourse, the emoluments of commerce and trade, the advantages of travel, together with

the pleasures that come from literature, science, and philosophy, and the solace and stimulus afforded by a true religion.³²

Admitting that "this civilization may not be the best possible," Morgan nonetheless believed that it was the best the Indians would get. "They cannot escape it," he concluded, "and must either conform to it or be crushed by it." For those who embraced it and willingly entered the classroom, Morgan promised nothing less than a new future. "Nothing . . . is so distinctly a product of the soil as is the American school system," he said. In the schools, "race distinctions give way to national characteristics" and produce generations who honored the same institutions, celebrated the same heritage, and worshipped the same God.³³

In his annual report for 1891 Morgan issued a comprehensive, ten-point plan designed to create a lasting Indian school system. He called it "A Settled Indian Policy."³⁴ First, the Indian school system should be comprehensive and should offer the fullest educational opportunities to the largest possible number of students. "Nothing less than universal education should be attempted," he had insisted in a separate opinion. Without it Indians were "doomed either to destruction or to hopeless degradation."³⁵ Universal education, moreover, should conform to the course of study used in public schools, which was where Indian students should ultimately complete their educations.

Second, Morgan demanded "definiteness of aim." He lamented the fact that "there has been more or less confusion in the public mind as to precisely what the Government is aiming to accomplish." Actually, the goal was unmistakably clear: It was "to incorporate the Indians into the national life . . . as Americans . . . enjoying all the privileges and sharing the burden of American citizenship. . . .

[This] should be inculcated as a fundamental doctrine in every Indian school."

Indians had to be made to understand "that their future lies largely in their own hands." Accepting that responsibility meant prosperity and happiness; neglecting it meant that they would be "swept aside or crushed by the irresistible tide of civilization, which has no place for drones, no sympathy with idleness, and no rations for the improvident."

Points three and four addressed the plan's administrative structure.

Dismayed by the chaotic bureaucracy of the Indian service, Morgan reminded his audience that "we cannot gather grapes from thistles nor figs from thorns," and called for "clearness of outline" in the bureau's offices. Indians were a backward race, Morgan observed, and thus the situation demanded clearly thought out policies. Only fortitude and careful direction, he concluded, could close "the dreary chasm of a thousand years of tedious evolution." Bureaucratic wrangling could only produce the sort of misdirection and hand-wringing widely believed to be typical of the Indian service. But clearness of outline also included flexibility, something that Morgan defined loosely as the adaptation of means to ends. Acknowledging that not all Indians were alike, and that single-minded policies could not work equally well in all places, the commissioner advocated specific goals and plans according to immediate circumstances.

Fifth, the commissioner addressed the issue of what he called justice. For him this did not mean protecting Indian rights but reflected instead the notion that what he was doing was just, righteous, and quite necessary. Justice for Morgan implied the paternalism that had long influenced the Indian Office; thus when he spoke of justice he spoke more in terms of accepting an obligation to do

right by his wards than he did of protecting their lives or property. "We do not ask that they concede anything of real value to themselves," he wrote, "but only that for their highest welfare they abandon their tribal organizations . . . and accept in lieu thereof American citizenship." Of course, such pronouncements reached to the heart of paternalism by defining "real value" as nonexistent in native culture. After all, as one of Morgan's successors observed in 1899, "the well-known inferiority of the great mass of Indians in religion, intelligence, morals, and home life," simply necessitated taking the children so that they might be guided "to the proper channel."³⁶

The approach championed by Morgan meant that resistance by Indians justified coercion. The matter of justice was clear to him; he had the responsibility to ensure that Indian children got useful educations. Indians, on the other hand, were responsible for accepting the opportunity. Writing to the Secretary of the Interior on the matter, Morgan observed that:

I do not believe that . . . people, who, for the most part, speak no English, live in squalor and degradation, make little progress from year to year, who are a perpetual source of expense to the Government . . . a hindrance to civilization and a clog on our progress, have any right to forcibly keep their children out of school to grow up . . . a race of barbarians and semi-savages. We owe it to these children to prevent, forcibly if need be, so great and appalling a calamity from befalling them.³⁷

Morgan underscored this idea in point six by announcing that firmness was critical in all that the Indian schools attempted. The government had certain obligations and could not shirk them. Like most of his colleagues, for example, Morgan saw no particular problem in requiring parents to enroll their children nor in administering severe punishment to those who resisted. Morgan brooked no

dissent on the issue and used it often as an illustration of how important it was for the government to stand firm in its resolve. If his plans were followed to the letter, compulsory attendance meant that in only a couple of years the bulk of Indian children would be in school and thus well on their way to transforming an entire race. "Two or three years I think will suffice," he wrote in 1890, "when all Indian youth of school age . . . can be put in school."³⁸ Firmness on this essential point translated into future success for educated Indian youth. The idea fit nicely with the overall government plan which called for allotment, citizenship, and liquidation of the Indian estate — which collectively meant the solution of the Indian problem.

Insisting that such powers "belong unmistakably to the prerogatives of the National Government," Morgan pleaded only for what he called "a reasonable opportunity . . . whereby [Indian] children can be lifted onto a plane where they will have an equal chance." There could be no discussion of the matter. As with so much of what Morgan espoused, his absolute sense of moral and cultural superiority made any alternative untenable. To his critics he responded that he was being firm for the good of the Indians, who did not perhaps clearly understand what was in their best interests. Any other course was sure to cause, and probably deserved, failure. And to those who might be tempted to stand in the way of progress, Morgan issued a stern warning: "If, after this reasonable preparation, they are unable or willing to sustain themselves, they must go to the wall. It will be survival of the fittest." It was a chilling prospect, but one that revealed plainly just how important the issues were.

Despite the unyielding nature of his rhetoric, in point seven Morgan

demanded humanity in all that the Indian service did. "For the sake of the history we are making as a Christian nation," he wrote, "we should treat them not only justly and humanely, but with as much generosity as is consistent with their highest welfare. This we are doing." Future generations of historians would find much about Morgan's moral posturing that seemed hypocritical or even dishonest. Still, when viewed in the larger historical context of the late nineteenth century and the values that determined race relations then, Morgan's philosophy sought a humane solution.

Eighth, the commissioner demanded "radicalness," which he defined by saying that if his plans were taken at full value and implemented completely, sweeping success awaited the country. He wrote:

If we purpose [sic] to educate Indian children, let us educate them all. If we look to the schools as one of the chief factors of the great transformation, why not establish at once enough to embrace the entire body of available Indian youth. . . . If there could be gathered by the end of 1893 . . . nearly all of the Indian children and they be kept there for ten years, the work would be substantially accomplished; for . . . there would grow up a generation of English speaking Indians, accustomed to the ways of civilized life. . . . Forever after . . . the . . . dominant force among them.

Radical application of a kind not yet attempted meant radical change. Get them in school, keep them there, erase completely any vestige of their culture, inculcate in them American values and ideas, and then release them to an independent life.

Finally, Morgan insisted on two mutually dependent ideas that tied the whole vision together — stability and time. One without the other doomed the system to failure. Stability meant trained professionals in the schools, administrative competence, able leadership, and a bureau that was politically and personally beyond reproach. Chafing at the mediocrity that afflicted so much of

his bureau, Morgan called for higher standards and cautioned against moving too quickly. It might take a full decade for the fruits of his labor to appear. (Schurz had predicted that it would take at least fifteen years.) Yet nothing short of a devotion to the long-term plan would do. Given enough time, he argued, education would "bring the young Indians into a right relationship with the age in which they live, and put into their hands the tools by which they may gain for themselves food and clothing and build for themselves homes."

Morgan's vision embraced much that reformers considered sacrosanct — English language use, disintegration of the tribes, the end of segregation, preparation for citizenship and independence. In the end, he believed that Indian students would realize that their new way of life far exceeded anything that the old life had to offer. Failure to achieve the goals he set for himself and the Indians would amount to nothing less than a moral disgrace. According to the Lake Mohonk Conference in 1885, ignoring the imperative to save the Indians and educate them amounted to nothing less than the continuation of "the National dishonor of supporting ignorant and barbaric peoples in the heart of a Christian civilization."³⁹ It was this devotion to the transformation of a people that created schools like Rainy Mountain and took the crusading zeal of Thomas Morgan out to the remote corners of the nation's reservations.

Morgan's successors also expressed absolute faith in educating Indians. According to the bureau's annual reports there seemed no end to the opportunities and possibilities in Indian schools. Each year the solution edged a bit closer, the end to the Indian problem became a bit surer as more and more Indian children were drawn under the influence of the classroom. In 1895, for

instance, Commissioner Daniel M. Browning reported that the tribes had already recognized that "the old order of things has passed away . . . and that only by educating his children can the Indian compete with the white man in the struggle for life. . . . The most effective means for this end are those exerted through a wise educational plan."⁴⁰ Three years later, Commissioner William A. Jones was even more emphatic: "Education is the greatest factor in solving the future status of the Indian." "No parent, whether red or white, has a moral or legal right to stand in the way of his child's advancement in life; no nation has a similar right to permit a portion of its embryo citizens to grow up in ignorance and . . . vice."⁴¹ And in 1900, Commissioner of Indian Education Dr. W. N. Hailmann observed that education made the Indian "ethically a better individual," who was "more persevering, more persistent, more thoughtful."⁴²

Schools pointed the way toward a self supporting Indian population and an end to the reservation system and government services for Indians. In 1899, Commissioner Jones observed that:

It is essential that the education of the present generation of young Indians . . . prepare them to take and properly appreciate their share of the common land belonging to themselves and parents. . . . The entire educational system . . . is therefore predicated upon the final abolishment of the anomalous Indian reservation system.⁴³

Two years later the Indian office solemnly reported that "education and civilization are practically synonymous," and that the schools were "doing a great work in preparing the way for emancipation from reservation life."⁴⁴

Those sorts of pronouncements not only justified the government's program, but also made clear what the consequences of resistance would be. If

the relationship between education and civilization was plain, so too was that between resistance and extermination. The urgency with which administrators spoke reflected alternatives that were stark indeed. "There is no one who has been a close observer of Indian history," wrote Commissioner Hiram Price in 1881, "who is not well satisfied that one of two things must eventually take place, to wit, either civilization or extinction."⁴⁵ Twenty-two years later the official opinion had not changed. Indeed, by the turn of the century it had become perhaps even more insistent. "There are only two phases of the Indian question," wrote Commissioner Francis Leupp in 1903:

One, that the American Indian shall remain in the country as a . . . study for the ethnologist, a toy for the tourist, a vagrant at the mercy of the state, and a continual pensioner upon the bounty of the people; the other that he shall be educated to work, live and act as a reputable, moral citizen, and thus become a self-supporting, useful member of society. . . . To educate the Indian . . . therefore, is to preserve him from extinction.⁴⁶

Regarding the work in which they were involved as the most morally urgent exercise ever presented a civilized people, reformers looked time and again to the common school as the source of enduring change. Dr. W. N. Hailmann had called education the "great emancipation." Those who agreed with him believed in the absolute imperative to save Indians from themselves and the barbarity that inhibited their advancement. Speaking in 1901 to the Board of Indian Commissioners, Annie Beecher Scoville, a teacher in the Indian schools, summed up the prevailing wisdom of the era as neatly as any government report ever did:

If there is an idol that the American people have, it is the school. What gold is to the miser, the schoolhouse is to the Yankee. If you don't believe it, go out to Pine Ridge, where there are seven thousand Sioux on eight million acres of land . . . and find planted . . . thirty-two school houses, standing there as a testimony to our belief in education. . . . It is a remedy for barbarism, we think, and so we give the dose. . . . The school is the

slow match . . . it will blow up the old life, and of its shattered pieces [we] will make good citizens.⁴⁷

The rhetorical and philosophical utterings of education leaders, however optimistic they were, would only work if a school system capable of enforcing goals and standards actually existed. By the early 1880s policymakers were designing a comprehensive system of day and boarding schools where Miss Scoville's dose of humanity could be administered. In 1899 the commissioner's annual report reviewed the status of the Indian schools and discussed briefly the various components that made up the system. Commissioner Jones reported that a wide variety of schools made up the system. Nonreservation boarding schools, reservation boarding schools, reservation day schools, independent day schools, state and territorial public schools, contract schools, and mission schools made up the vast majority of the institutions into which Indians were placed, with by far the greatest numbers going to reservation day and boarding schools.⁴⁸ Designed to provide opportunities for virtually all Indian children, the system reflected the importance placed on exposing children to systematic training. After all, children represented the most likely sources of success in assimilation — they knew least of the old ways and if placed into schools at an early age could be remolded completely. Such thinking had been standard fare since the days of the Peace Policy.

Morgan was the architect of a systematic, comprehensive school system that began to take shape during his tenure commissioner. His four-tiered approach proposed a collection of schools that roughly resembled American public schools. At the bottom were reservation day schools within easy distance of reservation

communities, and which operated like primary schools. With an average capacity of thirty pupils, the day school introduced youngsters to white values and institutions, serving in Commissioner William Jones' words as "an object lesson to the Indians who daily visit it."⁴⁹ Often located in fairly remote locations where more extensive facilities were rare, the day school taught rudimentary skills in domestic arts, hygiene, and discipline. "These schools bring a portion of the 'white man' civilization to the home of the Indian," observed the commissioner in 1898. "As a rule, industrial training on a small scale is adopted [for boys . . . whereas girls are] taught in a simple way the adornment of the home and the purity of home life. Unconsciously the little one bears with her back to the rude tepee . . . some small portion of the civilization with which she is in contact."⁵⁰

For the youngsters forced to attend them, day schools served as the foundation for future education at the boarding school, where one commissioner loftily suggested, "the superstructure" of education was added.⁵¹ Because they took "the little ones from the very heart of barbarism," noted Commissioner Browning in 1895, "these schools perform serious work in the educational plan."⁵² Moreover, day schools aimed not just at children, but at parents as well. Indeed, all of the Indian schools were intended to serve as object lessons for parents and pupils alike. Day-school teachers were expected to visit camps of Indian families and to "instruct the women in the care of their homes."⁵³ Lessons imparted to children were intended to filter down to parents so that those exposed to the rhythms and lessons of the day school might find it more difficult to undo its lessons. Aware of the need to counter any resistance, Commissioner Browning commented in 1896 that because "the day school is as much an educator of the

father and mother as of the child," it could be counted on to help convince parents of the necessity of putting their children into school.⁵⁴

Although less expensive and more numerous than other types of Indian schools, day schools gave way wherever possible to the single most important type of school in the system, the reservation boarding school. Boarding schools were the bedrock of the government's assimilation program. Calling them "the gateway out from the reservation," Morgan promoted them tirelessly. According to him, they taught Indian children the one thing that barbarism could not stand: "the marvelous secret of diligence."⁵⁵ Carl Schurz also recognized the importance of the boarding schools. "Mere day schools upon the Indian reservations have . . . proved insufficient," he wrote in 1880. "They do not withdraw the pupils from the influence of their home surroundings. . . . To this end boarding schools are required. . . . In fact, it is just as necessary to teach Indian children how to live as how to read and write."⁵⁶

Boarding schools kept students closely supervised for an average of ten months a year and thus controlled them to a degree not possible in the day schools. The lessons learned in boarding schools served a two-fold purpose. One was to provide students with the discipline and training they would need to lead successful lives. The reservation boarding school, said the commissioner in 1899, "presents daily object lessons . . . and forms a stepping stone from camp conditions to home life . . . boys and girls are taught the . . . advantages of civilization, presented ideals for emulation, and a desire is awakened for a more moral and profitable existence."⁵⁷ Boarding schools were not intended to produce legions of professionals or even of well educated students; their highest

purpose was to civilize the children, give them a dose of religion, and provide them with sufficient skills to break away permanently from the old tribal life.

A second objective made the boarding school a role model for the reservation community it served. Like day schools, an important part of the boarding school-program lay in its ability to influence entire communities. "The agency boarding school," wrote Morgan in 1881, "is the object lesson for the reservation."⁵⁸ The more parents knew about the boarding school, reasoned administrators, the better. Rather than operating beyond the reach of parents, reservation boarding schools in fact generally encouraged visitation and were not tightly segregated from the rest of the community except in times of illness or emergency. In that way, parents might both see and appreciate for themselves the degree of change being wrought by the school. If they were overwhelmed by it, so much the better, for then administrators would have less to fear from parents who might once have been tempted to undo what their children were learning. There was also always the possibility that parents might actually take pride in what their school was doing. The Kiowas, for example, generally showed great enthusiasm for Rainy Mountain and in time came to consider it a critical part of their tribe's continued success. Parents eagerly visited the campus and overall the Kiowa community took great pride in the school.

Parental support and interest no doubt contributed to better relations and increased enrollments, which were exactly what the Indian office wanted. In 1896, Commissioner Browning argued that "the Indian as a rule looks upon the reservation school as peculiarly his own, and by a wise system of visitation on the part of the parents is kept in touch with the older Indians. These schools are the

backbone of the Indian education system, and their influence in uplifting the tribal life . . . is wonderful."⁵⁹ Two years later Commissioner William A. Jones was equally emphatic: "The institutions present themselves to him as an object lesson of the power and influence of the General Government; they appeal to him through his children, and awaken any smoldering sentiments for the betterment of his and their condition."⁶⁰

A revealing assessment of how important these schools were comes from the annual statistics of the Indian office for the years between 1877 and 1911. In 1877 only forty-eight boarding schools were open. The total budget appropriation for Indian education was a mere \$20,000, a sum that also supported 102 day schools. A decade later 117 boarding schools were operating with an enrollment of 8,020 pupils. The budget had increased to \$1,211,415. By 1897 15,026 students attended 145 boarding schools and total appropriations had more than doubled to \$2,517,265. In another decade the numbers were 173 boarding schools, 21,848 students, and an education budget of \$3,925,830. Until the 1920s when the government began to retrench and boarding schools fell out of favor, the trend was universally toward growth. This environment produced Rainy Mountain, and the school's entire life ran through the decades when boarding schools were heralded as the most important key to civilizing young Indians.⁶¹

Beyond the reservation, educational opportunities fell off sharply. The great bulk of Indian children who received any sort of education in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries got it in reservation schools. Yet, in every community there were students who showed promise. For those relatively few, off-reservation boarding schools offered better training and the opportunity

to experience, even in limited fashion, the outside world. They could be held up as examples, as beacons of hope for the thousands of other youngsters in reservation schools. And, most importantly, they could furnish whites with examples of successful assimilation.

Richard Henry Pratt was the architect and leading advocate of off-reservation boarding schools. While serving as commandant at Fort Marion, Florida in the 1870s for a group of Southern Plains Indians incarcerated for their role in the Red River War he began a prison school. The Kiowas, Comanches, and Cheyennes for whom Pratt created his prison school were the forerunners of a bold plan.⁶² After trying out his ideas at Fort Marion and later at Hampton Institute in Virginia, Pratt received permission in 1879 to open a boarding school for Indians at the abandoned army barracks in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Carlisle was the first of more than two dozen such schools scattered across the country by the end of the century. Housing up to one thousand students, off-reservation boarding schools emphasized industrial and domestic training, but at higher levels. Instruction was better, facilities generally were superior to anything found on reservations, and students were the best the other schools had to offer. The off-reservation boarding school, reported Commissioner Browning in 1895, "should stand in relation to the regular Government school as the college to the high school. . . . The brightest and most efficient higher grade pupils are recommended by school superintendents . . . in the nature of a promotion."⁶³

Moreover, because the off-reservation schools were usually located close to "civilized centers," as the commissioner said in 1898, they could be counted on to expose students to the possibilities and realities of the outside world. "Their

principal advantages lie in contiguity to white civilization and in bringing together at one place Indian children of diverse tribes," wrote the commissioner in 1902. "These advantages are of great benefit, and round out the education begun in the reservation day and boarding schools."⁶⁴ Through the outing program, for instance, which placed students with white families and businesses in the community, off-reservation boarding schools proposed to create generations of talented and ambitious graduates who would never go back to the blanket; even at schools like Carlisle and Phoenix, with student bodies of more than one thousand students, many of whom spent significant time with whites, only a fragment of the total Indian school population had contact with the outside world. To correct that, the Indian office introduced plans in 1890 to transfer large numbers of Indian children to local public schools. In doing so, the government might gradually reduce its involvement in the expense of maintaining a separate Indian school system, and Indian children would be placed into mainstream schools. There, reasoned advocates of such plans, the process of assimilation would be quickened and more thoroughly accomplished.

Thomas J. Morgan spoke enthusiastically in favor of the idea. As the logical conclusion to reservation education, Morgan hoped to see the day when Indian children would attend public schools - which was where they belonged - instead of reservation schools. Public schools would do for Indians "what they are so successfully doing for all the other races in this country," said Morgan, "assimilate them."⁶⁵ Such thinking was consistent with the larger vision of liquidating tribal domains, closing reservations, and ending government services to the tribes as soon as possible. Once reservation schools were gone (and the day

was coming, announced the bureau), Indian children would have no choice but to attend public schools.

In theory the plan was reasonably sound. In reality it operated poorly in most school districts. Though bureau statistics suggest a monumental shift in policy after the 1910s, those numbers are illusory. In many, if not most, local districts, the notion of accepting Indian pupils was not popular. As the Rainy Mountain example will show, both Indians and whites resisted the attempt to force Indian children to leave reservation schools. In the end, schools like Rainy Mountain were simply closed. The move forced Indian parents either to enroll their children in public schools or to bear the cost of transporting them to more distant reservation schools. Many Kiowas found that prospect repugnant because it meant taking their children to Fort Sill School, where they would be forced to live with Comanches.

By 1899, nearly a decade of effort had netted contracts with only thirty-six public schools. Space was available for 359 pupils, but only 167 were actually in attendance. "Theoretically the placing of Indian youth in the public schools . . . is a most admirable expedient for breaking down prejudices," commented the commissioner in 1899. But the lamentable truth was that the government would still have to accept responsibility for laying the foundation of education for Indian children.⁶⁶ Only a year earlier, in fact, the Indian office had been forced to admit that "the plan . . . does not appear to meet with much success" and noted that a decrease of more than one hundred Indian students had been reported in public schools.⁶⁷

By about 1910, however, the situation had changed dramatically. At the

turn of the century, the momentum of reform had begun to decline, and with it went the optimism of the preceding decades. No longer willing to champion the cause of Indian education as the source of change, policymakers adopted a more pessimistic posture. Although reservation schools survived the shift in attitude, their numbers were severely reduced. The bureau adopted a much less benevolent attitude concerning its responsibilities. Rather than spending millions for schools, the social Darwinists who ran the Indian bureau in the 1910s and 1920s sought to roll back expectations and facilities. The shortest course with regard to education lay in transferring Indians to public systems, where they could disappear into the mainstream. And the quicker that was done the better. "Progress is being made in the important work of more closely connecting the Indian schools with the public schools," asserted Commissioner Robert G. Valentine in 1910. He went on to remind them that above all public schools were "a definite means of promoting the assimilation of the Indians into American life."⁶⁸ Two years later the commissioner described the process as "probably the most noticeable example of what is believed to be the 'final step' in the education of the Indian youth" and reported that out of 46,131 Indian children in school, 17,000, or nearly 30 percent were in public schools.⁶⁹ By 1921 the commissioner could report that "the placing of all Indian children in the public schools is the ultimate aim. In a majority of the states we meet with the heartiest cooperation."⁷⁰

Statistics bear this out. In roughly decade-long increments between 1890 and 1920, for instance, the trend is clear. In 1899, 20,522 Indian students attended schools. More than 16,000 of them attended reservation or off-reservation schools and only 167 were enrolled in public schools. By 1912, 46,131

Indian children attended schools. But by then a decisive shift had begun. A total of 24,341 Indian youth were in reservation or off-reservation schools, and, as noted earlier, 17,011, or nearly 30 percent attended public schools. By 1921, 62,764 Indian children were enrolled in schools. Fewer than 24,000 were in reservation or off-reservation Indian schools; 33,250 attended public schools.⁷¹

For small boarding schools like Rainy Mountain this shift proved fatal. Unable to combat the changing philosophy of the Indian office and unable to survive the retrenchment of the 1920s, small reservation boarding schools were closed. The great experiment that had begun with Schurz and Morgan was largely over by the close of the 1920s. The bureau continued to operate schools, but its goals were low and its scope severely limited. While it lasted, however, the fervor for educational reform produced remarkable results, none moreso than for the Kiowas, for whom Rainy Mountain School was to become a beacon of hope.

Notes

1. *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs* (hereafter cited as *ARCIA*), 1866: 20-21.

2. See Robert M. Utley, *The Indian Frontier of the American West, 1846-1890* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984), especially chapter 1.

3. Good discussions of the era are in Francis Paul Prucha, *American Indian Policy in Crisis: Christian Reformers and the Indian, 1865-1900* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1976); Robert A. Trennert, *Alternative To Extinction: Federal Indian Policy and the Beginnings of the Reservation System, 1846-1851* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1975); Robert W. Mardock, *The Reformers and the American Indian* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1971); Henry Fritz, *The Movement for Indian Assimilation, 1860-1890* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1963); Loring B. Priest, *Uncle Sam's Stepchildren: The Reformation of United States Indian Policy, 1865-1887* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1942); Fred Hoxie, *A Final Promise: The Campaign To Assimilate the Indians, 1880-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984). A particularly good discussion of the military's diminished role in the Indian West in the post Civil War era is Robert Worcester, *The Military and United States Military Policy, 1865-1903* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988).

4. Andrew Jackson to the Cherokee Nation, 16 March 1835, in Paul Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians*, 2 vols. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), I, 235-236.

5. See James C. Malin, *Indian Policy and Westward Expansion* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1921); Reginald Horsman, "American Indian Policy and the Origins of Manifest Destiny," in *The Indian in American History*, edited by Paul Prucha (New York: Holt, Rhinehart, and Winston, 1971); Ronald Satz, *American Indian Policy in the Jacksonian Era* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1975).

6. Richard White, *It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own: A New History of the American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 91. White's assessment of the reservation is quite pessimistic. It was, he says, "like Frankenstein's monster, bolted together from the corpse of the older hopes for a permanent Indian territory west of the Missouri," 92.

7. Ray A. Billington, *Westward Expansion: A History of the American Frontier*, 3rd edition (New York: MacMillan, 1967), 653-655.

8. *ARCLA*, 1848: 388-390.

9. *Ibid.*, 1849: 945-946; Utley, *The Indian Frontier*, 46.

10. Utley, *The Indian Frontier*, 62. Much of this paragraph rests on Utley's interpretation.

11. *ARCLA*, 1863: 129-130.

12. Specific provisions of the treaty may be found in Charles J. Kappler, *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, 7 vols (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904), II, 977-982 (Medicine Lodge), and 998-1024 (Fort Laramie).

13. Quoted in Prucha, *American Indian Policy in Crisis*, 107-108.

14. Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, xii.

15. Hoxie's *A Final Promise* is a particularly strong analysis of the era, see especially chapters 1-3.

16. Prucha, *American Indian Policy in Crisis*, 3. Prucha's comments in chapter 1 are particularly instructive; I have relied heavily on his analysis.

17. Prucha, *ibid.*, 15-16. For the Doolittle Commission, see Donald Chaput, "Generals, Indian Agents, and Politicians: The Doolittle Survey of 1865," *Western Historical Quarterly* 3(July 1972): 269-282. The finished report may be found in "Condition of the Indian Tribes: Report of the Joint Special Committee," Senate Report no. 156, 39th Congress, 2nd session, serial 1279, 3-10.

18. Prucha, *American Indian Policy in Crisis*, 18; "Report of the Indian Peace Commission, House Exec. Document 97, 40th Congress, 2nd session, serial 1337, 4; United States Statutes at Large, XV, 117.

19. An excellent summary may be found in Utley, *The Indian Frontier*, 99-127.

20. Thomas Battey in the introduction to Lawrie Tatum, *Our Red Brothers and the Peace Policy of President U.S. Grant*, forward by Richard N. Ellis (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1970, originally issued in 1899), 17-18; Utley, *The Indian Frontier*, 129.

21. Boston *Daily Advertiser*, 25 February 1869 in Mardock, *The Reformers and the American Indian*, 50.

22. *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior* (hereafter cited as *ARSI*), 1873: iii-iv.
23. Robert A. Trennert, *The Phoenix Indian School: Forced Assimilation in Arizona, 1891-1935* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988), 3.
24. Prucha, *American Indian Policy in Crisis*, 30.
25. *ARCI*A, 1873: 377.
26. Quoted in Prucha, *American Indian Policy in Crisis*, 292.
27. Richard Henry Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom: Four Decades With The American Indian, 1867-1904*. Edited and with an introduction by Robert M. Utley (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964), 335.
28. *ARSI*, 1877: xi-xiii; *ibid.*, 1879: 10-11; *ARCI*A, 1880: 7-10. Prucha summarizes the issues in *American Indian Policy In Crisis*, 265-291.
29. *ARSI*, 1880: 8; *ARCI*A, 1880: 85-86.
30. Prucha, *American Indian Policy in Crisis*, 293. See 293-304 in *ibid.* for a summary of Morgan's career.
31. *ARCI*A, 1889: 3-4, 302.
32. Lake Mohonk Conference Proceedings, *ARCI*A, 1889: 16-17.
33. Thomas J. Morgan, *Studies in Pedagogy* (Boston: Silver, Burdette, and Compant, 1889), 327-328, 348-350; *ARCI*A, 1889: 3-4.

34. *ARCIA*, 1891: 3-8. Unless otherwise noted, all citations in the following paragraphs come from this source.

35. Lake Mohonk Conference Proceedings, *ARCIA*, 1889: 16-17.

36. *ARCIA*, 1899: 4-5.

37. Morgan to Secretary of the Interior, November 30, 1892, in Prucha, *American Indian Policy in Crisis*, 314-315.

38. *ARCIA*, 1890: xvi.

39. Lake Mohonk Conference Proceedings, *ibid.*, 1888: 94-95.

40. *ARCIA*, 1895: 3, 16.

41. *Ibid.*, 1898: 2, 8.

42. *Annual Report of the Board of Indian Commissioners*, *ibid.*, 1900: 707.

43. *ARCIA*, 1899: 7.

44. *Ibid.*, 1901: 9, 20.

45. *Ibid.*, 1881: 1-2.

46. *Ibid.*, 1903: 2-3.

47. *Annual Report of the Board of Indian Commissioners*, *ibid.*, 1901: 809-810.

48. *ARCIA*, 1899: 8.

49. *ARCIA*, 1902: 35; *ibid.*, 1897: 11.

50. *Ibid.*, 1898: 13.

51. *Ibid.*, 1897: 11.

52. *Ibid.*, 1895: 9.

53. *Ibid.*, 1902: 35.

54. *Ibid.*, 1896: 3.

55. Morgan quoted in Prucha, *American Indian Policy in Crisis*, 301.

56. *ARSI*, 1880: 7-8.

57. *ARCIA*, 1899: 10.

58. *Ibid.*, 1881: 27.

59. *Ibid.*, 1896: 12-13.

60. *Ibid.*, 1898: 10-11.

61. *Ibid.*, 1911: 190.

62. The best source remains Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*. See also Elaine G. Eastman, *Pratt: The Red Man's Moses* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1935). Prucha lists a lengthy bibliography in *American Indian Policy in Crisis*, 272, n.16.

63. *ARCIA*, 1895: 6; *ibid.*, 1899: 10. By far the best study of an off-reservation boarding school other than Pratt's is Trennert, *The Phoenix Indian School*.

64. *ARCIA*, 1898: 9; *ibid.*, 1902: 32.
65. Lake Mohonk Conference Proceedings, *ARCIA*, 1889: 23.
66. *ARCIA*, 1899: 14-15.
67. *Ibid.*, 1898: 14.
68. *Ibid.*, 1910: 15. See Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, especially chapter 6, for an excellent analysis of the changes that occurred after the turn of the century.
69. *ARCIA*, 1912: 37, 187.
70. *Ibid.*, 1921: 7, 54.
71. *Ibid.*, 1899: 560-561; *ibid.*, 1912: 187; *ibid.*, 1921: 54.

CHAPTER III

THE KIWAS AND THEIR AGENCY

In the minds of many nineteenth-century Americans, the austerity of the Southern Plains seemed so complete that the region deserved the epithet of Great American Desert. Like the Spanish who preceded them, and likewise found little that seemed worth having, many Americans in the mid-nineteenth century preferred to ponder the open plains from a safe distance. Those forced to cross it did so as quickly as possible, for the most desirable lands lay farther to the west in California. Much of the West and its seemingly savage hordes deserved the isolation with which popular opinion had relegated them. The boundaries of that part of the West, to borrow Richard White's phrase, seemed to be walls and not doors.¹ Behind the walls lay an uncertain combination of natives, environmental extremes, and enormous space. Better, perhaps, to leave it be.

Reality proved to be somewhat different from the stereotype and illusion of the West. By the 1850s, in fact, the Staked Plains of Texas and the Cimarron Valley of western Indian Territory had been revealed to be more valuable than once presumed. Indeed, since the opening of Texas in the mid-1820s, the Southern Plains received more attention with each passing decade. Despite hostile weather and conditions, the region began to flourish by the 1850s when cattle interests and then farmers opened it up. The Southern Plains, far from

being a wasteland, had usable natural pastures and an abundance of land. It was hard land, to be sure, but it was no desert. With a careful application of technology and capital, it might be transformed into a prosperous place.

And yet it was hardly that simple. Before the region could be opened and settled, there lay the considerable task of controlling and pacifying its Indians. This meant coming to terms with fairly small but remarkably determined tribes that occupied much of the area between the Rio Grande and Platte rivers. Horse-mounted, assertive, occupying vast territories, tribes such as the Comanches, Kiowas, Southern Cheyennes, and Arapahoes were examples of the challenge facing other settlers on the Southern Plains. The government had to control these kinds of tribes through the Peace Policy and reservation system if the region was to be opened.

In the vanguard of Indian resistance were the Kiowas and their allies the Comanches. Never numerous — together they numbered fewer than 4,000 during the second half of the nineteenth century — they nonetheless raised a determined resistance to the opening of their territory. Observers who spoke of an Indian barrier across the Texas, Indian Territory, and Kansas frontier were not always stretching the truth. Although they were outnumbered and on the defensive from an early date, the tribes of the Southern Plains proved to be a serious threat to the Euroamerican settlement of most of the region. They defied attempts to collect them onto reservations until the late 1860s and early 1870s, surrendering as William T. Hagan has described the process only by fits and turns.² For the Kiowa people, the line of frontier settlement that reached the Red River country of western Indian Territory by the 1850s posed serious threats to their autonomy

and isolation. As it was for other neighboring tribes, the freedom of the Plains was in fact ending quickly, more so than any of them could really know.

The earliest eighteenth-century accounts of the Kiowas place the tribe in modern western Montana on the headwaters of the Yellowstone River. Tribal historians and oral accounts speak of Kiowa ancestors among the Sarsi and Cree Indians and of the earliest known Kiowa hunting grounds between the headwaters of the Yellowstone and Missouri Rivers.³ Sometime before 1750 the tribe migrated to the south and east until it reached present western Oklahoma, where it settled. Kiowa tradition explains that the move began in the wake of a dispute that produced a permanent split. One group moved to the west and out of recorded history. The other, from whence came the modern Kiowas, moved east to the Black Hills of present eastern Wyoming and western South Dakota. There, around 1700, they met and allied with the Crow, Northern Cheyenne, and Arapaho tribes.⁴ By way of their relationship with those tribes, the Kiowas were exposed to the material and social culture of the Plains. Most important was their introduction to the horse and buffalo culture, for through it the Kiowas developed into a Plains people whose institutions and values prepared them to become a dominant force once they moved south to the Red River.

Although it is uncertain when the transition to the horse and buffalo culture began, it was nevertheless well underway by the middle of the eighteenth century. Evidence suggests that the tribe was trading for mounts as early as 1700. Anthropologist Francis Haines believed that the Kiowas acquired enough horses to make the transition to the buffalo culture by 1725. James Mooney cited Spanish sources indicating that mounted Kiowa war parties were common by the

late 1740s.⁵

The acquisition of horses and the transformation that followed reshaped the Kiowas completely. Most notably it led to a level of prosperity and institutional growth previously impossible. Moving from the fringe of the Plains signaled one of the formative moments in Kiowa history. For then they encountered and established relations with the dominant powers of the Central and Southern Plains, eventually taking a place among them as a leading force. Moving out onto the Plains brought them into touch with the Lakotas, Comanches, and Northern and Southern Cheyennes and Arapahoes. Pushed south out of the Black Hills by the Lakotas after the mid- eighteenth century, the Kiowas lingered briefly on the south fork of the Platte River; they then moved south across the Republican and Smokey Hill rivers and settled near the Arkansas River. There they claimed territory reaching into the Red River country. Between 1790 and 1806, the Kiowas and Comanches joined forces and opened the way for a formidable Indian presence all the way to the Rio Grande and the Hispanic and Pueblo Indian settlements that lay in its valley.⁶

By 1834 the Kiowas strengthened their position in the region by reaching accords with the Osage, Lakota, and Pawnee tribes. Six years later they did the same with the Southern Cheyennes. With their borders now secured through a set of informal alliances, the Kiowas and Comanches established dominance on the Southern Plains by controlling most of present western Texas and Oklahoma and portions of eastern New Mexico. To the northeast they pushed back the Wichita Confederacy, to the southwest the Tonkawas, and to the west the Utes, Navajos, and Apaches. By mid-century, then, the Kiowas were in control of vast stretches

of the region.

The material and social culture of the Kiowas generally reflected that of the other horse and buffalo tribes on the plains. Anthropologist Jerrold Levy maintains that in addition to developing the well-known material culture of Plains tribes, the Kiowas also went through an important period of political and institutional change. "Differences in wealth and status developed," writes Levy, and a leadership hierarchy was formed "that united the bands in one political (tribal) entity with tribal wide ceremonies and warrior associations whose membership cut across band divisions."⁷ Unlike many other Plains tribes, the Kiowas enjoyed a rare sense of tribal identity made possible in part by a relatively small number, and in part by unusually fluid and complex kinship patterns.⁸

The primary political unit of the pre-reservation period was the band, or *topadoga*, which operated under the direction of a headman, the *topadoki*. Seven of these bands are known to have existed: Arikara (*k'at'a*, or biters), Elks (*ko-qui*), Kiowa proper (*kae-qua*), Big Shields (*kinep*), Apaches (*semat*, the Kiowa-Apaches), Black Boys (*konta'lyui*, also called Saynday's children or *sindiyui*), and the Pulling Up Band (*k'uat*^o, said to have been exterminated by the Lakota in the late eighteenth century.)⁹ These bands typically consisted of the families of several brothers and sisters and were led by an elder brother. The most senior brother of the core family became the *topadoki*. Descent was bilateral, often patrilocal, and familial ties were characterized by sororal polygamy — marriage by one husband to sisters, and the levirate — the taking of a widow by her brother-in-law. Thus the Kiowa family was the smallest unit in Kiowa society, but it was also usually an extended group bound closely together by social and political

conventions that ensured adequate levels of labor and prosperity for the group.¹⁰

A distinguishing element in Kiowa social and political organization was the presence of named social ranks and the use of hierarchical warrior societies. No other Plains tribe practiced the status ranking typical of the Kiowas. A deliberately uneven distribution of wealth, usually in the form of pony herds, characterized the Kiowa system. This wealth was used to determine social and tribal status. Although an inequitable distribution of wealth was not uncommon among other Plains tribes, only the Kiowas formalized the status that derived from such an arrangement. *Onde ongop*, the first rank, consisted of the most eminent *topadoki*, warriors, and men of great wealth provided they had good war records. The next rank, *onde gupai*, included the rest of the men who possessed horses in number beyond that required for subsistence. Levy describes members of this rank as "lesser *topadoki* . . . , most medicine men; and some of the more successful younger warriors." The third rank, *kaan*, owned few horses and rarely had the herds necessary for joining war parties, but constituted a sort of respectable poor who were often courted by the higher status groups. *Kaan* members were usually young men eager to rise to other ranks. Finally, the lowest class occupied a status called *dapom*. Frequently considered misfits and outcasts, the *dapom* were usually regarded as lazy and shiftless.¹¹ Deference toward members of the *onde* groups was the rule, but upward mobility was possible. Members of upper groups could occasionally breach social or tribal conventions with little fear of retribution. Given the relationship of wealth and status to the pony-based economy, it was just as possible to lose rank if the herds were thinned or lost.¹²

Contact with Euroamericans came in the wake of the Spanish settlement of

the Southwest. Although the Spanish knew the Kiowas and had suffered depredations at their hands and those of the Comanches, the Spanish frontier was a relatively isolated one and did not pose a substantial threat to the autonomy of the tribes. This changed very quickly after the turn of the nineteenth century when the line of Angloamerican settlement crossed into the Mississippi Valley. The Louisiana Purchase of 1803 added the Kiowa homeland to the United States; the establishment of Indian Territory in 1830 immediately adjacent to the Kiowa domain further complicated the matter. The first notable contact between the Kiowas and Angloamericans occurred in the summer of 1834 when the Kiowas joined other tribes from Indian Territory to meet with the famous Dragoon Expedition of Henry Dodge. Discussions at the junction of Elk Creek and the north fork of the Red River led the following August to the Treaty of Camp Holmes and a formal declaration of peace and friendship between the Kiowas, Comanches, Wichitas, Creeks, and Osages. Tardy in their attendance at the signing ceremonies, the Kiowas did not actually sign until May 26, 1837.¹³

In the meantime, contact accelerated as traders and settlers pushed beyond the 100th meridian and into Kiowa country. In 1834, for example, Charles Bent opened a trading post on the Arkansas River in the southeast corner of what would become Colorado. One year later, Auguste Choteau built a post on the Canadian River and attracted Kiowa, Comanche, and Wichita interest. Two years later, in 1837, he opened the first post in Kiowa territory on Cache Creek, three miles west of what became Fort Sill. William Bent followed in 1844 with a trading concern near Kiowa country located on the South Canadian River in the Texas Panhandle.¹⁴ The relative isolation of the Kiowas and their neighbors eroded

steadily in the 1840s and 1850s as the line of white settlement pushed westward. And as a result, relations, which were never particularly good, became increasingly strained.

By the 1850s alarm grew over Indian depredations on the Southern Plains. Texas settlements bore the brunt of the raiding, but Mexican towns came in for their share as well. As violence flared, a solution was more urgent with each passing year. When a line of frontier forts intended to pacify the region by the early 1850s failed to do so, the government began earnest attempts to negotiate lasting peace through the careful application of goods, annuities, and, of course, reservations. The first major agreement with the Kiowas occurred in July 1853 with the signing of the Treaty of Fort Atkinson. The treaty secured the protection of settlers moving onto the Southern Plains via the Santa Fe Trail and other routes. Annuities were promised to the Kiowas, Kiowa Apaches, and Comanches in return for the safe passage of settlers and for the establishment of roads and military posts. Despite their apparent significance for both sides, none of the famous Kiowa calendars recorded the negotiations. In any event, the agreement did little to improve the general situation on the Southern Plains.¹⁵

In the wake of the Fort Atkinson Treaty, in fact, hostilities escalated. Kiowa-Comanche raiding parties continued to traverse the region and reports indicated no significant reduction in the level of violence. Indeed, Kiowas rarely felt bound by treaty provisions designed to restrict their movements; some interpreted the Americans' willingness to negotiate as a sign of weakness. Fort Atkinson was an indication of the cavalier attitude that most Kiowa men had toward such settlements. The Atkinson discussions pointed up the difficulty in

getting tribes, or even portions of them, to accept the restrictions and agreements that white negotiators placed at the heart of such treaties. They were often products of the manipulation of certain willing headsmen who, for their part, were usually more interested in annuities and trade goods than in peace settlements. Treaties like the ones signed at Fort Atkinson were badly flawed from the very beginning and promised much more than either side was able to deliver.

At any rate, conditions continued to be dangerous as the 1850s came to a close. The American Civil War years worsened an already poor situation. In the West the army had to deal not only with rebels but also with recalcitrant Indians. Having never gained satisfactory control of the Southern Plains to begin with, the federal government now faced the unhappy prospect of confronting not one but many enemies in the West. By 1863 a general state of war existed between the United States and most of the region's major tribes. Engagements at Adobe Walls, New Mexico in the summer of 1864 where Kiowas and Comanches battled Kit Carson, and the notorious Sand Creek, Colorado massacre by Chivington's volunteers in the autumn of the same year highlighted the situation. Both sides wearied of the standoff, and by the fall of 1865 Kiowa emissaries joined with other tribal representatives to discuss peace with United States authorities on the Little Arkansas River near present day Wichita, Kansas. On October 17 and 18, the Kiowas, Kiowa-Apaches, and Comanches agreed to relinquish all territorial claims in Colorado, New Mexico, and Kansas and to move to a protected reservation in western Indian Territory. Again, however, the treaty failed to represent the majority of tribesmen, and Comanche spokesmen bitterly reminded the government of its failure to live up to previous agreements. As with other treaty

negotiations, Little Arkansas seemed more like a cease fire than a permanent solution.¹⁶

To no one's surprise, the tenuous peace fell apart almost immediately. The death of Dohasin, an influential headman who had signed the treaty at Little Arkansas and who had promoted peace, left an important void. Equally troubling was the factionalism between peace advocates led by Kicking Bird and a collection of raiders led by Lone Wolf and Satanta, both well known for their prowess as fighters. Under Satanta's influence, large numbers of young Kiowas left the reservation, repudiated the Little Arkansas agreements, and returned to their raiding.

Increasingly concerned by the level of violence across the Southern Plains, the government made yet another attempt in the fall of 1867 to secure a settlement with the Kiowas and their neighbors.¹⁷ In meetings held at Medicine Lodge Creek, Kansas, the Peace Commission — created in 1867 by Congress and empowered to deal specifically with the western tribes — meant to have a definitive answer. The region's most important tribes, with whom the government was beginning to lose patience, assembled to hear the commission's offer. Instructions from Washington gave the commission power to clear the area, arrange reservations, and pacify the tribes. Yet it meant to do so, it said, fairly and judiciously. As if to satisfy the tribes that it had their interests at heart, Commissioner John B. Henderson announced that he had come "to hear all your complaints, and to correct all your wrongs."¹⁸

Three days of discussions produced a treaty. The usual pronouncements concerning perpetual peace and friendship were made. Boundaries for a Kiowa-

Comanche-Kiowa Apache reservation were detailed, and annuities were guaranteed for the next two decades. The treaty promised an agency and staff to attend to the needs of the tribes for the life of the agreement. Important plans for allotment and inducements to encourage it were included, as were the usual comments on education and civilization. These were all standard fare. The document reflected the dominant assumptions of the era and accurately represented the American government's intentions. It served as a blue print for the transformation of the Kiowas. Provisions for education, farming, and allotment, for example, revealed the sweeping changes in store. In its emphasis on accelerating the assimilation of the tribes the agreement reflected what Prucha has noted was the central goal of reformers and policymakers alike — a Protestant, civilized, Indian.¹⁹

Kiowas and Comanches who attended the meetings gave mixed responses that, at best, reflected an ambivalent attitude about what was happening. The lofty rhetoric of the commission notwithstanding ("We wish you to live," said Henderson, "and we will offer you the way"), most of the Indian audience was unimpressed. The outspoken leader Satanta reminded the group that his people were making grave sacrifices. "All of the land south of the Arkansas belongs to the Kiowas and Comanches," he said, "and I don't want to give away any of it. . . . I love to roam over the wide prairie . . . but when we settle down we grow pale and die." Two years later, Kiowa agent Lawrie Tatum reported that Satanta admitted that "he took hold of that part of the white man's road that was represented by the breechloading gun, but did not like the ration of corn; it hurt his teeth." Speaking for the Comanches, Ten Bears said he was happy to have the

gifts and annuities but expressed reluctance over accepting a reservation. "I was born where there were no enclosures," he said. "I want to die there and not within walls. . . . The white man has the country which we loved."²⁰ It was not an encouraging reaction.

As William T. Hagan has argued, Kiowa and Comanche skepticism was well founded. Despite its impressive tone and authority, the Treaty of Medicine Lodge Creek reflected not so much a desire to solve the Indian problem through peace and humanitarian reform as it did a desire to open the Kiowa-Comanche country to white settlement. In fact, the purpose of the treaty was to clear Indians out of the way, not to worry at length about what should be done with them. Neither the treaty nor the government that sponsored it created the conditions necessary for the transformation of the Kiowas and Comanches. Worse, Hagan has written that the commissioners themselves participated knowingly "in a mockery of true bargaining" by writing a treaty that purported to reflect the will of the tribes involved. It is likely that only a handful of tribesmen truly understood the treaty's provisions, a fact that commission members knew. In reality, the treaty did not promote peace at all, but, according to Hagan, was used to "give the stamp of legitimacy to United States efforts to concentrate the Indians and open the region to white exploitation." Thus, the primary aim of such negotiations was rarely to civilize Indians. Instead, they served to reduce the threat to frontier settlements and to facilitate the expansion of railroads and other interests. This critical flaw crippled the Medicine Lodge agreement from its inception. The government made promises that it would not keep, promises that according to Hagan it never intended to honor. It was a specious document, and the civilizing

program it outlined would prove it.²¹

At the heart of that program lay the schools and teachers promised by the treaty — one each for every thirty pupils on the reservation. "The necessity of education is admitted," noted Article 7, especially on so-called "agricultural reservations."²² How deeply the government would honor the commitment remained to be seen. Coming as it did in the era of the Peace Policy and public concern for humanitarian programs, reformers hoped that some policymakers would embrace the cause. A few officials actually took the task to heart, believing, as did Thomas Battey, that Indian schools "seemed like a holy experiment."²³ Before long several schools dotted the reservation. This fledgling reservation school system, however, was falsely encouraging, a fact best revealed through a brief examination of the reservation in its formative years.

Control of the Kiowa-Comanche Agency passed to the Quakers in 1869 when responsibility for the Central Superintendency, in which the agency was located, came to them under the provisions of the Peace Policy. The first agent for the tribes was Lawrie Tatum, a forty-seven-year-old Iowa farmer appointed in May 1869, a fact Tatum reportedly discovered in a newspaper story.²⁴ A thorough-going Quaker whose temperament meshed perfectly with the humanitarian goals of the Peace Policy, Tatum faced an enormous task. Before him were more than 6,000 Indians from ten tribes speaking nine languages and occupying an area the size of Connecticut. An earnest and eager agent, Tatum soon discovered that the kind of enlightened conduct in which he so deeply believed was badly out of step with the overwhelming realities of the reservation. In 1872 he wrote that through inspired and thoughtful leadership "the witness of

God in their hearts would be reached." Unfortunately for Tatum, the task would prove to be a nearly impossible undertaking.²⁵

A portent of the future came shortly after he took office. A brief inspection of the agency convinced him that its needs were so great that significant increases in budget and supplies were necessary. On August 21, 1869 he wrote to the Indian Office to say that he needed twenty-seven farmers and fourteen cooks for the current year in order to fulfill his obligations to the tribes. Moreover, he continued, those numbers would have to be increased to eighty and thirty, respectively, for the coming year. Tatum also requested 25 wagons, 160 mules, and 120 plows, all of it necessary to provide the "fostering and protecting care of the government" to which the tribes were entitled.²⁶

Tatum's requests exceeded \$200,000 — a figure that went far beyond anything authorized in the Medicine Lodge Treaty, and well beyond what the Indian Office could provide. The commissioner's response was coldly emphatic: The Medicine Lodge Treaty guaranteed one farmer, not twenty-seven. Tatum would have to make do with what he had. His other requests were turned down as well, probably by a clerk who wondered just who this Quaker farmer thought he was. When Tatum continued to push for larger budgets and greater support, Commissioner Francis A. Walker tersely reminded him in 1872 that "the United States have given them a noble reservation, and have provided amply for all their wants."²⁷ It was an inauspicious beginning to be sure.

Forced to make do with what little they had, Tatum and his successors forged ahead with programs intended to support the civilizing agenda of the Peace Policy. By making the tribes farmers and stockmen, and by using the influence of

schools, churches, and other Angloamerican institutions, agents hoped to lead the tribes as quickly as possible to new lives. In the meantime, rations and annuities not only provided them with basic necessities, but also served as a discouragement to the raiding in which too many tribesmen still engaged. It was a daunting task. As Hagan's analysis of the Comanche experience reveals, agents rarely gained control of the reservation. Although in theory they possessed what Thomas J. Morgan described as "semi-despotic powers," few agents ever managed to master the complexities of the reservation environment. This was due in part to the determined resistance of the tribes. In a revealing passage in his study of the Kiowa-Comanche Reservation, Hagan has argued that "the typical agent learned to avoid trouble by not pushing the civilization program too hard and thus setting his Indians against him." An 1870 report from Tatum suggests that Hagan is correct. Tatum commented to the commissioner that annuity payments ironically represented an incentive to ignore agency policies because if the Indians behaved themselves they feared the reduction of such goods. "They repeatedly told me that . . . the only way to get a large amount was to go on the war path awhile, kill a few white people, steal a good many horses and mules, and then make a treaty and they would get a large amount of presents and a liberal supply of goods for that fall."²⁸ Similar stories and accounts of failing programs were staples of subsequent reports.

The fact that most agents were usually of poor caliber only made the situation worse. Tatum was an exception to the rule, and even he found the situation beyond his ability. Agents usually showed less fortitude and initiative than Tatum. Many were nothing more than political hacks for whom the agent's

job was a political reward. The situation improved somewhat when army officers replaced civilian agents at the Kiowa-Comanche Reservation by the 1890s. Until then a procession of malcontents, incompetents, and ill-suited appointees plagued the agency. With the exception of the Quaker agents, most of them were wretched failures. Between 1885 and 1893, for example, five men served as agent and in the process created conditions that were generally so miserable that the agency earned a well deserved reputation as one of the nation's worst. Although not the worst of the lot, J. Lee Hall was typical. He confided that he had entered the Indian service to get rich. Lee did not succeed in that hope, but he was indicted twice by grand juries for fraud, misappropriation of funds, and drunkenness during his tenure. The author O. Henry is said to have based a character on Hall, whom he described as "blond as a viking, quiet as a deacon, dangerous as a machine gun." Methodist minister J. J. Methvin, a missionary on the reservation, remembered Hall somewhat more charitably as "a great man in ruins on account of drink." Other agents hired relatives, cut deals with cattle interests or railroads, and took bribes from traders and businessmen. Though some were genuinely good men, too many were not.²⁹

This was unfortunate, for the Kiowa-Comanche Agency was a large and important one with pressing troubles and unruly occupants. The Medicine Lodge agreement did little to control them. Leaders like Satanta, Big Tree, and Satank continued to raid with near impunity and regarded the reservation with disdain. In 1870 Central Superintendent Enoch Hoag reported that the principal troubles in his region came from the Kiowas, Comanches, and Kiowa-Apaches. Two years later the Commissioner of Indian Affairs characterized those tribes as "wild and

intractable Even the best of them have given small signs of improvement." Exasperated, the commissioner went on to say that in light of continued raids and trouble making by those tribes, "the point has been reached where forbearance ceases to be a virtue." More urgently needed than anything was "a wholesome example which shall inspire fear and command obedience." Tatum confirmed Hoag's dreary evaluation when by admitting that "the Kiowas and a few hands of the Comanches are uncontrollable by me."³⁰ Though official reports eventually began to offer more optimistic assessments, especially after the end of the Red River War in 1875, the agency did little more than muddle through for the first six years of its existence. Reviewing its lackluster performance in 1884, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs regretfully described the agency to the Secretary of the Interior as "an unhappy failure," a fact that few knowledgeable observers could deny.³¹

Across the reservation the government's civilizing programs were failing. Schools were nonexistent. Stock raising programs fizzled. Attempts to get Kiowas and Comanches to farm met little success. So little was being achieved that most of the agency's Indians found it relatively easy to resist assimilation, or, at the very least, to accept it in ways and on terms that did not mean forfeiting their sense of cultural identity. In 1875, seven years after Medicine Lodge, Hoag reported that the number of Indians on the agency wearing citizens clothing stood at eight. The number of houses occupied by Indians was eight. And only sixty of an estimated six hundred school-age children were receiving instruction at the agency's only school. Far from transforming the tribes, the reservation produced increasingly dependent Indians mired in poverty and subjected to one after another of the

worst agents in the service. The promises made at Medicine Lodge unraveled more rapidly every year. Some had seen it coming and had warned against it. In 1871, less than two years after the signing of the treaty, Hoag told his superiors that though the Peace Policy was working, "its beneficial results, in some instances, have been seriously crippled by want of promptness on the part of the Government."³² Nowhere was the want of promptness more keenly felt than the Kiowa-Comanche Agency.

The schools intended to civilize Kiowa children after the fashion of other American children operated in this environment. Like much of the rest of the reservation's programs, schooling met with indifference, poor support, and inadequate funding. Despite the lofty rhetoric of the Indian Office and humanitarian reformers, the truth is that what little the schools accomplished came usually in spite of, and not because of, government direction. Schools like Rainy Mountain stood as testimony to the casual attitude of a government that liked to pride itself on a progressive approach to the Indian question. In reality, few examples more clearly illustrate the limitations of reform; few examples more clearly reveal the distance between rhetoric and reality.

Required by the Medicine Lodge Treaty to provide a school and teacher for every thirty school-age children on the reservation, the government struggled from the beginning to make good on its obligation. At no point during the agency's existence were there sufficient school facilities. The government never came close to providing anything resembling enough schools for the six-hundred children who were entitled to them. Tatum reported in 1870 that his agency had no schools and he did not expect to get any in the foreseeable future. "There

have been no funds either to build houses or sustain teachers," he noted.

Moreover, he found the restrictions on building schools one at a time a ludicrous idea. Requiring one school to have thirty students before the next could be put up was an unreasonable requirement. Many rural, white districts had fewer than thirty students in them, he noted, but schools went up anyway. If education was the key to civilization programs, why force helpless Indian children to endure crippling regulations?³³

The first attempt at a school began in February of 1871 when Josiah Butler, a Quaker, and his wife Elizabeth, opened a small boarding school near the agency at Fort Sill. Though it would come to be known as the Kiowa School, it initially attracted mostly Caddoes and Wichitas. Kiowas did not attend it regularly or in significant numbers until some three or four years later. During its first term Butler's school was home to a total of twenty-four children. His scholars, as he liked to call them, attended school five days a week, four-and-a-half-hours a day. Butler used what he called "object teaching" and concentrated on spelling, reading, and writing. Elizabeth Butler taught sewing and domestic skills to the girls; her husband arranged work for the older boys at the agency saw mill on Saturdays for fifty cents each per day. The children were fed, lodged, and clothed at the school, which was partly supported by donations from the Society of Friends. Invited to see for himself how the children were doing, Tatum visited at the end of the first term and reported that the pupils "all showed marked progress for the length of time they have been studying."³⁴ As for Butler, it was a modest beginning, but he too thought there was great promise in the experiment, provided he could get help and support from the tribes and the agency. In his first annual

report he was careful to mention "the labor, anxiety, patience, and forbearance" that had been "necessarily expended." Still, he trusted in God to lead him and closed by saying that he knew his labor was not in vain.³⁵ For the next eight years his was virtually the only school on the reservation.

Others made attempts at opening schools, but none of them provided significant help to Butler; in fact, most of them failed. An instructive example comes from the experience of Thomas C. Battey, a Quaker from Iowa who got along well with the Kiowas. Battey announced his intention to open a school after receiving what he called a sign from the Lord on March 30, 1872. In December of the same year he arrived at Kicking Bird's camp, where in a long tent divided into living quarters for himself and a classroom for his pupils, he opened a school. By his own recollection the Indians regarded the school with some hesitation, and Battey found his hands full just managing simple conversation with children who did not speak English. In her study of schooling on the reservation, Ida Moore commented that "as to the school, as is generally understood the term, it did not seem to amount to much."³⁶ Agent J. M. Haworth said much the same thing in his annual report for 1873. "Thomas C. Battey has not been very successful in keeping up a school . . . among the Kiowas," he wrote. But Battey was "much encouraged he will convince them to allow a regular school this fall and winter."³⁷ He was wrong.

In the meantime, the agency struggled along and relied on Butler's school at Fort Sill as its only viable school house. Butler cheerfully reported that each term brought larger enrollments than the previous one. Within two years of its opening the school held over thirty students, most of whom, if one is to believe

official reports, were making satisfactory progress. In 1875 Kiowas and Comanches enrolled their children for the first time, a heartening development. Twenty Kiowa children enrolled that year, bringing the school's size to nearly sixty students. Ironically, the interest shown by Kiowas in getting their children into the school quickly pushed it beyond its limits and contributed to the overcrowding that became chronic. Haworth complained to Washington that he could have had many more children in school if he had more room, more schools, and more teachers. As it was, he could accommodate only about sixty of more than six hundred school-age youngsters.³⁸ Every term children were turned away. Even when Indian parents tried to pay for the privilege they discovered that there simply was not space. One chief reportedly offered a pony to get his child into the school, but for lack of space he was refused.³⁹ Why the Kiowas suddenly began to support the school is not clear. The growing number of missionaries on the reservation probably contributed, as did intertribal jealousy. Although they did not like their children being schooled in the same rooms, more and more Kiowas and Comanches likely realized that keeping their children out of school would hinder them in the future.

From 1877 through 1879 agents reported that the school was filled to overflowing and that young children were being sent away with no hope of getting the education that was owed them. The situation was becoming so bad that Indian parents began to lodge complaints with the agents. Haworth noted that "several of the Indians who have children in school have told me that they are very anxious for their children to get an education sufficient to become teachers among their own people." Others asked repeatedly when their children could

expect to be enrolled. Urged by the Indians to build more schools, Haworth suggested a solution to the shortage. He proposed dividing the agency into eight districts — one for the Kiowa Apaches, three for the Kiowas, and four for the Comanches — with a school for each district. By building smaller schools the agency could save money and meet the needs of the large majority of children for whom there were no schools. There is no evidence that his proposal received serious attention.⁴⁰

Agents complained repeatedly about the lack of space in the schools. Almost a decade after Medicine Lodge, P. B. Hunt reported in 1878 that with seventy-five students crowded into the school at Fort Sill the facility was strained beyond capacity. Many more students would have gladly attended but could not due to lack of space and teachers.⁴¹ Clearly, the agency was failing in what the government regarded as a critical component of the civilizing process.

By 1879 matters improved slightly. The consolidation of the Wichita Agency with the Kiowa-Comanche Agency in 1878 meant more school-age children to worry about, but it also provided an additional school. The Wichita School at Anadarko, later known as Riverside School, held about one hundred students. Agent Hunt announced plans to improve both it and the Fort Sill plant to provide space for some three hundred pupils, nearly double the number then in attendance. Still, as he ruefully admitted, some five hundred other children would still be without schools. It was the best he could do. In late 1879 a new building went up at Riverside; similar improvements to the Fort Sill School followed about a year later. In 1887 approval was granted for a separate Comanche school at Fort Sill. The deteriorating condition of the Fort Sill School, combined with a

reluctance to send their children to school with other Indians, prompted the Comanches to insist on a separate facility. The agent was well disposed to the idea because the school was a strong bargaining chip with the Comanches. The agent noted it made sense to placate the tribe because it was a powerful one and "by far the best material out of which to make good citizens." Construction began in 1890; the school opened its doors in October of 1892 when thirty-three Comanche girls entered. By 1893 the school was filled to its capacity of one hundred students. It was an indication that circumstances were changing, for by then the Kiowas had gotten approval for a school of their own at Rainy Mountain.⁴²

Despite additional construction and improved facilities, the reservation's schools remained desperately overcrowded and poorly run. In 1882, for example, the Riverside School suffered a fire; its effects were still being felt two full years later when, because of limited repair funds, the school building was near collapse. In the coldest weather the agent conceded that "there was actual suffering" among the students. In 1885 the agent's official report made the embarrassing admission that on balance the schools had accomplished very little.⁴³

By 1888 agent E. E. White lamented that although the Kiowa-Comanche Agency was "a very large and important agency . . . it would be hard to imagine one with fewer or less adequate facilities." He called the schools "greatly inadequate," and reported that the Fort Sill School was so badly in need of repair that it was scarcely habitable. One year later W. D. Meyers continued the litany of complaints by declaring the Fort Sill School "a disgrace to the government that owns it." As evidence, he pointed to the sordid state of affairs at the school,

whose superintendent had been dismissed for drunkenness and then inexplicably reappointed, a fact that Meyers said had "wrecked it for the year." Worse, the Kiowas and Comanches were beginning to refuse to send their children to the same schools, and had begun to demand their own separate schools.⁴⁴ On a reservation where keeping two schools in working order was proving to be a herculean task, it was unlikely that such a request would be enthusiastically undertaken.

The quality of school employees was often mediocre at best. Turnover was frequent — four men served as superintendent of the Fort Sill school between 1885 and 1889. The first, though judged by an investigator for the Indian Rights Association to be "a nice well-meaning man; industrious, honest, and all that, and would make a good farmer, . . . [he] has no faculty for managing a school." His successor was fired for drunkenness. The third stayed only a few months and, in the words of the Indian office, left after using "objectionable and profane language to such an extent as to shock the female employees." The fourth, a twenty-five year old Kansan, was removed in 1891 after one of his employees whipped two boys so savagely that the two plus a companion fled the agency, were caught in a winter storm and froze to death.⁴⁵

Teachers proved no better. One inspector described two of the three teachers at the Kiowa School in 1887 as incompetent. Only the third, along with the matron and seamstress, were worthy of employment. They alone were the "grains of salt which save this school from absolute stench." Nepotism was rampant, caused partly by the isolation of the agency and the difficulty in obtaining reliable help, and partly by agents who knew they could appoint relatives

with impunity. The staff of the Kiowa School in 1889, for instance, reflected this. The superintendent and one of the teachers were married. One teacher was a cousin to the wife of the superintendent. The assistant matron and industrial teacher were married, and the cook was the matron's sister. It was no wonder that after evaluating the agency's school staff in 1885, one inspector described the schools as "asylum[s] for relatives and friends who cannot earn a support elsewhere."⁴⁶

Private schools were doing little better. Common on reservations across the country, mission schools and private academies were slow to appear on the Kiowa-Comanche Reservation. They enrolled a relatively small number of pupils (agency records suggest combined enrollments of fewer than one hundred pupils), and often had brief life spans. An array of religious groups including the Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Quakers, and Catholics established schools on the reservation beginning in the 1880s.⁴⁷ In 1888, for example, the Secretary of the Interior notified the Indian Office of a request from the Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church for 160 acres near Fort Sill to carry on "an Indian training school." Two years later Reverend S. V. Fait had a church up and announced plans for a boarding school to be opened the following year. In February of 1893, Fait informed Commissioner Thomas J. Morgan that the Mary Gregory Memorial Mission School was ready to receive its first students. Though it had an advertised capacity of twenty, it was some years until it reached that number. The school closed in 1897.⁴⁸

The Methodists, Baptists, and Catholics were close behind. With the support of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, Reverend J. J. Methvin opened

the splendidly named Methvin Methodist Institute south of Anadarko in the fall of 1890. By the spring of 1891 he had sixteen Kiowas and five Comanches in class.⁴⁹ At the same time, Reverend W. W. Carithers of the Reformed Presbyterian Church opened Cache Creek Mission among the Apaches and Kiowa-Apaches. It remained open until just after World War I. Joshua H. Given, a Kiowa educated by the Presbyterians and ordained as a minister, announced his intention to build both a church and school.⁵⁰ W. D. Lancaster, a Baptist missionary and one of Rainy Mountain's first employees, opened the Lone Wolf Mission in September 1890 on the north fork of the Red River with about a dozen pupils, most of them Kiowas. The Kiowas liked the school, reported one observer, "because it is located among them. The Government school . . . and all the mission schools except one are . . . in a bunch near the agency at Anadarko." Like most of the other small mission schools, however, Lone Wolf attracted few pupils and suffered from scanty support. It closed in 1910. In addition to these, the Catholics ran Saint Patrick's Catholic Mission in Anadarko between 1891 and 1915, and the Indian office opened the Chilocco Indian School north of Newkirk, Oklahoma in 1884. A large off-reservation school of the sort pioneered by Pratt at Carlisle, Chilocco served primarily to further the training of students who had already been through reservation boarding schools. It cannot, therefore, be said to have improved materially the terrible shortage of schools on the Kiowa-Comanche Reservation.⁵¹

Despite the spate of building that occurred in the 1880s, the schools that opened during that decade never approached the numbers called for in the Medicine Lodge agreement. With a school-age population that averaged around

six hundred after 1874, the reservation was entitled to at least twenty schools and teachers. It never had more than a half dozen, and half of those were private, church-supported efforts. Between 1869 and 1884 the number of school-age children actually in school never exceeded twenty percent of the eligible population. Even with the addition of Rainy Mountain and the new Comanche School by the early 1890s, levels of attendance never approached fifty percent. Indeed, as late as 1892, agent George Day could write that among the gravest concerns of the reservation's Indians was education, specifically more and better schools.⁵²

The Indian service so completely neglected its duties during the era that to fulfill Article 7 alone of the Medicine Lodge Treaty would have required expenditures far beyond the capacity of the government's resources. Hagan, for example, has noted that the commissioner's office admitted in 1878 that "if the United States simply lived up to its treaty obligations to the Comanches, Kiowas, and Kiowa Apaches, it would consume all the educational funds allotted to the entire population of the Indian Territory exclusive of the Five Civilized tribes." Four years later, Commissioner Hiram Price reported that by his reckoning the government had fallen behind a total of nearly \$2 million dollars in meeting educational commitments for the Kiowa-Comanche agency since the signing of the Medicine Lodge pact.⁵³ In his annual report for 1885, Superintendent of Indian Education John H. Oberly wrote that with regard to education, "the government [has] failed to give effect, in accordance with their letter, to most of the . . . [treaty] provisions. It may also be stated that Congress annually fails to give effect . . . to most of the still vital provisions." He continued by noting that the

Secretary of the Interior's report for 1884 had revealed that \$4,033,700 was necessary to fulfill education obligations across the country. On the Kiowa-Comanche Reservation alone the amount was \$245,206, a sum equal to 22 percent of the government's entire education budget of \$1.1 million for 1885.⁵⁴

A report from the Superintendent of Indian Education in 1883 revealed the extent of the Indian Office's negligence on the Kiowa-Comanche Reservation. According to the government's master plan, thirty-two schools erected at a cost of \$1,000 dollars each were to be built beginning in 1869. The plan also allocated an additional \$700 per school for teachers, materials, and supplies. In 1884 the reservation had only three schools with an estimated total enrollment of 120 children out of an eligible pool of more than six-hundred. As noted earlier, the government had fallen more than a quarter of a million dollars in arrears. Figures for other agencies indicated similar plans and failures. At the nearby Cheyenne and Arapaho Agency the total owed was \$283,000. For the Crow Agency the sum was \$262,000, for the Navajos it was \$883,000, for the Utes, \$255,500, on the Sioux Reservation it was an astonishing \$1.4 million.⁵⁵ What had happened at the Kiowa-Comanche Reservation was occurring all over the country. The problem, of course, was that for the year 1885 the total education budget of the Indian service was only \$1.1 million.

Yet year after year the Indian office pointed to education and announced that with the exception of annuities, no other component of the government's program received as much money. There was truth in that statement, but it was not the whole truth. From a budget of only \$20,000 in 1877, the annual education appropriation had grown to \$2.9 million by 1900. The number of schools more

than doubled during the period, and the number of students went up seven-fold. Yet the numbers were illusory, for nowhere in the country was the government meeting its obligations. Most agencies suffered the same kinds of shortages as the Kiowa-Comanche agency, and most had only a minority of its children in school. In 1880 the commissioner's office stated that at fifty-one of sixty-six agencies fewer than 50 percent of the eligible students had classrooms and teachers. It revealed that on at least seventeen agencies there were no treaty school funds whatever.⁵⁶

From the very beginning the Kiowa-Comanche Agency faced serious problems. Funds were limited, progress was slow, and the tribes proved difficult. Although the government believed that the agency was an important one it did surprisingly little to create a stable, orderly environment. The Medicine Lodge agreement promised significant government assistance; its aftermath revealed an ambivalent, stingy, and misdirected policy. Thomas Battey's "holy experiment" seemed destined for failure. And it was into this maelstrom that Rainy Mountain was born.

Notes

1. Richard White, *It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own: A New History of the American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 3.

2. An excellent summary of that process is Hagan's *United States-Comanche Relations: The Reservation Years* (Norman: University Of Oklahoma Press, 1990), especially chapters 1-3.

3. For early Kiowa history see Mildred Mayhall, *The Kiowas* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962), chapters 1-3. See also Maurice Boyd, *Kiowa Voices*, 3 vols. (Ft. Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1981); James Mooney, "Calendar History of the Kiowa Indians," *Seventeenth Annual Report, Bureau of American Ethnology* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1898): Part 1, 129-445. Though Mayhall's account is accepted as the standard history, it is poorly written, contains no ethnographic or cultural material of any value, deals only passingly with the twentieth century, and lacks any analysis of the reservation period. A definitive history of the tribe does not exist.

4. This split, called the "Pulling Out Band Legend," and the subsequent move, is described in Boyd, *Kiowa Voices*, I, 9-10; see also Mayhall, *The Kiowas*, 9.

5. Francis Haines, "The Northward Spread of Horses Among The Plains Indians," *American Anthropologist* 40(December 1938): 429-437; Jerrold Levy, "Kiowa," unpublished manuscript in the possession of the author, 2-3; James H. Gunnerson and Dolores Gunnerson, "Apachean Culture History: A study in Unity and Diversity," in *Apachean Culture: History and Ethnology*. Keith Basso and Morris

E. Opler, eds. *Anthropological Papers of University of Arizona* 21(1971): 16-19; Mooney, "Calendar History," 148, 161.

6. Charles L. Kenner, *A History of New Mexican-Plains Indian Relations* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1969), 69-71.

7. Levy, "Kiowa," 3.

8. Mooney estimated that for much of the nineteenth century Kiowa population averaged between 1,200 and 1,350. Reservation census figures from the late nineteenth century confirm such estimates. See Mooney, "Calendar History of the Kiowas," 235-237.

9. Levy, "Kiowa," 9. The Kiowa-Apaches were Athapascans who had lived with the Kiowas since the early eighteenth century. Small in number (about three hundred by the mid-nineteenth century), they shared the material culture of the Kiowas and lived with them but maintained a distinct identity from the Kiowas. The literature on the tribe is sparse. A useful summary is William Bittle, "A Brief Account of the Kiowa-Apache," *Papers in Anthropology* 12(1971): 1-34, published by the department of Anthropology, University of Oklahoma.

10. *Ibid.*, 8-10.

11. Levy, "Kiowa," 11. See also Bernard Mishkin, *Rank and Warfare Among The Plains Indians* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1966); Jane Richardson, *Law and Status Among the Kiowa Indians* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1966).

12. For a discussion of the implications of Kiowa law see Richardson, *Law and Status Among the Kiowas*.

13. Mayhall, *The Kiowas*, 61-77; "Indian Treaties and Councils Affecting Kansas," *Kansas State Historical Society Collections* 16(1923-24): 746-772. The text of the treaty may be found in Charles J. Kappler, ed., *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, 7 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1904), II, 489-491.

14. Levy, "Kiowa," 23.

15. The text may be found in Kappler, *Indian Affairs*, II, 600-602. For details of the treaty see Mayhall, *The Kiowas*, 185-186; Hagan, *U.S. Comanche Relations*, 15-16. For discussions of the conditions on the Southern Plains between 1840 and 1870, see Hagan, *U.S.-Comanche Relations*, especially chapter 1; Robert M. Utley, *The Indian Frontier of the American West, 1846-1890* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984), especially chapters 2-6; Utley, *Frontiersmen in Blue: The United States Army and the Indian, 1848-1865* (New York: MacMillan, 1967); Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1891* (New York: MacMillan, 1973); Rupert N. Richardson, *The Comanche Barrier to South Plains Settlement* (Glendale, California: Arthur H. Clark, 1963); William Leckie, *The Military Conquest of the Southern Plains* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963). Three works are critical for an understanding of the policy decisions of the era: Robert A. Trennert, Jr., *Alternative to Extinction: Federal Indian Policy and the Beginnings of the Reservation System, 1846-51* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1975); James C. Malin, *Indian Policy and Westward Expansion* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press,

1921); and Alban W. Hoopes, *Indian Affairs and Their Administration, with Special Reference to the Far West, 1849-1860* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1932). For Kiowa and Comanche relations see W. Stitt Robinson, ed., "The Kiowa and Comanche Campaign of 1860 as Recorded in the Personal Diary of Lt. J.E.B. Stuart," *Kansas Historical Quarterly*, 23(Winter 1957): 382-400; M.L. Crimmins, ed., "Colonel Robert E. Lee's Report on Indian Combats in Texas," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 39(July 1935): 21-32; Michael Tate, "Frontier Defense on the Comanche Ranges of Northwest Texas, 1846-1860," *Great Plains Journal*, 13(January 1974): 67-77; Brad Agnew, "The 1858 War Against The Comanches," *Chronicles of Oklahoma*, 49(Summer 1971): 211-229; Forrest Monahan, "Kiowa-Federal Relations in Kansas, 1865-1868," *Chronicles of Oklahoma*, 50(Winter 1971): 477-491; Mayhall, *The Kiowas*, especially chapters 5-6.

16. For details of the treaty see Kappler, *Indian Affairs*, II, 892-895; Mayhall, *The Kiowas*, 204-207; Hagan, *U.S.-Comanche Relations*, 21-23; Mooney, "Calendar History," 48; William E. Unrau, "Indian Agent vs. the Army: Some Background Notes on the Kiowa-Comanche Treaty of 1865," *Kansas Historical Quarterly*, (Summer 1964): 129-152.

17. The best description of the negotiations remains Douglas Jones, *The Treaty of Medicine Lodge* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1966). An excellent summary of the issues may be found in Hagan, *U.S.-Comanche Relations*, 1-43, on which I have relied heavily. See also Mayhall, *The Kiowas*, but note that her account is quite poor. Provisions of the treaty are in Kappler, *Indian Treaties*, II, 977-984.

18. Quoted in Hagan, *U.S.-Comanche Relations*, 29.

19. See Prucha's comments in *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians*, 2 volumes (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), I, 488-500.

20. Hagan, *United States-Comanche Relations*, 29,31; *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs* (hereafter cited as *ARCIA*), 1869: 504; Lawrie Tatum, *Our Red Brothers and the Peace Policy of President Ulysses S. Grant*, Foreward by Richard N. Ellis (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1970. Originally issued 1899.), 29.

21. Hagan, *United States-Comanche Relations*, 42-43.

22. Kappler, *Indian Treaties*, II, 979.

23. Ida Cleo Moore, "Schools and Education Among the Kiowa and Comanche Indians, 1870-1940," Master's thesis, University of Oklahoma, 1940: 15.

24. Tatum, *Our Red Brothers*, 24.

25. Tatum's account of his experience in the Indian service is in *Our Red Brothers*. See Hagan, *United States-Comanche Relations*, especially chapters 4-8, for a revealing examination of Tatum's experiences, experiences that turned out to be omens of a failed reservation policy. On the Quaker administration of the agency see Lee Cutler, "Lawrie Tatum and the Kiowa Agency, 1869-1873," *Arizona and the West* 13(Autumn 1971): 221-244; Burritt M. Hiatt, "James M. Haworth, Quaker Indian Agent," *Bulletin of the Friends Historical Association* 74(Autumn 1958): 80-93; Aubrey

L. Steele, "The Beginning of Quaker Administration of Indian Affairs in Oklahoma," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 19(December 1939): 364-392; idem., "Quaker Control of the Kiowa-Comanche Agency," Master's thesis, University of Oklahoma, 1938; idem., "Lawrie Tatum's Indian Policy," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 24(Spring 1944): 83-98. Population statistics come from Tatum's annual report in the *ARCIA*, 1870: 728. He reported these numbers for the tribes under his jurisdiction: Kiowas, 1896; Comanches, 2742; Apaches, 300; Wichitas, 260; Caddoes, 500; Delawares, 95; Keechees, 100; Tawaconis, 140; Wacos, 140; Hie-en-eyes, 100.

26. Tatum, *Our Red Brothers*, 10; Hagan, *United States-Comanche Relations*, 61-63.

27. *ARCIA*, 1872: 396.

28. Hagan, *United States-Comanche Relations*, 158; *ARCIA*, 1870: 725.

29. Hagan, *United States-Comanche Relations*, see chapter 8. O. Henry quoted in Dora Neill Raymond, *Captain Lee Hall of Texas* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1940): 203; J. J. Methvin, *In The Limelight* (Anadarko, OK: Plummer, 1928): 50. Speaking at the Lake Mohonk Conference in 1893, Merrill Gates complained that "under the pretentious name of 'home rule' senators and representatives were allowed to dictate the nomination, as agents, of perfectly worthless men." Indian service appointments "should cease to be part plunder, awarded to partisan workers to build up party interest," Annual Report of the Lake Mohonk Conference in *ARCIA*, 1893: 1017. For an analysis of conditions at the Kiowa-Comanche agency in the late 1860s, see William E. Unrau, "Investigation or

Probity? Investigations Into The Affairs of the Kiowa-Comanche Agency, 1867," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 42(Autumn, 1964): 300-319.

30. *Annual Report of the Central Superintendency (hereafter cited as ARCS)*, 1870: 718; *ARCI*, 1872: 429, 632.

31. Hiram Price to Secretary of the Interior, December 27, 1884, cited in Hagan, *U.S.-Comanche Relations*, 165.

32. *ARCS*, 1875: 768; *ibid.*, 1871: 876. For discussions of the Kiowa agency and reservation experience see Michael D. Mitchell, "Acculturation Problems Among the Plains Tribes of the Government Agencies in Western Indian Territory," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 44(Summer 1966): 281-289; Forrest Monahan, "The Kiowa-Comanche Reservation in the 1890s," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 45(Winter 1968): 451-463; Martha Buntin, "History of the Kiowa, Comanche, and Wichita Agency," *Panhandle-Plains Historical Review* 4(Spring 1931): 62-78; William D. Pennington, "Government Policies and Farming on the Kiowa-Comanche Reservation, 1869-1901," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1972; Hugh D. Corwin, "Protestant Mission Work Among the Comanches and Kiowas," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 46(Spring 1968): 41-57; William Hagan, "Kiowas, Comanches, and Cattlemen," *Pacific Historical Review* 40(August 1971): 333-355. For a comparison of a neighboring agency and reservation, see Donald Berthrong, *The Cheyenne and Arapaho Ordeal: Reservation and Agency Life in the Indian Territory, 1875-1907* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1976).

33. *ARCI*, 1870: 729.

34. Thomas C. Battey, *The Life and Adventures of a Quaker Among the Indians*, introduction by Alice Marriott (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1968): 39. For Butler's account of the school see Josiah Butler, "Pioneer School Teaching at the Comanche-Kiowa Agency School, 1870-1873," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 8(December 1928): 482-528.

35. *ARCI*A, 1870: 588.

36. Moore, "Schools and Education Among the Kiowas and Comanches," 16.

37. *ARCI*A, 1873: 588.

38. *ibid.*, 1875: 567; *Annual Report of the Kiowa Agency* (hereafter cited as *ARKA*) in the *ARCI*A, 1875: 775.

39. *ARCI*A, 1876: 378-399.

40. *ARKA*, 1877: 484.

41. *ibid.*, 1878: 557.

42. *Ibid.*, 1879: 174; *ibid.*, 1880: 197; *ibid.*, 1881: 141-142; *ibid.*, 1887: 164-165; *ibid.*, 1892: 386, 640; Hagan, *United States-Comanche Relations*, 199-200. One source suggests that the primary reason for Comanche obstinance was that they "objected to their children's attending school with the Kiowa," George Posey Wild, "History of Education of Plains Indians of Southwest Oklahoma Since The Civil War," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1941: 227. See also W. D. Meyer's annual report from 1889 when he noted that the Comanches were "still clamorous for a school of their own," an attitude which he attributed to "tribal prejudice," *ARKA*,

1889: 189.

43. *ARKA*, 1882: 130; *ibid.*, 1884: 125; *ibid.*, 1885: 311.

44. *Ibid.*, 1888: 95,97; *ibid.*, 1889: 188-189.

45. Hagan, *United States-Comanche Relations*, 195-197.

46. *Ibid.*

47. Muriel Wright, *A Guide To The Indian Tribes of Oklahoma* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1951): 174.

48. *ARKA*, 1889: 189; *ibid.*, 1890: 188; Kiowa Schools, Microfilm KA 96, Indian Archives, Oklahoma Historical Society.

49. *ARKA*, 1889: 189; *ibid.*, 1890: 189; Hagan, *United States-Comanche Relations*, 199.

50. *ARKA*, 1889: 189; *ibid.*, 1890: 188.

51. Kiowa Schools, Microfilm 96, Indian Archives, Oklahoma Historical Society.

52. *Annual Report of Superintendent of Indian Education* (hereafter cited as *ARSIE*) in *ARCLIA*, 1883: 475; *ARKA*, 1892: 385.

53. Hagan, *United States-Comanche Relations*, 134; *ARCLIA*, 1882: 34.

54. *ARSIE*, 1885: 83,94; *ibid.*, 1883: 475.

55. *Ibid.*, 1883: 475-476; *ibid.*, 1885: 83.

56. *ARCLIA*, 1918: 177; *ibid.*, 1880: 85-86.

CHAPTER IV

"THERE ARE SO MANY THINGS NEEDED:"

AN INAUSPICIOUS BEGINNING

As the 1880s came to a close the Kiowa-Comanche Reservation still lacked school facilities for the overwhelming majority of its eligible children. And with no indication from Washington that any significant change would come in the near future, the reservation continued to operate with a handful of schools scattered across its expanse. The Kiowas, however, shortly made clear that they were losing patience with the government. Repeatedly disappointed in their hopes for a school, and increasingly unhappy at the prospect of sending their children to Fort Sill or Riverside with Comanches and Wichitas, the Kiowas continued to agitate for a school of their own. Because large numbers of Kiowas lived in the reservation's more remote districts, they had a strong desire to obtain a school that would serve their children.¹

In the summer of 1891 the situation began to change. Acting on the direction of the Indian Office, John Richardson, a regional supervisor for Indian education, surveyed the Kiowa-Comanche Reservation for a suitable site on which to build a new boarding school for the Kiowas. He found a place about thirty miles west of Anadarko on a creek at the base of a well-known landmark known to the Kiowas as *Sep-yal-day*, or Rainy Mountain.² In August 1891, Richardson

sent a long letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Thomas Jefferson Morgan describing the location.³ From all appearances the site seemed adequate to the needs of the Indian Office; Richardson wrote that it was "in the midst of the most beautiful scenery" and was amply supplied with water, grass, timber, and native stone for building purposes. Good soil was abundant. Importantly, the site was "most happily located for health . . . no dull lake, marshy swamps or stagnant pools lurk within miles of it; nothing that breeds the dread malaria is found here." Convinced that Rainy Mountain was perfectly suitable for a boarding school, Richardson concluded that the place was "supplied with the purest mountain water, fanned by the sweetest of mountain air, it is a veritable 'health resort.' " More importantly, support among the local Kiowas was widespread. Owing to what he described as a "restlessness in this settlement of Kiowas, for whose benefit the school is to be established," Richardson encouraged the Indian Office to get the school into operation as quickly as possible.⁴

One week after receiving Richardson's letter, Morgan wrote to Kiowa-Comanche Agent George Day for his advice on how much land to set aside for the school. He also directed Day to contact George Moss, a thirty-seven-year-old employee at the nearby Cheyenne Boarding School for the purpose of bringing Moss to the school as its first superintendent.⁵ By the fall of 1891, building plans were being prepared and reviewed, Moss was on his way to the Kiowa-Comanche Agency, and money had been allocated for construction of a boarding school. Finally, the Kiowas would have a place for their children.

As events turned out, however, the school's beginning proved to be much like the rest of its life – slow, mixed up, and poorly administered. Although a

contract to erect the school's buildings was made with a local construction firm in mid April 1892, nothing else happened at the proposed site through the winter and spring of 1892. In early May, Moss wrote to Agent Day, suggesting that they meet to discuss various matters concerning the school's establishment. The builder, noted Moss, was still waiting for approval from Washington to begin construction. "You are aware, of course," Moss reminded Day, "that there is liable to be a considerable delay in regard to receiving it [an understatement], so I thought it would be a good plan for me to come down and go with you . . . to select a site for the building." Moss especially wanted to begin fencing the school's pastures and fields so that Rainy Mountain's farm could be started.⁶

In mid-June, Morgan made inquiries about the preparations for the school. Had a site been determined? Was it advisable for a superintendent to report for full-time duty? What progress could Day report on the construction of a building or the breaking of farm land? Although there was not a finished building at the site when Morgan wrote, he shortly directed Moss (who apparently still worked full-time at the Cheyenne school) to "enter upon the discharge of your duties" at Rainy Mountain as of July 1, 1892. In mid-July, Day reported that W. D. Lancaster, a former missionary from Kentucky, had been hired as the school's industrial teacher and farmer, and that John Wolf, a local Kiowa, was employed as the school's helper. By October, Moss finally announced that "the building is going up nicely now," and that other projects on the grounds were being handled as well.⁷ It had taken more than a year, but the school was taking shape.

In the late fall of 1892 Morgan wrote once more to Day and made anxious inquiries about the state of the school. After reminding the agent that every

effort should be made to secure all necessary supplies and hasten the completion of the main building, Morgan announced that "it is the earnest wish of this Office that the school may be filled with pupils at the earliest practical opportunity." To accomplish this, he instructed Day to "meet with parents of children and make a thorough canvass among the children of school age and suitable health who are tributary to the Rainy Mountain School, and have a thorough understanding with the parents and effect such arrangements that you may get the children into the school without delay as soon as you are ready to receive them."⁸

Morgan's anxiousness to get the school into service as quickly as possible ran headlong into the galling realities of the situation on the Kiowa-Comanche Reservation. No students were enrolled that fall, nor in the spring that followed. Indeed, in mid-November 1892, nearly a year and a half after approval had been granted for the school, John Richardson reported that Rainy Mountain still lacked many of its basic necessities. There were no dining, storage, or laundry facilities, he reported. A small barn was needed to shelter the school's animals as well as to provide training for the boys in industrial and agricultural areas. In an omen of troubles, he wrote that "the manner of the water supply should be looked after at once, so that there will be plenty of water when the school is opened." A year later, W. H. Cox, who replaced Moss as superintendent before the school ever opened, reported that a store house and laundry house (including a bath unit) were complete. And although a well had been dug, it was not producing adequate amounts of water; at the end of August 1894, Cox requested authority to hire a crew from Anadarko to dig a new one. The matter of a barn was not satisfactorily resolved until more than two years later when Cox's successor, Cora Dunn, asked

for \$550 to build a barn and tool shed.⁹ The litany of problems to which Cox and Dunn referred became typical.

Despite those and other troubles, Agent Day and the small staff at Rainy Mountain School continued to press ahead in their preparations for the school's opening. In early 1893, for example, the Indian Office informed Day that a matron for the school was being chosen from the appropriate Civil Service lists. Other staff members were also reporting for duty.¹⁰ And then disaster struck. In February 1893 John Richardson wrote to the commissioner that the Rainy Mountain staff was not only inefficient but also dangerously incompetent. "The superintendent and the Industrial Teacher of the Rainy Mountain School are total failures; indolent and shiftless," he reported. In response to the allegations, Morgan instructed Day to fire both Moss and Lancaster. "It is . . . utterly useless to consider the matter of Mr. Moss remaining in the service in any capacity," wrote Morgan. "You will notify him that his relief is absolute." The same was true of Lancaster, who was to be discharged immediately as well.¹¹ Why the two men were so hastily drummed out of the Indian Service is not known. The school's administrative records contain no mention of the episode beyond the fact that they were fired. It was an inauspicious start, one from which the school never really recovered. Although no one knew it at the time, the episode involving Moss and Lancaster was a harbinger of a future filled with equally distressing developments.

The Indian Office attempted to straighten the mess out as quickly as possible. In early March 1893, W. H. Cox, the assistant superintendent at the Albuquerque Training School, received word of his appointment as superintendent

at Rainy Mountain. T. W. Miller was hired to replace Lancaster as industrial teacher and farmer for the school.¹² Cox and his wife arrived on March 17 and immediately began to get the school back on track.¹³ Under his direction a full staff was assembled and the school's main building, a two story stone combination dormitory and classroom, was readied for use. By late April Cox informed the Indian Office that the school would be ready for occupancy sometime in late May. Owing to the nearness of the summer vacation period, however, the decision was made to delay opening until the fall.¹⁴

Over the course of the spring and fall Cox continued to hire his staff. From the time of his arrival, when the staff hovered between four and six, until the school's opening in September of 1893, Cox managed to collect a full complement of staff, with the notable exception of a qualified teacher. In the absence of one, Cox's wife agreed to serve as a temporary substitute. By September the school's pay vouchers listed no fewer than seven full- or part-time staff. By November it had increased to fifteen and included a teacher, matron, cook, baker, seamstress, laundress, industrial teacher, and farmer, plus an assortment of Indian helpers and laborers. But Cox soon discovered that he was dealing with a stingy Indian Office and often unreliable employees. Within the school's first six months, for example, Cox went through no fewer than two farmers and industrial teachers, and two classroom teachers.¹⁵ Indeed, Cox found it so difficult to obtain staff willing to stay that his first qualified teacher apparently left between her appointment and the actual opening of the school. This would prove to be a recurring problem for all of Rainy Mountain's history.

In addition to forming his staff, Cox also oversaw the completion of the

school's main building, the stocking of necessary supplies, clothes, and other items, as well as the plowing of the school's farm land. He made provisions to fence part of the school's four sections of land and put fifty acres under cultivation. In late March 1893 the school received a large shipment of seeds and plants with which Cox intended to begin a modest farm operation. Judging from the invoices, he placed especially high hopes on pumpkins, tomatoes, cabbages, and beets. Cox also ordered large quantities of shade trees and decorative plants with which to enhance the school's campus.¹⁶ His successor, Cora Dunn, was an indefatigable tree planter as well but their combined effort to create a tree lined campus failed. Today the school's grounds show no evidence whatever that trees were planted.

Cox purchased the school's staple goods and supplies, items that were intended to signify the break from Kiowa life that awaited the school's students. An inventory from the summer of 1893 contained an astonishing collection of goods from disk harrows to shoe blacking. Included were hand bells, brooms, butter knives, mirrors, thimbles, mirrors, gingham dresses, shoes, wash tubs, and other assorted goods and tools that would be used to force the transition from Kiowa culture to Angloamerican culture. With every necessity of life provided, the students would be dependent on the school for virtually all their needs, which would in turn help to sever completely any connection to the Kiowa world from whence they came. Cox also left an inventory of office supplies. It included the usual foolscap stationery, inkstands, and envelopes. It also included, alas, "one spool - red tape."¹⁷ If only Cox had known how close to the truth it really was.

As the summer of 1893 came to a close the school finally appeared to be ready for opening. On August 14, Agent Hugh Brown informed Commissioner of

Indian Affairs D. W. Browning that the school would begin taking students on or about September 1. Browning authorized an opening date of September 1, but stipulated that Cox accept no more than forty pupils. This was due to the previously noted absence of a teacher. Browning promised to send one as soon as a qualified applicant could be found. Until then he authorized Cox to employ "some competent person as a temporary teacher."¹⁸ Rainy Mountain School opened officially on September 5, 1893 with a total of five scholars, as they were called, in residence. Two weeks later the number had grown to thirteen; by March 1 it had edged up to thirty-two. The Kiowas at last had their school, and a great experiment had begun.

Cox stayed at the school only for its first full year of operation. During the summer of 1894 he left Rainy Mountain and was replaced by Cora Dunn, who with her husband Alfred as industrial teacher and farmer, stayed on for the next sixteen years. It was she who saw the school through its formative years. More than this, Cora Dunn was largely responsible for making the school successful. Her determination often made the difference between success and failure. As it was, her best efforts often succeeded only in keeping the place afloat and somehow operating. During her tenure Rainy Mountain developed a sense of identity. And it endured a fumbling Indian Office that often had no understanding of the rigors which plagued schools like Rainy Mountain.

Understanding the administrative history of Rainy Mountain School means recognizing the withering realities which beset it from the very beginning. The reservation inhabitants whom it served had a reputation for obstinance and violence. Agents had little control over their wards; the government's civilizing

program was often little more than a joke. Schools were too few to be effective; there was the distinct possibility that Rainy Mountain would amount to little more than a holding pen for Kiowa children. Cora Dunn's first years at the place confirmed that life there would likely be difficult and perhaps even unpleasant.

So unfavorable a portrait of the school is not altogether accurate, however, for the place was more complicated than that. True, it suffered mightily from neglect and official carelessness. Administrators were often forced to operate a school that was a pale and shoddy imitation of what the government wanted. Cramped and unhealthy living conditions frustrated the school's effectiveness. High staff turnover kept the curriculum unsettled, hastily planned, and poorly administered. Limited budgets meant minimal upkeep of the physical plant and property. Yet the school opened nearly every year to a full, if not overflowing, contingent of students. Many Kiowas came to embrace the place, cherishing it despite its deficiencies for the good that they believed it did their children. Thus, the school lived in the midst of a paradox; never adequately staffed or supported, chronically troubled, yet filled to capacity for each of its twenty-seven years.

Reservation boarding schools were intended to provide an environment in which Indian children could learn how to lead productive lives as independent citizens. In theory an institution of total control, the boarding schools were the most critical link in the government's assimilation program. Because it was "just as necessary to teach Indian children how to live as how to read and write," said Secretary of the Interior Carl Schurz in 1880, reservation boarding schools were regarded as the laboratories of change.¹⁹ The Indian Office regarded these schools as gateways to the freedom gained through hard work, discipline, and

learning.

At Rainy Mountain rhetoric never reflected reality. Two factors account for this. The first was that administratively the school rarely had sufficient support from the government to accomplish its mission. Whether it was unsafe buildings or lack of books, Rainy Mountain went through every year needing (and usually not getting) a variety of major things. The second explanation for the school's failure to fulfill its expectations: the ability of Kiowa children to resist the government's forced assimilation program. Their resilience, combined with the school's marginal effectiveness, meant that Rainy Mountain could not hope to affect the changes desired by policymakers.

When she arrived at Rainy Mountain in the summer of 1894, Cora Dunn took charge of a boarding school that eventually enrolled more than 150 children every year. Once enrolled, those children began a program that would lead to a sixth grade education, one that combined academic instruction with vocational training in domestic and industrial arts. The school was supposed to emancipate Kiowa children from the uncertainties of reservation life and from a cultural identity that was, policymakers believed, already out of step in an industrializing modern America.

The most urgent problem confronting the school in its first years concerned the physical plant and the condition of the campus. This proved to be a continuing dilemma. The largest and oldest building on the campus was the two-story stone dormitory that originally housed the girls, some of the boys, and many of the staff. A similarly sized second dormitory went up in 1899, along with a superintendent's cottage in the same year. A laundry, barn, commissary building,

mess hall, band stand, and various service buildings went up over the next fifteen years. A large classroom building was added in 1915. The campus was a neatly arranged quadrangle set at the base of Rainy Mountain's east side. In addition to the central campus, the school held 2,560 acres of adjoining land reserved for the exclusive use of the school. Much of that land was used as pasture, put under cultivation, and even on rare occasions might be leased. As reservation boarding schools went, the place was not particularly unique. The size of the school, the scope of its activities, and the nature of its operation all reflected generally the state of affairs at reservation boarding schools across the country.

The government's almost ubiquitous neglect of the care and protection of the Rainy Mountain campus, however, meant that from the earliest days of its existence the school suffered serious problems. These in turn produced deleterious effects on students and programs alike. Poor buildings, unhealthy living conditions, outmoded or insufficient equipment and teaching materials combined to create a difficult environment. A close look at conditions on the campus shows a troubling lack of interest or concern by the Indian Office or the Kiowa-Comanche agents. Of course, not all reservation boarding schools were as poorly kept up as Rainy Mountain; some were better, some were equally bad. On balance Rainy Mountain was a typical institution, problems and all. At any rate, it is difficult to find schools of the same size and general characteristics which were much better off than Rainy Mountain. In most ways — size, location, student body, problems — the place was not unique. And the fact that Cora Dunn sometimes feared for the very roof over her head can be taken as a symbol, literally and figuratively, of what life was like in the reservation schools.

As far as the physical condition of the campus was concerned, the government showed a curious ambivalence. Surviving records from the school are rife with complaints and reports detailing the disregard of the Indian Office for any but the most urgent needs. Even then, school officials often had to press for help. Having invested at least \$37,825 in the campus in its first six years, it seems reasonable that the government would have shown considerable interest in protecting and improving its investment.²⁰ This was not to be the case. In fact, having spent the money, the Indian Office usually appeared reluctant to appropriate more funds, even when conditions at the school were dangerously unsafe.

Several examples illustrate the case. At the end of his first and only year as superintendent, W. H. Cox issued an annual report on the school. He came to the conclusion that Rainy Mountain was "in need of an additional building for schoolrooms and quarters for either the boys or the girls; that the school also requires a range, and that some porches should be constructed on the present building." In response, the Indian Office doubted the need for some of Cox's improvements and asked Agent Maury Nichols to look into the matter.²¹

Cox's requests were both necessary and justifiable. In its first year the school had already outgrown its single main building, built to hold perhaps fifty pupils. Attendance increased from an average of thirty-one in May of 1894 to more than seventy by December of 1894. By the fall of 1895 it stood at seventy; by early 1897 it stood at nearly ninety, far more than the school could adequately hold.²² The main building was already filled to capacity by the 1895-1896 academic year. Crowded conditions were the norm for students and staff alike.

The lack of employee housing made the situation even worse, for staff members were forced to live in the dorms, reducing the space available for students.

Because it served as dormitory, assembly hall, classroom, staff living quarters, and chapel, the main building quickly began to suffer from over use. The school clearly needed another building. Kiowas were enthusiastically filling the place to overflowing every term. Something had to be done.

Cox left without persuading officials of the school's needs. When Cora Dunn assumed control she too brought the issue to the attention of her superiors. In November 1894 she informed the commissioner's office that the school was in need of a variety of general repairs and improvements. "The plastering of the [main] building was originally of very indifferent quality," she wrote, "and is now badly broken." She requested funds to repair the plaster, and she also asked for authority to build three water closets in the main building. In a separate note she also inquired about getting \$550 for a barn and toolshed. Noting that the school's livestock and implements were unsheltered, she reminded the commissioner that this was the third time in her brief tenure that she had written of the matter. Dunn seems to have believed that the Indian Office was not taking her seriously, so she was, she said, writing at the advice of "Special Agent Able, who appreciates our pressing need."²³

The Indian Office responded by suggesting that instead of building a large dormitory-style edifice, a number of smaller cottages would probably suffice. This also had the important advantage of being considerably less expensive than a large building. Unwilling to endure the cost of probably more than \$10,000 (the original main building had cost \$12,000), the office advised Kiowa-Comanche

Agent Hugh Baldwin that the plan was economical and practical. Cora Dunn agreed, but she had some reservations. Her letter to Baldwin in December 1894 noted that the plan "commends itself to me as the best and most functional method of fostering a love of homelife among these homeless children. Such an arrangement would turn out more permanent work than all the non-reservation schools with their vast machinery." With the cottages she could also solve other problems. The dining area in the main building could be converted into a chapel, and the kitchen (the pupils would cook in their cottages) into a classroom. She worried, however, that the need for additional employees would be a burden. The school would need a matron for each cottage "to insure the prosecution of the work and sufficient protection for the girls." At the same time, she continued, the expense of additional matrons might be offset by eliminating the positions of cook, baker, and laundress.²⁴

Nothing ever came of the plan, and three years later Dunn was writing again to complain about conditions at the school. "The standing need of this school, as has been stated in all previous reports, is another large building of the same size and general construction of the one now occupied." So desperate was its need, she continued, that it would have to serve not only as a dormitory but must also contain a kitchen and dining room, for those facilities were pressed well beyond capacity. In addition she also requested a cottage for the superintendent, a carpenter's shop, and a milking shed. Without these and other improvements the school simply could not be expected to provide the children with adequate instruction.²⁵

As if these were not enough, Dunn also brought the agent's attention to the

need of extensive repairs across the campus. Flues in the main building were "nearly ready to fall," she reported. Indeed, after further inspection she hastened to add that the flues were "in worse condition than we supposed, and it is extremely fortunate that it was discovered in time to save the building from destruction by fire."²⁶ Shortly thereafter the agent received a note from Alfred Dunn asking permission to build flues in the dining room and playroom. "The children are having chills," he wrote, "and ought to have fires early in the morning." There being no funds for such purposes, the request was denied.²⁷

It seemed to be one thing after another, especially during the first years. Plumbing, plaster, walkways, fire hoses, wells, and new buildings all found their way into Cora Dunn's correspondence on a regular basis. As her tenure lengthened, moreover, she discovered that she could usually expect little sympathy, and less help, from the Indian Office when it came to keeping her school in good condition. In 1897, for example, she raised the issue of getting a decent water system for the campus; six years later she was still asking for the same thing. In the meantime, the school muddled through by relying on the decrepit original system from 1893.²⁸

In February of 1904 the condition of the school's major buildings (including a new dormitory, which she got in 1899), had deteriorated so badly that Dunn needed more than six thousand pounds of plaster for repairs. Blaming the condition of the buildings on the haphazard and inferior craftsmanship of the original contractors, she noted that some ceilings were in such poor shape that they were "positively dangerous."²⁹ Driven to exasperation in the spring of 1905 by the bureaucratic wrangling that crippled even the simplest requests, Dunn

tersely informed the agent that she needed, and had ordered, boiler grates and a range for her cottage. "In order to obviate the extensive correspondence and tedious waiting involved in ordering through the Indian Office," she continued, "I had . . . a hardware merchant in Gotebo order them."³⁰

She had learned from experience that such maneuvers were unappreciated by the Indian Office, but she also knew that the alternative was to suffer the interminable paper shuffling that too often left her without anything more than an official rejection notice. In the fall of 1897, for example, in answer to her repeated requests for \$220.00 worth of fire equipment, the Indian Office declined to authorize the funds because the prices she quoted "seem to be about 100% above market price." In the end she was allowed a total of \$78.05 for the purchase of one hydrant and 250 feet of hose.³¹ In the meantime, however, the office refused to upgrade the water system, thus the fire equipment was only marginally useful.

Despite the necessity of extensive improvements championed by Cora Dunn, significant changes did not occur until the turn of the century. For more than six years Rainy Mountain languished. It filled to overflowing every term, but the Indian Office refused to expend additional funds to meet the demands of increasing enrollments. The school got a tool shed and barn, both built sometime in 1895. No additional quarters or classrooms were approved, and it was not until late 1899, a full five years after Cox first raised the issue and long after the school had outgrown its facilities, that an additional dormitory was added. In the meantime a stable went up in 1895, a playroom and lavatory in 1896, a slaughter house sometime between 1894 and 1900. Certainly the school had need for these

facilities, yet the Indian Office did not address the most urgent problem of all, that of better living quarters and expanded classroom space. By the time the second building went up, moreover, enlarged enrollments threatened to overwhelm the school again. By 1899 it had already begun to creep toward 100. In 1905 it stood at nearly 130 and the school was badly overcrowded. Cora Dunn wrote the agent that "the need of an additional building for school purposes has so frequently been represented that it is unnecessary to further enlarge upon it."³² Relief did not come until 1915, when a third building — primarily a classroom building — went up. It marked the last major construction at the campus. By then enrollment averaged more than 160 students.

In 1906 Cora Dunn informed Agent John Blackmon that although the dorms were adequate, "the need of an additional building for school purposes has so frequently been represented that it is unnecessary to further enlarge upon it." To dispel recent reports that conditions were in fact unhealthy, Dunn hastened to tell Blackmon that "the only time the pupils really lacked for sufficient air is when all are assembled in the schoolroom used as a chapel." This is not surprising given the fact that at the time of her letter attendance was 129.

Besides the continuing concern over the physical state of the school's building, Cora Dunn inherited an especially critical problem — the lack of a reliable water system. The original report establishing the location of the school stated that "an excellent spring that will amply supply water for all purposes" was only one-half mile from the school.³³ This was an exaggeration if not an outright fabrication. The lack of a reliable water source and the unwillingness of the Indian Office to provide anything but the most meager appropriations for a

serviceable water and sewer system meant that Rainy Mountain was forced to exist under conditions that were unhealthy. This was increasingly so in the years after 1900, when the school's ability to take care of students was compromised year after year. Indeed, after 1913, when more than 160 students crowded into the school, health and hygiene suffered as a direct result of poor bathing and laundry facilities. The lack of flush toilets forced the school to endure drop-pit latrines until well in the 1910s. The greatest danger came from trachoma, a malady associated with dirty water that led in some cases to blindness. It began to run out of control as early as 1910.

The problems caused by the water situation were well known. Dunn and her successor, James H. McGregor, who arrived in the fall of 1910, repeatedly brought the issue the attention of the Indian Office. In fact, it runs like a thread through all of the official correspondence for the entire history of the school. In December 1893, nearly two years before the school was in operation, John Richardson — who had earlier assured the office that water supply would not be a problem — advised the commissioner "that the manner of the water supply be looked after at once, so that there will be plenty of water when the school is opened."³⁴ When the school actually opened, the water question had not been resolved. The school's supply was brought in daily from a spring located close to three miles south of the campus. W. H. Cox complained that it took one employee nearly half the day to haul the necessary amount.³⁵ In August 1894, Cox wrote to Agent Maury Nichols for permission to hire a man to dig a well at the campus. Because Rainy Mountain creek ran not far from the school, Cox offered that a well dug some fifteen to twenty feet deep "would likely furnish a

supply of water."³⁶ Nichols apparently did not share Cox's concern and did not approve the request.

Cora Dunn took the matter up in the summer of 1895 when she wrote to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Daniel Browning to submit an estimate for a well. She wrote that a small one had recently been dug for the convenience of Indians who gathered at the school for the issue of rations and annuities and that an enlarged one at the same place "would furnish an inexhaustible supply of pure water . . . at a moderate cost." There was some urgency about the issue, she continued, as the small well was the school's only reliable source of water short of continuing to haul it from the spring three miles distant.³⁷

Browning's reply is revealing. To the request for funds to build a water system (estimated by Baldwin at \$1,799.24) Browning replied that Baldwin needed first to establish which of the reservation's schools could be enlarged to accommodate a larger than anticipated pool of eligible children. Until such recommendations had been received in the office, Browning told Baldwin that he refused to consider the question of water at Rainy Mountain School.³⁸ Obviously there was not enough money to satisfy every school's needs, but because it was unlikely that Rainy Mountain would be enlarged it was equally unlikely that its water problems would receive much attention. By tying improvements to matters that had nothing to do with the actual problem, the Indian Office virtually assured that pressing needs would often go unattended. The merits of its case, clear and convincing though they were, did nothing to help the school. In the end, Cora Dunn's subsequent request of \$40 for a wagon-mounted water barrel was met with a curt response that authorized her to spend "no more than \$30.00 for one wagon

water tank."³⁹

By early 1896, the Indian Office apparently had a change of heart and authorized \$1,381.94 for a well, water tower, pump, and pipe. Hopes ran high on the campus and Cora Dunn anticipated the end of a troubling dilemma. In a letter to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, she had announced that "the health and comfort of the school demand new water closets and sanitary construction."⁴⁰ That summer a local contractor was hired to plumb most of the school's main buildings. Another dug a well. A third was hired to erect a windmill, motor, pump, and pipe. The total cost was \$637.71. How the remaining \$744.23 was spent, or if it was spent, is not known.⁴¹

No sooner was the water problem solved, however, than a series of new disasters appeared. In December 1896, most of the pipes laid that summer burst. In a letter to Herman Veidt, who had done the installation, Alfred Dunn implied that shoddy workmanship was to blame. (Perhaps a low budget contract explains why less than one-half of the appropriated funds were actually used.) "There are several things that will be a continual source of trouble," warned Dunn, "and they had better be fixed now."⁴² Veidt apparently complied, but how much he did is not known.

Shortly after this episode, a train of events occurred that defy explanation. On March 21, Alfred Dunn notified Baldwin that a spring storm the previous evening had wrecked the school's windmill. The apparatus was "torn all to pieces," noted Dunn, and it left the school with less than a week's supply of water.⁴³ By early April, Dunn had overseen the digging of a new well but was anxious to know when the school could expect a new windmill. Without it there was not sufficient

water (short of hauling it, an onerous task that Dunn wished to avoid at all costs) to supply the school's water closets. Fearing that he would be forced to tear down the water closets because of a health hazard, Dunn appealed for help.⁴⁴ By late April, he informed Baldwin that matters were becoming serious; "if we do not get relief soon" he wrote, "we will be compelled to let some of the children go home. We are running our water wagon all the time and our cisterns have given out, so that we are dependent on the water wagon to furnish drinking, cooking, and laundry water, besides water for the closets."⁴⁵ The matter had gone beyond inconvenience, now it threatened to affect the operation of the school.

One week after Dunn's plea, the Indian Office authorized \$225 to replace the destroyed mill.⁴⁶ It had taken nearly six weeks for it to do so; it would be almost another month before the second mill went up. And then disaster struck again. In early June, as the mill was being raised into place, a rope parted and the mill crashed to the ground. "It is in nearly as bad shape as the other mill," reported Alfred Dunn. But the agent could take some solace from the knowledge that the broken rope belonged to the man hired to erect the mill, "so no blame can possibly rest on us." No doubt the agent found comfort in that fact. After repairing and raising the mill again after several days, Dunn reluctantly wrote that it was so bent that it did not function. Worse, it was in danger of falling down in even a moderate wind. In early June, the Indian Office authorized funds to replace the second mill. But it did not spend very much money. Despite Dunn's warning that without a good mill the school would "of course be out of water the rest of the year," the office allocated only \$28.94.⁴⁷

Events then verged on the ridiculous. Apparently a third mill went up in

late June but not for very long. On June 25, Alfred Dunn wrote to Baldwin that "the 'expected' has happened to the windmill." The mill was destroyed; Dunn's letters do not reveal exactly what happened.⁴⁸ The Indian Office, probably flinching every time it heard from the school, agreed to spend \$179.04 for a fourth windmill that went up, and miraculously stayed up, in mid-August 1897.⁴⁹

Alas, the problems were not solved. In early September, Alfred Dunn wrote to Baldwin. "I am sorry to say it," he began, "but the mill will not put the water in the [storage] tank. . . . I am satisfied the tower will have to be raised in order to give wind steady and strong enough to do the work." Until that was accomplished he would haul water for forty hogs as well as for the kitchen and laundry.⁵⁰ By October Dunn reported that the school had water in limited quantity only and that the water closets had been moved. He was increasingly afraid of the fire hazard related to the lack of water across the campus. Shortly thereafter Baldwin won approval for a steam engine to pump water from the well or nearby creek to the main buildings. But as the winter deepened, so did the trouble with the water supply. In early January 1898, Dunn told the agency that the school was "out of water and have been for three weeks."⁵¹

At this point a new solution came to hand. Sometime between late 1897 and late 1900 a reservoir was constructed at or near the top of Rainy Mountain. Parker McKenzie, a student at the school from 1904 to 1914, believes that the reservoir was built sometime around 1897. Official estimates from Cora Dunn concerning the cost of the plan, however, do not appear in the records until late 1900. It could be that the project spanned several years, thus explaining the discrepancy in dates. At any rate, in October 1900 Cora Dunn requested \$535.25

for the "proposed reservoir at the top of Rainy Mountain." In March 1901, she included as part of a general estimate for campus repairs a request for cement "to be used in repairing the water reservoir and rendering it insect and vermin proof. Its present condition," she said, "is a standing menace to the school and must be remedied."⁵² By using the steam engine to pump water up from the well or creek, the system could then rely on gravity to send water at sufficient pressure to the campus below.

It was a good idea that promised to solve a disgraceful situation. The only problem was that it did not work very well. In early February 1900 the school's fourth windmill was blown "completely to pieces." Later that year Cora Dunn informed Agent James Randlett that the "automatic flushing apparatus of the water closet in the girls' building refused to work." The only water the school was getting was water that it did not particularly need; the main buildings were leaking like sieves, she noted, and their ceilings were being ruined. By the spring of 1902 she asked for a new well as the old one could no longer supply the school. And in the summer of 1903 she lectured Randlett emphatically on the "immediate necessity of repairs . . . to the plumbing and water system at this school." The grates at the steam boiler in the laundry had given way, the girls' dorm needed a complete plumbing overhaul, and the water closets would not flush anywhere on campus. "All the plumbing at the school was originally of the most inferior quality and workmanship," she wrote, "and no repairs have ever been made except such as could be effected by school employees. The health of the employees [to say nothing of the children] . . . is greatly endangered." She demanded \$44.50 to set things right immediately. Two months later Randlett finally authorized the

money.⁵³

Had the effects of the windmill episodes not been so important for the health of the school they would seem humorous. But the lack of attention given to the seriousness of the situation, and the resulting problems that arose, made the water issue critical. The danger from fire and the inconvenience of hauling water aside, the health of the children who attended the school was badly compromised. And employees suffered as well, although they were rarely affected like the children. Inoculated against disease, able to take advantage of the school's facilities, employees might have been uncomfortable but rarely were they threatened. Alfred Dunn, for example, could easily find ways to keep himself and his wife supplied with fresh water and other goods. Who would question the need of the principal to maintain a certain level of cleanliness and hygiene?

Students, on the other hand, endured primitive conditions. Drop-pit latrines located at a distance from dorms, water so limited in quantity as to allow bathing only once every other week — and even then in tubs shared by two to three children — no regular physician, and susceptibility to a variety of illnesses and diseases meant that life at the boarding school could be very hazardous. In the case of Rainy Mountain there were never any severe outbreaks of smallpox or other scourges. For the most part, trachoma was the most troublesome affliction, and it was related directly to the presence of dirty water and unsanitary conditions. It was an especially prevalent condition from 1910 on.

Reluctant to spend enough money to remedy the situation, the Indian Office instead allowed the school to suffer through prolonged unhealthy periods. Doing so meant that the ability of pupils to learn and grow was compromised in

fundamental ways. For a school that would not provide clean drinking water could not possibly create an atmosphere in which learning was nurtured and supported.

In addition to the school's physical woes, it suffered constantly from poor support. For much of her tenure, Cora Dunn battled the agency or the Indian Office with regard to some shortage of important supplies or about one pressing need or another. The school's official correspondence for much of its first decade reveals a deeply felt sense of isolation. Located far from the agency office in Anadarko, the place was generally inconvenient for travelers who sought it out for visits or inspections. Out of sight, and just as often out of mind, Rainy Mountain seemed very much like a remote outpost.

This remoteness was most clearly revealed through the attitude of the Indian Office regarding Cora Dunn's endless requests for more help, better staff, improved instructional materials, and other myriad needs. In its formative years the school faced enormous shortages of just about every necessity. The Indian Office tended either to shrug this off or to provide what Dunn and her successors considered a bare minimum of supplies. Several examples illustrate this point.

It was the custom of the Indian Office to require that all students wear "citizen clothing," or more simply put, non-Indian clothing. Cora Dunn would have gladly enforced the rules if she had been able to provide her students with ample supplies of such clothing. On most occasions she was able to see that the children dressed in accordance with the regulations. But she often was forced to make do with salvaged goods and cast-offs from other schools, or to rely on the charity and goodwill of missionaries. Her invoices for supplies of clothing reveal

regular shortages of staple items, especially shoes.

In August of 1903, for example, she implored Randlett to find her enough shoes so that she could open school on schedule. "There are no shoes on hand for the opening," she wrote, "and as yet none received. If you would call the attention of the Indian Office to this also, it would help me out of an embarrassing situation." In September she again asked Randlett for help on the same matter. "Where are my shoes?" she queried the agent. "We have none at all for the children. . . . The Indians are greatly dissatisfied over it." The same day that she was writing Randlett the agency received 427 pairs of day shoes and Sunday shoes for boys, youths, and misses.⁵⁴

In the fall of 1905 Cora Dunn was pressing for shoes once again, as well as for clothing for her older students, especially the boys.⁵⁵ Three months later she informed the agent that although she had shoes on hand, they were "so coarse and stiff as to occasion the children great discomfort in wearing them. Lighter shoes, I think, would wear quite as well and effect . . . the relief that would be afforded the unhappy wearers of those now in use."⁵⁶ By the end of the spring term for 1906 the school was so low on essentials that she was moved to attempt an early closing. "We are now out of bacon, lard, rolled oats, potatoes, hominy, and rice," she wrote. Her supplies of beef, soap, and sugar were good for about three weeks, and she offered to slaughter part of the of the school's dairy herd. That would not be a very practical solution, however, because of the lack of ice and proper storage for the dressed beef.⁵⁷

In early October 1906 she once again approached the agency for help. "I am sorry to mention the subject of shoes again," she wrote, "but a number of our

children are barefooted and are really suffering these cold mornings." She noted that their parents either would not or could not buy their children shoes. (Some stubbornly saw it as an obligation to be borne by the government. Others simply did not have the money.) "Many of the children have colds and I am trembling in fear of some of the barefooted ones having pneumonia." Worse, she was having to deal with angry parents. "The Indians are greatly incensed over the matter and I cannot blame them." Turning their ire to her use, Dunn reminded the agent that the Kiowas did not know "how perfectly helpless I am as far as providing for their children is concerned." At the end of the month she submitted bills for the emergency purchase of shoes for children whom she carefully noted "were barefooted."⁵⁸

Clothes were only one problem. In November 1895 Cora Dunn advised the agency that a sewing machine intended for Rainy Mountain had been sent instead to the Fort Sill School. It rankled her enough so that she dropped her normally respectful demeanor. "Whatever the need for a machine may be there, it can't be as great as at our school, for we have only two machines, one of which is practically worthless, while [I] understand that Fort Sill has five already." Three weeks later she raised the matter again. Not wanting to seem importunate, she wrote, she was nevertheless driven to remind the agent that her personal sewing machine had been pressed into service the preceding year. "I think each of the other schools have as many as five, and I don't quite understand why we are not allowed those that have come for us." She never got her sewing machine back from Fort Sill and was forced to divide her two usable machines between forty-nine female students.⁵⁹

An especially important part of the school's program was its kindergarten, where incoming pupils received their first taste of formal schooling. Cora Dunn considered it a critical component in the civilizing process. Like many of the school's other programs, however, it suffered from a lack of supplies and support. Indeed, it was all Cora Dunn could do to keep a kindergarten teacher, or any other teacher for that matter, in the school long enough to maintain any direction over the children. Between 1897 and 1902, for example, no fewer than three women served as kindergarten teacher. Worse, some of them were of the poorest caliber. In 1907 Dunn complained to Agent Blackmon that her current kindergartner "has done very much less work than any kindergartner I have ever had and has done that little very poorly." In 1894 Dunn requested various materials for the kindergarten and pleaded for consideration by the agent on the grounds that "the material asked for is mainly colored and really costs very little."⁶⁰ In 1899 she was once again in the same circumstance. "Miss Mattoon [the kindergarten teacher] complains that she has not the proper material to successfully prosecute her work," wrote Dunn. "If the present estimate could be filled this year it would aid her greatly. We have received no kindergarten supplies for two years."⁶¹ And in 1905 she simply asked for authority to purchase her own materials. "No supplies of this character have been furnished this school for three years," she wrote, "and there are none on hand now." Thankfully, her request was approved.⁶²

This situation in the kindergarten was illustrative of the rest of the school. Administratively, it reflected the overall problems of poor supply, high employee turnover, and lukewarm support from the Indian Office. Indeed, personnel

turnover was chronic at the school for its entire history. It was especially high during its first ten years. For example, between 1895 and 1902 the school had no fewer than fifteen teachers. Only one of that group stayed two years, the rest drifted in and out at an average of every six months. Only once during that span, from September to December 1899, did the school have as many as four teachers. By December the number had dropped to three; one year later the school had only one teacher for the entire spring term when the enrollment was 110. It averaged two per year for the years 1895 to 1902. Other positions had similar rates. Between 1895 and 1902 the school employed at least six matrons, three seamstresses, four cooks, and five laundresses. Rainy Mountain's predicament was not unique; by 1927 personnel turnover in the Indian school system reached 48 percent. Parker McKenzie said that during his time at the school, "there were not less than six changes in the position of boys' disciplinarian. . . . Three seamstresses served in my time, and . . . two different laundresses."⁶³

Although Cora Dunn rated most of her employees as satisfactory, she had to settle quite often for second-rate workers who had little interest in building the school into an effective institution. In 1901 she noted dryly that a recently hired laborer at the school was working out nicely. "I find he is a trained machinist, a competent musician, and, as he did not during the night develop aspirations to the position of superintendent, I think he will do."⁶⁴ On another occasion, however, she worried that a prospective employee did not quite appreciate the school's predicament. On her application for kindergartner, Alice B. Moncure of Virginia made inquiries about the size of Anadarko, the number of white inhabitants in the area, the availability of a physician and "a minister of the gospel," and whether or

not the climate was "dry and healthy." Cora Dunn wrote to Agent John Blackmon that "the lady is laboring under some illusions that ought to be dispelled at once before she comes nearly two thousand miles." What most worried Dunn was that "I have one employee now who wants the earth and I doubt my ability to divide it satisfactorily between the two." On the other hand, she needed a kindergartner and was willing to do what was necessary to get one. She enclosed a copy of her yet unmailed reply to Moncure with a note to Blackmon saying that if it was an "unduly discouraging" letter that he ought to return it and "I will gloss things over a little more."⁶⁵

During its early years, the school was rarely fully operable and suffered from a chronic list of problems. Its treatment by the Indian Office marked it as an isolated, often neglected school. Its physical plant was poorly built and maintained, and the campus was forced to make do without many essentials. Hobbled from the beginning, the place worked against great odds in its attempt to school Kiowa children. But it survived, often due only to the perseverance of Cora Dunn and sometimes because of good luck and timely aid. She more than any other person or administrator stamped the school with a sense of mission and dogged determination. A more easily satisfied principal would likely have seen the place fall to pieces. Cora Dunn was undeterred in her work, even when the school struggled with repeated shortages and disasters. And she even kept a sense of humor about her situation, though it was tinged with understandable bitterness; in a letter to Randlett in 1903 decrying the latest in a series of setbacks, she wryly observed that Rainy Mountain's somewhat diminished facilities "could not fail to gratify the practical statesmen who framed the Indian appropriation bill." Five

years later she reminded one of Randlett's successors that "there are so many things needed for the school" that she was running out of ideas.⁶⁶ But she never ran out of energy or devotion, and this meant the difference for hundreds of Kiowa children between abject misery and heartfelt concern.

Notes

1. For representative evaluations of conditions on the reservation see *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 1875: 567 (hereafter cited as *ARCIA*); *Annual Report of the Central Superintendency*, in *ARCIA*, 1875: 766, 768, 775; *Annual Report of the Kiowa Agency*, in *ARCIA*, 1877: 484; *ARCIA*, 1887: 164-165.
2. ARKA, 1892, 891; Thomas Jefferson Morgan to John Richardson, July 27, 1891, Rainy Mountain School Records: Record Group 75, National Archives, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (hereafter cited as RMS, OHS).
3. Richardson to Morgan, August 15, 1891; Morgan to George Day, January 14, 1892, RMS, OHS.
4. Richardson to Morgan, August 15, 1891, *ibid.*
5. Morgan to George Day, August 23, 1891, *ibid.*
6. Morgan to Day, August 26, 1892; Moss to Day, May 11, 1892, *ibid.*
7. Morgan to Moss, June 24, 1892; Day To Morgan, July 19, September 13, September 14, and September 17, 1892; Pay Voucher for Rainy Mountain School, September 30, 1892, *ibid.*
8. Morgan to Day, November 14, 1892, *ibid.*
9. Richardson to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, November 17, 1892; Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs to Day, October 10 and December 8, 1892; W.H.

Cox to Hugh Brown, January 2, 1894; Cox to J.G. Dixon, May 3, 1894; Cox to Maury Nichols, August 30, 1894; Cora Dunn to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, November 6 and September 26, 1894; A.M. Dunn to Nichols, September 26, 1894, *ibid*.

10. Morgan to Day, February 3, 1893, *ibid*.

11. Richardson to Morgan, February 28, 1893; Day to Morgan, February 24, 1893; Morgan to Day, March 10, 1893. When Moss attempted to resign and avoid the stigma of having been fired, the commissioner refused to allow it, see Morgan to Day, April 17, 1893, *ibid*.

12. Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs to Day, March 9, 1893; Pay Voucher for Rainy Mountain School, March 31, 1893, *ibid*.

13. Cox to Day, March 17, 1893, *ibid*.

14. Cox to D.W. Browning, April 5, 1893, and Browning to Day, April 22, 1892, *ibid*.

15. Pay Vouchers for Rainy Mountain School, June 30, September 30, and December 31, 1893; Browning to Hugh Brown, October 20 and November 24, 1893; Cox to Brown, November 28, 1893, *ibid*.

16. Invoice from F. Barteldes, Lawrence, Kansas, March 25, 1893, *ibid*.

17. Inventory list, February 15 and July 1, 1893, *ibid*.

18. Browning to Brown, August 21, 1893, *ibid*.

19. *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior*, 1880: 7-8.

20. The figure is derived from a 1912 annual statement on government buildings and improvements at the campus, RMS, OHS. The list showed these structures: boys' dorm (1892, \$12,000), girls' dorm (1899, \$12,000), superintendent's cottage (1899, \$1,200), farmer's cottage (1894, \$500), laundry (1894, \$2,000), pump house (1900, \$400), playroom and lavatory (1896, \$400), mess hall (1899, \$8,000), two small stone storage houses (1895, \$400 each), and a stable (1895, \$525).

21. Cox to D.W. Browning, May 3, 1894; Browning to Nichols, May 16, 1894, *ibid.*

22. Figures are derived from weekly supply invoices and quarterly attendance reports that listed all enrolled students by sex, age, and grade, *ibid.*

23. Cora Dunn to Browning, November 6, 1894, *ibid.*

24. Cora Dunn to Hugh Baldwin, December 13, 1894, *ibid.*

25. Cora Dunn to Baldwin, August 3, 1897, *ibid.*

26. Cora Dunn to Baldwin, January 4, January 11, 1897, *ibid.*

27. A. M. Dunn to Baldwin, October 1, 1897, *ibid.*

28. A. M. Dunn to Baldwin, August 23, 1897; Cora Dunn to James Randlett, July 17, 1903, *ibid.*

29. Cora Dunn to Randlett, February 15, 1904, *ibid.*

30. Cora Dunn to Randlett, March 19, 1905, *ibid.*

31. A. M. Dunn to Baldwin, August 23, 1897; A. G. Turner to Baldwin, September 24, 1897; William A. Jones to Baldwin, October 26, 1897, *ibid.*

32. Cora Dunn to Randlett, August 22, 1899; Cora Dunn to John Blackmon, January 6, 1906, *ibid.*

33. Richardson to Morgan, August 15, 1891, *ibid.*

34. Morgan to Day, December 8, 1892, *ibid.*

35. Cox to Nichols, July 2, 1894, *ibid.*; Parker McKenzie to Bill Welge, June 6, 1990, in the possession of the author. An undated but early platt map in the school's records at the Oklahoma Historical Society clearly indicated a spring south of the school. McKenzie indicated that this was the source for the school's water during this period. An attempt to locate it during the summer of 1990 failed.

36. Cox to Nichols, August 30, 1894, RMS, OHS.

37. Dunn to Browning, July 6, 1895, *ibid.*

38. Browning to Baldwin, August 3, 1895, *ibid.*

39. Cora Dunn to Browning August 26, 1895; Browning to Baldwin, September 13, 1895, *ibid.*

40. Browning to Baldwin, March 28, 1896; Cora Dunn to Browning, March 14, 1896, *ibid.*

41. Voucher to D. Farriss, June 19, 1896; Voucher to J. A. Rose, June 23, 1896; Voucher to Herman Veidt, June 25, 1896; A. M. Dunn to Baldwin, November

1896, *ibid.*

42. A. M. Dunn to Veidt, December 7, 1896, *ibid.*
43. A. M. Dunn to Baldwin March 21 and March 24, 1897, *ibid.*
44. A. M. Dunn to Baldwin, April 11, 1897, *ibid.*
45. A. M. Dunn to Baldwin, May 5, 1897, *ibid.*
46. Thomas Smith to Baldwin, May 5, 1897, *ibid.*
47. A. M. Dunn to Baldwin, June 2, and June 6, 1897; Thomas Smith to Baldwin, June 11, 1897, *ibid.*
48. A. M. Dunn to Baldwin, June 25, 1897, *ibid.*
49. William A. Jones to Baldwin, August 17, 1897, *ibid.*
50. A. M. Dunn to Baldwin, August 17, 1897, *ibid.*
51. A. M. Dunn to Baldwin, October 1, and October 22, 1897; William A. Jones to Baldwin, December 9, 1897; A. M. Dunn to Baldwin, January 4, 1898, *ibid.*
52. McKenzie to Welge, June 6, 1900; Cora Dunn to James Randlett, October 1900; Cora Dunn to Jones, March 15, 1901, *ibid.*
53. Cora Dunn to Randlett February 8, and September 26, 1900; Cora Dunn to Randlett May 7, 1902 and July 17, 1903; Randlett to Cora Dunn, September 9, 1903, *ibid.*
54. Cora Dunn to Randlett, August 21, 1903; Invoice of September 1903, *ibid.*

55. Cora Dunn to John Blackmon, November 23, 1905, *ibid.*
56. Cora Dunn to Blackmon, February 9, 1906, *ibid.*
57. Cora Dunn to Blackmon, May 23, 1906, *ibid.*
58. Cora Dunn to Blackmon, October 3, 1906; Cora Dunn to Charles Ellis, October 29, 1906, *ibid.*
59. Cora Dunn to S.A. Johnson, November 4, 1895; Cora Dunn to Baldwin, November 27, 1895, *ibid.*
60. Cora Dunn to Baldwin, November 28, 1894; Cora Dunn to Blackmon, May 4, 1907 *ibid.*; employee statistics are derived from the school's quarterly reports.
61. Cora Dunn to Randlett, December 22, 1899, *ibid.*
62. Cora Dunn to Randlett, April 18, 1905; C. F. Larrabee to Randlett, April 28, 1905; Charles McNichols to Randlett, June 5, 1905, *ibid.*
63. Employee statistics are derived from quarterly school reports; McKenzie to Ellis, August 1, 1990; Sally J. McBeth, *Ethnic Identity and the Boarding School Experience of West-Central Oklahoma American Indians* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1983), 94.
64. Cora Dunn to Randlett, October 28, 1901, RMS, OHS.
65. Alice B. Moncure to Blackmon, November 24, 1906; Cora Dunn to Blackmon, December 14, 1906, *ibid.*

66. Cora Dunn to Randlett, April 17, 1903; Cora Dunn to Stecker, March 12, 1908, *ibid.*

CHAPTER V

"WE HAD A LOT OF FUN, BUT, OF COURSE, THAT WASN'T THE SCHOOL PART"

Most accounts of Indian education focus on various aspects of institutional or policy history. For the most part, the record reflects a concern with understanding how schools operated according to the government's policy and procedural guidelines. The experiences of Indian students often get little attention. Although some works show more concern with understanding the boarding school experience from the perspective of students, relatively little is known about what it was like to attend a government school.¹ This is not to say that material is lacking about life at the boarding schools; but more often than not the available accounts are not from Indians as much as they are *about* Indians. The difference is crucial, for it entails the critical component of perspective. Young Kiowas who attended Rainy Mountain were not so malleable that they did as they were told without a moment's hesitation or thought; most were keenly aware of what was happening to them. And they often left the school with deep feelings about what they had seen and done as students. Few of their opinions, however, have ever found their way into scholarly assessments.

Understanding what Rainy Mountain was like through the eyes of its students presents a rich portrait of life in a reservation boarding school. It offers

a revealing look at how they learned, what they learned, and how their lives were affected. In the case of Rainy Mountain and the Kiowas, knowing what happened to the children who attended the schools opens the way not only to a fuller understanding of the realities of boarding school life, but also to important insights about contemporary Kiowa life. The boarding schools did not transform the children who attended them as completely as the government intended. This was so for many reasons. Two of the most important were that schools usually lacked the power to do it, as the example of Rainy Mountain's early history attests. Secondly, Indian children and their parents showed great resilience in their efforts to protect the cultural lifeways that made up their identity. Kiowas did show a willingness, however, to adapt themselves and their children to new situations in which they lived. This often meant combining certain pre-reservation values and institutions with ones that were non-Indian. Such an approach was not novel by the 1890s; it had been going on among the Kiowas since first contact with Euroamericans. Of course, this was exactly what the boarding schools were intended to discourage, for total change was the goal. But the process turned out to be more complex than policymakers ever imagined. Rainy Mountain was supposed to prepare Kiowa children for meaningful lives as educated, self-sufficient citizens. Ironically, it often succeeded in doing that, but not at the cost of what made those children Kiowa. The Rainy Mountain experience made it possible for students like Parker McKenzie to get their start in life; it did not mean the end of their Kiowa identity.

What the government wanted to accomplish is abundantly clear. How well it was done and what characterized it are less well known. Moreover, because

official records do not reveal much of the student perspective except to comment on certain excesses and problems, they tend to present a one-sided version of life at Rainy Mountain. Cora Dunn, for example, was the very portrait of Victorian gentility. Although she could lodge bitter complaints and make withering evaluations about staff and students alike, her correspondence was avowedly "official" in content and interpretation. Relying solely on her records or on those of the agency and Indian Office would give at best a jaundiced view. Striving to see good in almost every situation, reluctant to concede that for much of her tenure she was perhaps locked in a losing battle, Cora Dunn left a decidedly colored interpretation. Her successor, James McGregor, was less inclined to word his missives so politely, but his letters are not much more useful for getting at the students' perspective.

In and around Carnegie, Anadarko, Mountain View, Gotebo, and other Kiowa communities in southwest Oklahoma, there are many former students, as well as their children, who recall life at Rainy Mountain or one of the agency's other boarding schools during the early twentieth century. Except for the Doris Duke Oral History Collection undertaken in the late 1960s and a handful of scholarly studies, few of these people have ever been asked to comment at length on their experiences. Much of what follows rests on interviews with elderly Kiowas and Comanches who attended Rainy Mountain or another boarding school on the reservation.

As with all sources, some caveats are in order. Because much of what follows rests on memories that reach back as far as the first decade of this century, the question of reliability is legitimately raised. As oral sources these

accounts deserve to be treated as useful and unique narratives, yet held to fair and rigorous standards of historical interpretation. Acknowledging their limitations, however, does not obviate their importance. In most cases, multiple sources are used to illustrate points, especially where discrepancies exist. Knowing that the recollections of most of those interviewed are based on memories dimmed by time or softened by the passing of many years reminds readers of the difficulties involved. Still, because these former students grew up with, and still respect, the continuing authority of oral traditions, the accounts offered here have a certain potency. Rainy Mountain School never managed to destroy Kiowa culture; this is especially true with regard to language and its role in the transmission of values and ideas. It is a profound irony that two of the most keenly targeted elements of Kiowa life — language and the oral tradition — have survived to be used as a basis for understanding what Rainy Mountain was actually like.

As the fall term of the school's first year approached in 1893, Commissioner Morgan ordered Kiowa-Comanche Agent George Day "to meet with parents of children and make a thorough canvass among the children of school age and suitable health who are tributary to the Rainy Mountain School." The purpose of the meeting was for Day to get "a thorough understanding with the parents and effect such arrangements that you may get the children into the school without delay as soon as you are ready to receive them."² Getting Indian children into the schools and keeping them there had a high priority. Anxious to bring as many children as possible under the civilizing influence of the school house, the Indian Office directed agents to spare no effort in getting the schools filled. This meant locating and enrolling as many children between the ages of

about five and fifteen as possible. Some children started school as early as the age of three or four; typically they waited until about the age of five or six. Rainy Mountain records show that by the age of seventeen or eighteen most students left the school.

On some reservations this was less of a problem than on others. At the Kiowa-Comanche Reservation tribes were generally willing to enroll their children. The problem facing that reservation was not reluctant parents but too few schools to accommodate the school-age population. Once Rainy Mountain opened it rarely had trouble filling its quota. Except for episodic illness, bad weather, or some unanticipated development, the school usually filled quickly and almost always operated at, or over, capacity. And when Kiowa parents showed an inclination to resist, the agent had important powers that were normally sufficient to compel parents to relinquish their children. Because a reservation census was taken annually, the number and location of families was a matter of record. The agency kept track of where families with school-age children lived and monitored their movements through ration and annuity issues. Moreover, with the coercive force of the army at his disposal, and with the authority to restrict rations, annuities, and supplies, the agent had clear advantages in the campaign to enroll Indian children.

Kiowa families in the Rainy Mountain district, however, rarely showed significant resistance in putting their children into school. Although there were some who were slow to comply every September when the school opened for the year, for the most part a full contingent was on hand within several weeks. The reasons for putting children in school varied. Some families believed that their

children would only have a secure future if they had the benefit of education and training. Others believed the school might provide better care than they could — there was food, clothing, and shelter for every pupil. Myrtle Ware attended Rainy Mountain between 1898 and 1907 and returned as an assistant matron after her school days were over. She entered because she remembered that her family was having a difficult time providing food and other necessities. At the time of her enrollment she was living with an aunt and uncle in a tipi near Anadarko, about thirty miles from the school. Her relatives told her "that I can't be taken care of down this way . . . she [her aunt] took me up there to Rainy Mountain. She asked my dad, 'I wanta put her up to school there, where I'll go and see her,' and I went up that way." Annie Bigman, born in 1900, entered sometime around 1904 or 1905 for the same reasons. "Daddy started me to school when I was about four years old," she stated. The comment that "that's an awful little girl to be going to school," brought the reply "yeah, he was sick then. He don't want to take care of a little one so he pushed me to school."³

For some the decision was associated with peculiar factors. Guy Quoetone, born in 1885, first attended school at J. J. Methvin's Methodist Institute south of Anadarko. The decision to enroll him there was linked to his father's membership in the Methodist Church. Quoetone stated that he would have gone to one of the agency schools in Anadarko "if my father hadn't already have joined the Methodist church, and the campaign was on in every camp, and when we started to school he wanted me to go to that school [Methvin] and dedicated me and sent me to that school." Rainy Mountain records show that Quoetone entered in the fall of 1902 and stayed for about one year. When asked the reason he changed schools,

Quoetone replied, "well, nothing, only we lived closer to Rainy Mountain." He also recalled that he told his father "maybe they might give me better grades, but they didn't."⁴

Sarah Long Horn, born in 1902, entered Rainy Mountain sometime around 1910. "Oh, I don't know," she said, "I must be about eight years old I guess, or something like that. Or either I must be awful young when I went to school." She enrolled in order to be close to one of her cousins with whom she had been raised.

We mostly was raised together, and I always want to be with her. Well, I didn't know she was going into school. . . . I went down there to see that girl. They say she's going to school, so I went to visit her and she begged for me to stay. So I thought to myself, I'll stay for a few days and then I'll go back. Then when the time came, well I was already in school. So I just stayed there and never did go back home that's how I got to school. I went to school myself. By going visiting, she asked me to stay, so I just stayed with her.⁵

Fred Bigman, born 1900, began his education at the Cache Creek Mission west of Apache, Oklahoma. "Boy," recounted Bigman, "they is like real missionaries [at Cache Creek]. Sort of like Baptists." In fact they were Presbyterian. From there he went to public schools near Fort Cobb and then to Saint Patrick's Catholic Mission west of Anadarko. In September 1915, he entered Rainy Mountain because his "folks took me down [to] Rainy Mountain. Wanted me to switch schools. They just took me here and there." The peripatetic Bigman, who attended at least four schools by the time he was fifteen (most of his cohorts were lucky to attend two during their entire lives) noted that he was not particularly happy about being at Rainy Mountain. "I didn't like that school right there close" to home. He stayed only for a half a year and then returned to public

schools.⁶ For him, as for many of his fellow students, the idea of going to school was neither to be feared nor resisted. But few of them saw as many classrooms in the space of five or six years as he did.

James Haumpy entered Rainy Mountain in the fall of 1913 at about the age of thirteen. His mother and father sent him to school, he said, to be with "those other boys they was schooling out there." Haumpy apparently found little solace in that fact; "I was a little boy. I don't know how to talk English. They put me in school. Well, I ain't used to it. And I cried and cried, I wanna go home." So, like other young Kiowas, Haumpy went because his parents wanted him to, and because other Kiowa children were there as well. Haumpy also remembered that when he eventually got over his initial displeasure, he found that school was not entirely unpleasant. "I'd take my horses down there" to Rainy Mountain, he said. "I seen pretty girls at that school."⁷

Lewis Toyebo got to Rainy Mountain only because a family friend prevented missionaries from carrying him away. At the age of five or six, Toyebo and a boyhood friend were on their way to a mission school when a relative "chased us down and made us get off" their horses. Pondering the incident, Toyebo mused "we might have been preachers." About a year later, "Daddy and Mother told me they were to take me to Rainy Mountain School." This was in 1898. He spent the next decade at the school and eventually became an assistant disciplinarian there. In a surprising move, Toyebo's father Edward asked to attend the school with his son. In 1902 Cora Dunn obtained permission for the father to stay on the school grounds and to attend classes.

While his progress has been slow, as might be expected at his age, during

his three years . . . at school he has learned to read and write and can speak English with sufficient ease to make a very acceptable interpreter for the missionary. Deprived of educational advantages in his boyhood, Toyebo, late in life determined to educate himself. For several years he struggled along with no other help than his little boy during vacations.⁸

Parker McKenzie said that by the time he entered the school in 1904 "most of the Kiowas already were impressed of the benefits of education and took advantage of schooling." As far as McKenzie's family was concerned, "the Indian was already out of us by the time we went to school . . . missionaries had already been doing this. . . . After joining the church we began to change." (It is worth noting that McKenzie was a half-blood; the overwhelming majority of his classmates were full-bloods, many of whom had not yet been exposed to white culture to the same degree as he.) McKenzie also commented that because Rainy Mountain was well known to the Kiowas by the time of his enrollment "no one had to inform them about the schools, they were on hand and saw them." His parents, convinced of the advantages that schooling gave their children, made sure that McKenzie and his siblings attended. His father enrolled Parker and his brother Daniel in 1904 "to get us used to boarding school life."⁹

Important support for the school also came from well-placed authorities inside the tribe. When schools began to open on the reservation in the 1880s various headmen and chiefs often took the lead in encouraging Kiowas to enroll their children. Some of them probably understood the importance of education as explained to them by the government. Others used it to gain favor with agents. In August 1905, for example, Big Tree, a highly influential Kiowa chief and former opponent of reservation life (he eventually became a Baptist) dictated a letter to Agent James Randlett concerning Rainy Mountain. Randlett had

solicited the chief's help in getting the school filled. Big Tree replied "I will tell the people to put these children in school. . . . We are going to the Ghost Dance Friday and I will let the people know about the school and tell them to put these children in school." In closing, the chief reminded Randlett that annuities were due shortly and wanted to know "when the payment will be."¹⁰ It was a friendly reminder that support had a price.

Although the school usually had few problems recruiting students, on occasion it was forced to take measures in rounding up the children. Not every Kiowa was anxious to surrender a child. Resistance took several forms. Parents sometimes used the leverage of annuities and other payments. Until payments were made, they kept their children out of school. In September of 1900, for example, allotment negotiations on the reservation had produced bitter feelings. Angry over what they believed was a fraudulent process, parents held their children at home. Cora Dunn reported that at the end of the opening week she had only two dozen students on the campus; in past years opening week had brought in an average of seventy-five children. "The Kiowas are in an ugly frame of mind over the terms of the allotment treaty," she reported, "and are determined to be as annoying as possible." This included using their children as a bargaining point. "If the children do not come in by the first of the coming week," she concluded, "some coercive measures will have to be used to fill the school." The situation was remedied when several groups of parents managed to collect a number of children and brought them to the school.¹¹

More often than not, however, parents discovered that they could not challenge the system very long, especially when it meant that important rations or

money hung in the balance. Most of them brought their children in after a fairly brief period. In March of 1905 Cora Dunn advised Agent Randlett that one such case had been resolved after a father agreed to enroll his daughter, thus his grazing money should not be held up. Moreover, she added, the case ought not be pressed too vigorously "as he promises he will voluntarily place the child in school next year." Another parent was reported as having "placed in school his daughter . . . on account of whom his per capita payment was withheld." This was typical of the approach taken. Cora Dunn believed it was absolutely necessary to take a firm stand. "I know from experience," she wrote, "that nothing is to be gained by temporizing with a Kiowa."¹²

In extreme cases parents (and occasionally children) were actually jailed. Less drastic solutions were usually found. If withholding payments failed, agents refused rations. This was a very serious decision. The Indian Office specifically identified it as a legitimate use of force and approved its use in a wide variety of circumstances. In 1898 Commissioner William A. Jones informed Kiowa-Comanche Agent William Walker that unless parents put their children into school he would cut off their rations and annuities, "and if that does not suffice I will send their children [to school] anyway. Make it peremptory, and let them understand that I do not care and will not have any obstacles in the way of these children going." In the same year Jones reported that he fully supported "more vigorous measures" to increase enrollments. Citing an 1896 circular to all agents, Jones instructed that all children who deliberately avoided school were to be arrested and subjected to "suitable punishment." Parents and guardians who likewise resisted were to be punished as well. "The wisdom of this course," he

imperiously observed, "is fully evidenced in the largely increased enrollment and average attendance for these schools."¹³

Once they were in school, Kiowa youngsters entered a world that was intended to be completely different from the one into which they had been born. For a minimum of forty weeks a year they lived according to a regimen that exposed them to the tenets of a Christian life based on independence, diligence, and discipline. It was to be a wholly transforming experience both culturally and intellectually. In theory no detail was too small to be spared, no lesson too limited to be ignored.

The change began immediately upon arrival. Physical appearance was an important manifestation of a civilized life. Although some children already wore so-called citizen's clothing, or mixed it with traditional Kiowa dress, all of the children went through a process that marked the beginning of the attempt to take the Indian out of them. For a few the transition was not so difficult. Parker McKenzie was born in a tipi on the reservation but grew up in a home where he learned much about white culture. "I am sure I was not surprised that knives, forks, and spoons were on the cloth covered tables," he recalled. A visiting missionary once described the home of McKenzie's maternal grandparents as "neat and clean, two beds well made, chairs, a table, a polished cook stove, a cupboard well arranged, pictures on the wall."¹⁴ For McKenzie, Rainy Mountain was not a radical departure.

Most others, however, came to the place with considerably less experience. For them the school was largely foreign, composed of people and things that were unfamiliar. Guy Quotone recalled that the first time his parents left him at a

reservation boarding school he was "still in my Kiowa costume." Staff members ushered him into a room where two men and a woman waited for him.

They shut the door and about that time I get excited and they got a chair. This man set me there and they commence to hold me. While I was talking at her . . . this barber . . . he come from behind and cut one side of my braid off. . . . About that time I turned tiger! I commenced to fight and scratch and bite and jump up in the air! They had a time, all of them, holding me down. Cut the other side. Two men had me down there and that white lady tried to hold my head and then that barber cutting all the time. It was almost an hour before he finished cutting my hair. And you ought to see how I looked. I sure hate a haircut!

Following his encounter with the barber, Quoetone was issued government clothing and shoes and went to the boys' dormitory.¹⁵

All students were issued uniforms. Styles varied from year to year, but the school always provided some standard dress for both sexes. When Annie Bigman entered Rainy Mountain in 1904 or 1905 the girls all wore grey uniforms that resembled sleeveless jumpers. A white blouse, black shoes, and stockings completed the ensemble. Boys wore "little brown suits. Boys' knee pants. Brown caps."¹⁶ When Sarah Long Horn arrived several years later there was a military look to school clothing. Girls wore ribbons in their hair that identified them as members of company B or C in military style.¹⁷ After cutting Lewis Toyebo's braids, staff members bathed and then fitted him with new clothes and shoes. "Everything that was needed was furnished by the school" he said. "The Indians didn't have to buy nothing." Toyebo remembered a martial look to the clothes he wore. "Our school uniforms were grey with red stripes and our play clothing were plain jeans. We were a sight on earth."¹⁸

In addition to new clothes, many students also received new names. Those

without a Christian, english name were assigned one. When asked if his son had a name, Lewis Toyebo's father said that he did not. "Okay, we'll call him Lewis" was the reply. James Haumpy received his name in similar fashion. Working from lists, staff members apparently assigned names on an arbitrary basis. There was not much variety; school rolls show an inordinate number of girls named Sarah, Mary, Elizabeth, and Bessie. Popular boys' names included Robert, Henry, Albert, James, and Frank. Surnames were either translated, if possible, or rendered phonetically. Each student also had a permanent number. Toyebo was number forty-one from the day he entered in 1898 until he left in 1909. Myrtle Ware was number nineteen, "which I kept for so many years until I was dismissed from the school." Parker McKenzie said that "like prison convicts we were mostly identified by our assigned numbers rather than by name, except in classrooms where we were 'respected' by our given English names."¹⁹

Living quarters were assigned by age and sex. Here, as in all aspects of school life, students were strictly separated. Matrons hovered over their wards and were unstinting in their punishment of those who tried to cross the line. "Keeping the sexes apart was routinely strict," said Parker McKenzie. "We were under strict discipline, we were never free." Students nonetheless flirted with each other across an imaginary line that McKenzie said most feared to cross. Boys and girls not only maintained separate living quarters, but ate at separate tables, occupied different portions of the same classrooms, and were kept apart at chapel services. Only at the school's carefully chaperoned social functions were they allowed to mix. And even then it was not quite an open field. Students "all marched to and from [these events] in military order — and separately, too."

Despite what McKenzie called "some unavoidable togetherness," for the most part staff members tried to keep boys and girls as far apart as possible.²⁰

Sarah Long Horn said that the boys often tried to find ways around the separation of the sexes. There was an occasional daring foray into the girls' dorm, but the odds of success were long, and punishment was swift and sure. There were more auspicious moments. When students made the trek to Boake's trading post about a mile from the campus, for example, there was usually opportunity to test the rules. But the girls were closely watched by staff members, recalled Sarah Long Horn, who diligently protected them. "They watch us real close," she said. "There's got to be one teacher up in front and there's got to be somebody else in the back that will watch the boys and the girls."²¹ Fred Bigman grumpily recalled "we never did get to talk to any girls." Sometimes students managed to foil the best efforts of the staff. McKenzie wooed his future wife Nettie by passing her notes in phonetically written Kiowa, a practice that prevented teachers from confiscating the notes and reading them out loud. Eventually McKenzie perfected a written Kiowa language.²²

The premium placed on order was high. Discipline was thorough and sometimes harsh. Like other boarding schools, Rainy Mountain was run according to strict regimens and schedules copied from military forms. McKenzie wrote "I distinctly remember . . . how odd it was to line up like I imagined soldiers lined up." Students queued up for every occasion, he said, and marched to meals, classes, and chapel services. Boys drilled every day before breakfast, except for Sundays. "It was not unusual for the little ones' skins to appear blue from the cold. It was very sad to see 6, 7, and 8 year-olds being compelled to learn the

rudiments of soldiery as early as 6:00 am." The school organized students into companies and designated older pupils as cadet sergeants. A former student at Riverside said that boarding school

was really a military regime. . . . Every year an official from Fort Sill would come down and review our companies and our drilling maneuvers. We marched everywhere, to the dining hall, to classes; everything we did was in military fashion. We were taught to make our beds in military fashion, you know, with square corners and sheets and blankets tucked in a special way. . . . On Sundays we had an inspection . . . just like the military.²³

Those who stepped outside the bounds received quick lessons. "Everything you do, you get punished," recalled a former Riverside student. "You'd get tired and get punished." Disciplinary responses ran the gamut from stern lectures to draconian whippings. By far the most common sin was speaking Kiowa. School officials regarded stamping it out as one of the first steps toward the transformation of the children. Speaking Kiowa, even by the youngest children, was not tolerated and brought swift punishment. Not surprisingly, this had a chilling effect on many youngsters who, rather than venture a question to a Kiowa classmate, simply remained silent and used no language at all. Getting caught meant enduring a variety of punishments including having one's teeth brushed with soap, extra drill duty, carrying stepladders on the shoulders for several hours, or restriction from the school's social events. The child of a former Rainy Mountain student said that her mother was forced to hold quinine tablets in her mouth for using the Kiowa language.²⁴ Sometimes punishment humiliated rather than hurt physically. Sarah Long Horn said that boys caught speaking Kiowa were punished by being made to wear sandwich boards reading "I like girls." At other schools

boys were forced to wear dresses. Rainy Mountain girls stood face-first in room corners until they spoke English.²⁵

Myrtle Ware said that getting caught speaking Kiowa brought demerits used to restrict opportunities for trips and outings. "There's one of the matrons, you know, she goes around and listens . . . when one of them gets six marks, they don't let them go to the store." Harry Tofpi, Sr., a Kiowa who attended Riverside School in Anadarko in the 1930s, said that when he was caught speaking Kiowa his hands were bound tightly behind his back until the circulation had been completely cut off and he had learned his lesson. He also said that teachers considered his left-handedness incorrect; when he attempted to write with his left hand his teachers tied it behind his back and forced him to write with his right hand.²⁶

For all of the attention given to eradicating the Kiowa language, however, the campaign rarely succeeded. All of the children carried on conversations in Kiowa "when the matron ain't listening," said Myrtle Ware. Despite the punishments they had to endure, McKenzie said that Kiowa "nevertheless remained the dominant language away from the campus, particularly with the younger boys." Kiowa remained the language used in the majority of Indian homes where children went for holiday visits or the three month summer vacation spoke it daily. This failure was a costly one in view of the school's mission. Psychologically and culturally the survival of the Kiowa language meant that an important barrier to assimilation remained in place. The full meaning of this became clear in the decades that followed. The generations of young people who went through the school proved to be a galvanizing force in the continuation of

Kiowa culture in the middle and late twentieth century. They played the central role in transmitting crucial knowledge and traditions.²⁷

The most serious offense short of violence or sexual misconduct was running away. According to the official records, Rainy Mountain suffered only about two dozen runaways. It is likely that this is not entirely accurate; school officials were not anxious to admit that runaways occurred. Moreover, if children returned within a reasonable amount of time (usually several days), an appropriate punishment was given but the offense was not recorded as a runaway. On the other hand, runaways could not be tolerated; those who turned out to be incorrigible often discovered to their sorrow that the punishment was severe.

For those who doubted the harshness of a reservation boarding school, runaways provided a reminder. In some cases offenders were forced to wear a ball and chain, boys had to dress in girls' clothing, or suffer whippings with rubber hoses. Common punishments included paddlings or standing on tip-toe with arms outstretched. Some schools locked children in darkened closets. Most former boarding school students recalled that boys were treated more harshly than girls. In extreme cases students were actually arrested and subjected to the vile conditions of the Fort Sill stockade. Cora Dunn arrested recalcitrant students on several occasions. In May of 1895 she wrote to Agent Hugh Baldwin about "a case of most willful disobedience from this school" involving a young Kiowa boy who had asked to leave. When Dunn refused he left anyway. "I think the punishment he really needs is about thirty days in the guard house at the Agency," she wrote. "In the Cheyenne and Arapaho schools that seemed to have the most salient effect possible in such cases." She left the final decision to the agent, but

closed by observing that the young man in question came from a family "that needs a good lesson."²⁸

In February 1900 she sent two students to the agency under armed guard and ordered them "punished by imprisonment in the guard house for at least one month." The two boys had "given trouble in every way," she wrote, and normal disciplinary measures had proved "wholly unavailing." Frustrated by her inability to prevent them from making more trouble (which included fighting and running away), she sent them to the agency and told the agent "I feel they both deserve more severe punishment than I am prepared to inflict on them, hence I send them to you." There were no mitigating circumstances, she assured the agent, and any defense offered by them "will be a product of their imaginations."²⁹

Cases like this were extreme; most disciplinary problems were less serious and normally handled at the school. Once runaways were located, the school's matron or disciplinarian was dispatched to return them. Annie Bigman said that the school's male employees would administer the punishment, which usually meant a whipping. These were genuinely feared because they occasionally ran out of control. In 1891 the superintendent of the Fort Sill School in Anadarko was fired after one of his teachers whipped two boys so savagely that they ran away and froze to death. "The men . . . do it," recalled Bigman. "When they whip `em some would half kill them." Fred Bigman said that "some boys get away, but they get `em back. When they get `em back they punish them. . . . They whipped them."³⁰

Still, boys and girls alike tried to leave. Some were lonely, others were scared, and a few simply did not intend to stay in school. A Wichita girl who

attended Riverside in the late 1910's said that:

I don't exactly know why, but I was all the time running away. There were two older girls who at the end of the week would say, "let's go home." And since I was the little kid, I'd always say, "Okay" Whenever we'd run home, my folks would just bring us back the next day. I don't ever remember getting punished for that.³¹

James Haumpy, who gained a reputation at Rainy Mountain for running away, was probably typical. He ran away because the older boys were always trying to pick a fight with him. "I don't fight," he said. "You know how it is." But he also discovered that the girls did not particularly like him either, and that was too much for him to take. "Young and got to go to school," he said, "and some girls they don't like you. That's why I wanna' go home."³²

Order and discipline, then, lay at the core of the boarding school experience. Virtually all aspects of students' lives were strictly controlled, in theory at least, and this control would be used to foster the change that awaited them. Cora Dunn seemed genuinely to love her students, but she also feared that at best they were an untamed rabble. Thus she worked diligently to create an environment in which they could be carefully and completely remolded. Given Rainy Mountain's circumstances she rarely accomplished this to the degree she desired. But she labored mightily. Nowhere was her effort more apparent than in the school's academic and vocational training. Here were the real laboratories of change. In the classrooms, under the watchful eyes of their teachers, Kiowa children would be molded into citizens freed from the temptations of a wild life on the plains. At least that was the plan.

Students at Rainy Mountain matriculated through the sixth grade, provided

they had the endurance to make it. Most did not. The education given them rested mainly on the acquisition of vocational skills — farming and industrial arts for the boys, 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. Their education was intended to be a stepping stone from the reservation to life as independent, self-sufficient models of Angloamerican society. It promised nothing more than that and was not really intended to make them equal members of that society. A small percentage went on to one of the large off-reservation boarding school, but most stayed a handful of years at Rainy Mountain and then left to make their way in the world.

The government's boarding school curriculum focused on giving students usable skills and training. In 1895 the commissioner observed that the majority of the schools were equipped for:

thorough industrial work, and great stress is laid on this portion of the educational curriculum. While literary branches are by no means neglected . . . the necessity of giving Indian youth an all-round training, which shall equip them for their own living, is kept constantly in view. To teach the Indian boy and girl to work intelligently, effectively, and hence remuneratively, is the first consideration.³³

The annual report for 1902 of the Superintendent of Indian Schools summarized the government's approach to Indian education. Drawing on a series of papers delivered at a summer seminar for Indian school teachers, the report highlighted the work to be accomplished at schools like Rainy Mountain. In "Essentials of Indian Education," the Most Reverend John Ireland argued that above all "the Indian needs a practical education. It is well for him to know that

he must live as a white man, and consequently he must learn to work." Because "work is the basis of all civilization," continued Ireland, Indians could only profit from the strict lessons of industry and discipline instilled in the classroom.

Teach the boys a trade of some kind, and teach them farming, which is, of course, the most important of all. Teach the girls the ordinary industries for which they are fitted . . . and I believe it will do much more for the elevation of the race than teaching boys. Let the spirit of the home be what it should be, and the father and son will be all right. Teach the girls to take care of their homes and make them attractive. Teach them cooking, teach them neatness, teach them responsibility. Teach the girls to milk and take care of poultry; and teach them how to serve a nice appetizing meal for the family; do this and I tell you you have solved the whole question of Indian civilization.³⁴

In the same report were excerpts from "What Should Be Taught The Indian," by Z. X. Snyder, the president of the State Normal School in Greeley, Colorado. Snyder stated that the "soul of the Indian is different from that of the Caucasian, and a generation cannot change it." By acknowledging "the nature of his impulses," teachers would realize that "industrial education should be the central notion in . . . training, and should include the useful trades, the native handicrafts, farming, and nature study." Training the "intellectual nature" meant giving the Indian work skills; training the "social nature" gave Indians "a chance to do the things he likes that are helpful to others."³⁵

Other papers summarized in the report bore titles like "How To Impress Upon The Indian The Use And Value Of Money," "Training The Pupils To Be Better Indians," "Training For Citizenship," and "The Place Of Athletics In Indian Schools," whose author worried that "small lung capacity seems a too general defect among the Indians," and suggested that vigorous exercise would likely cure

it. But there was danger in over emphasizing athletics; the essay soberly noted that "Indian boys are too liable to get the wrong idea of the importance of applause."³⁶

From the beginning, the Indian school curriculum placed more importance on practical training than on academic development. All that was necessary was enough general knowledge to instill respect for Angloamerican values. Anything more was a waste of time and effort. The result was a curriculum of limited expectations and goals that according to Sally McBeth "were not intended to meet any specific Indian problems or needs."³⁷ The thrust of Indian education throughout Rainy Mountain's years reflected a paternalistic approach based on limited possibilities for all but the bare few who could escape the cultural and intellectual barriers of being Indian. Geared toward producing obliging, obedient graduates, schools like Rainy Mountain did little more than provide a decent level of literacy and familiarity with Angloamerican values and institutions. The gulf between the ability of Indians as measured against that of whites was obvious, thorough, and nearly impenetrable. Cora Dunn loved her work and her children, but she also believed that by their nature Kiowas were not fully capable of attaining the same intellectual or cultural status as whites. For her, Rainy Mountain's mission was to raise the children from savagery. She agreed with Commissioner William A. Jones who wrote in 1903 that "the central thought is work as a preparation for home life." In Cora Dunn's opinion, Rainy Mountain was best suited as a training ground for a decent, respectable lifestyle.³⁸

Rainy Mountain's curriculum combined vocational skills with what Commissioner Jones described as "academical classes." These included English

language training, history, geography, arithmetic, and a smattering of civics, the Bible, and other suitable topics designed to imitate the American public school system. Students normally spent half the day in class, and half the day at one or another of the school's vocational classes. For boys this meant harness making, farming, carpentry, shoemaking, tailoring, dairying, masonry, blacksmithing, and so on. Girls were taught sewing, housework, laundering, dairying, cooking, poultry care, "and the multitude of 'little things' which contribute to the successful housekeeper and homemaker."³⁹ In theory all of this and more formed the core of a successful reservation boarding school.

A 1914 report from principal John McGregor detailed a typical day at the school and revealed how the boarding school curriculum operated according to the conditions that prevailed at Rainy Mountain. (Accounts by McKenzie, Toyebo, and others who were there in earlier years reveal a nearly identical regimen. The only noticeable change after 1910 was the addition of evening classes and meetings.) The day began at 6:00 a.m. with drilling and cleaning. Morning roll call came at 6:45. Breakfast followed from 7:00 to 7:30 after which students returned to their rooms to do routine chores. Classes began at 8:00 and ran until 11:45. Lunch was at noon. Instruction resumed at 1:00 and continued until 5:00. Supper was served at 6:10. Evenings were filled with more classes, vocational training, reading circles, recreation and free time, lectures, and various programs.⁴⁰

In 1913, for example, the school calendar showed numerous evening socials (usually designated for small, middle, or large-sized boys and girls) as well as lectures on topics ranging from the humane treatment of animals to patriotism.

Evening roll call came at 7:15 for small pupils and at 8:00 for the older ones. At 9:00 it was lights out. Weekends brought a respite from the routine. Saturday mornings usually found students engaged in chores or work from 8:00 to 11:00, but afternoons were free time. On alternate weekends groups were taken to nearby Gotebo or to Boake's trading post not far from the campus. Sundays meant Sunday school from 10:00 a.m. to noon, recreation and free time for much of the afternoon, and church service from 5:00 to 6:15. Attendance at the church was required. A Kiowa girl who attended one of the reservation's other boarding schools recalled that "you went to church; there was no *not* going."⁴¹

For much of the school's history classes were formed in two divisions — kindergarten through third grade, and fourth through sixth grade. Between 1894 and 1910, moreover, the fact that the school often had only two teachers during any term meant that only two classrooms were formed. Sometime after 1910 the academic program was divided into three parts — kindergarten through second grade, third and fourth grades, and fifth and sixth grades. A paucity of full-time teachers, however, kept the program hobbled. Students in kindergarten through the third grade typically concentrated on rudimentary learning skills, especially English language training. They also had simple lessons in hygiene, manners, music, and exercise among other things. By the fourth grade students added history, classics, agriculture, and civics. It was at this stage as well that vocational training began.

In 1916 a redesigned curriculum designated schools as either pre-vocational or vocational. Reservation boarding schools characterized the former, off-reservation boarding schools the latter. Differences in curriculum were mainly

matters of degree; whether at Carlisle or Rainy Mountain students got the same kind of training, only the intensity and variety changed. As a pre-vocational school Rainy Mountain was expected to offer a wide variety of training classes suitable for the age and experience of its students. First, second, and third graders concentrated on lessons in music, manners, health, arithmetic, and some limited vocational skills described by the Indian Office as "industrial work." Instruction in reading, grammar, and spelling rounded out the academic day. Beginning with the fourth grade academic skills were scaled back in favor of more intense vocational instruction. Academic training in the fourth grade, for example, consisted of 145 minutes a day of instruction in reading, history, geography, and other topics; vocational work, however, took up 240 minutes of the day. According to this regimen schools like Rainy Mountain would successfully train students for what the commissioner called the task of leading "useful lives under the conditions which they must meet after leaving school."⁴²

It all sounded fine in theory. In practice, however, most schools never had a chance of putting such plans to work. Limited facilities and too few teachers meant that for much of the time Rainy Mountain gave its students parts of this program but rarely all of it. A 1911 inspection, for example, revealed a distressing lack of critical facilities including a dairy barn, carpenter shop, and industrial cottage.⁴³ Worse, because of the lack of teachers the school usually held classes that were enormously over crowded. In December of 1912 attendance stood at 146, but the school employed only two academic teachers plus an industrial teacher. Forty-seven percent of the student body (sixty-seven pupils) were in the first grade. Twenty-eight percent (forty-one pupils) were second and third

graders. Thus 110 of 146 students attended grades one through three with one full-time teacher.⁴⁴

In September of 1913 the situation was largely the same. With 108 students on campus (soon to top off at 166), eight-five pupils were assigned to the first grade with one full-time teacher. During the previous spring semester when the same conditions prevailed, the agent, in a masterful show of understatement, had characterized the situation as "somewhat difficult."⁴⁵ Over the next two years the circumstances did not improve. Huge numbers of students filled the lower grades where they were not taught so much as they were simply warehoused.⁴⁶ This was typical of most years at Rainy Mountain. In many cases other staff members were pressed into service, particularly for domestic and vocational training. Older students were also used as assistant matrons, disciplinarians, or helpers in the effort to keep the school's programs adequately staffed.

Living and learning in Rainy Mountain's crowded conditions meant that progress was very slow. Many students languished in the lower grades and never successfully advanced. Parker McKenzie remembered many boys well into their teens who had advanced only to the second or third grade despite five or six years of instruction. A 1915 inspection report revealed that 10 percent of the school's first and second graders had been at Rainy Mountain for as long as seven years.⁴⁷

In addition to overcrowded classes and the lack of teachers, one of the chief causes of such poor rates of advancement was the language barrier. Students were strictly forbidden to speak Kiowa; teachers knew no Kiowa and insisted that English be used exclusively. Combined with the over crowding that

plagued every classroom each term, this amounted to a significant problem. It was an especially grueling transition for the very young pupils, many of whom were so frightened that according to McKenzie they "just clammed up."

McKenzie recalled an experience that helps to illustrate the difficulties involved. He arrived at the school with no knowledge of English; his teacher spoke absolutely no Kiowa but was resolute in her determination to teach the children English. To demonstrate the use of articles she placed a boy's hat on a stool and said that it could be "a" hat, or "the" hat. "Some of us were puzzled," said McKenzie, "because she was seeing two hats where we only saw one. . . . How she managed to get it across to us still mystifies me." His first language lesson came at the hands of a fellow student who translated the signs in the boys' playroom for him: "Do not spit on the floor," went the message. "To do so may spread disease."⁴⁸

Fred Bigman said that learning English was one of the hardest things he did at the school. "Boy, I had a hard time," he said. "When they start talking English I don't know what they are talking about." Once, when called to the board for spelling and grammar exercises, he panicked.

And when I went to school in class . . . that teacher told me to come up to the blackboard, write something on it. I didn't know what to write. I didn't know what she said. So I ask a guy . . . what'd she say. . . . She said for you to run out. Boy I jumped up and grabbed my cap and away I went. I went plumb back to our boy's building.

After several years Bigman progressed "to where I got to learn to talk English pretty good. Wasn't extra good." Looking back on the experience he commented that "I had a hard time. I think about it sometimes myself. Oh, it was painful."⁴⁹

Myrtle Ware said that she spoke no English prior to her enrollment at Rainy Mountain in 1898. "We had to learn," she said. "They write it on the blackboard when I first started to school." Every pupil went to the board, something that frightened many of the young children. "Our names are called, we go there and she tell us, write, give us a word, and then we have to write it down. Spelling so that she'll know that we know how." Ware adjusted fairly easily and even began to enjoy trips to the board as long as she got her favorite word, Mississippi.⁵⁰

When they were not at the blackboard, students learned the rudiments of grammar, penmanship, and style. Surviving samples in the school's official records reflect the influence of the Bible, Benjamin Franklin, and Robert Browning. "I am the Resurrection and the Life," wrote twelve-year old Alma Bigtree in March of 1895. Isabel Horse found her model from the works of Franklin: "A man of words and not of deeds is like a garden full of weeds."⁵¹ These were more than samples from which to perfect penmanship and grammar; they were the rules of life that every student was expected to learn and cherish.

Students occasionally received unexpected language lessons. Billy Evans Horse recalled that one of his grandfather's first memories of the English language came from an encounter with the school's farmer. Watching the man trying to harness animals, Horse's grandfather heard him scowl "stand still" to which he added a terribly obscene epithet. Shortly thereafter young Horse was in class. When asked to share his beginning knowledge of the English language, he stood up and repeated what he had heard from the farmer. By all accounts the teacher was not amused.⁵²

The fact that many students took several years

to attain even minimal English fluency meant that academic training remained remedial at best. The comments of former students say relatively little about classroom experience, except for language lessons, and much more about vocational training. When asked if she remembered any of the classes she took in school, Sarah Long Horn said no. She commented at length, however, on her vocational training. She remembered that girls were assigned to the school's bakery, laundry, or ironing room. Not surprisingly, kitchen work was standard for all girls. Work details changed every two months, she said. "That's where I got all my work, my neatness and my sewing, most of my cooking, things like that, because we stay there and do all that work."⁵³

Fred Bigman spent much of his time working in the school's dairy barn or on the farm. "They put you to a certain kind of work," he said. In his case that usually meant milking cows. "I didn't know how to milk," he said, but he learned. Rising every morning at 4:00 a.m. he joined about a dozen other boys to milk the school's small herd.⁵⁴ Parker McKenzie also worked on the dairy detail. He and his companions milked as many as a dozen cows twice a day but "we never saw milk, and butter, too, on our tables! Most of it went to . . . single employees." And as far as Alfred Dunn's manner of teaching was concerned, McKenzie characterized it as "mostly bossing."⁵⁵

Myrtle Ware's memory of the classroom was that her teacher taught them "how to write and sing and read and spell." Beyond that she offered no specific information on academic training except to say "I like to go to school in the morning 'cause I feel a little fresh to learn something. . . . At a certain time you go to school, you know, so many hours, and then you're out to work so many hours,

too." She spent much of her time working in the laundry, where she was so proficient that after several years as a student she was hired as an assistant matron. (This was not entirely uncommon; Louis Toyebo worked as an assistant disciplinarian, Parker McKenzie was the school's office boy, and Annie Bigman served as an assistant matron.) Work assignments changed about once a month during her time.⁵⁶

William Lone Wolf, who enrolled at Rainy Mountain in 1905, said that although there were six grades, "mostly they teach us how to work; it was a nice school, I learn some — I learn to work there."⁵⁷ Students from the reservation's other schools made similar comments. "We were taught practical things such as sewing and cooking, laundry and how to care for a family," said a former Riverside student. "All the things we learned were things we needed to know for our immediate living."⁵⁸ Some students regretted not getting more academic training. "It didn't take me long to realize how far behind I was," noted a former Fort Sill student. "I had a little math and science . . . compared to those who attended public school." One Riverside student lamented the lack of academic instruction; another Fort Sill student said "I don't think it was good because it was really academically inferior to the public school."⁵⁹ Despite the fact that many former boarding school students voiced similar complaints, most also commented that they had received important and useful training in school. In that sense Rainy Mountain served its pupils better than we might think. At the very least it helped them to acquire some of the skills necessary to make a living after their school years were over.

Relations between staff and students tended to be formal and reflected the

school's orderly regimen. There were strict rules against crossing the lines of authority. "There was very little personal contact between white employees and students," said Parker McKenzie. The school "seemed to have that segregation business going real strong."⁶⁰ But this did not mean an adversarial relationship. When Lillie McCoy transferred from Rainy Mountain in 1896, for example, she lamented leaving "my sweet little Kiowa children," but desired to be closer to home.⁶¹ A former Riverside student from the 1930s said that "the employees have empathy for the students. . . . The teachers influenced us a lot and we liked them a lot."⁶² Lucy Gage, a Riverside teacher in the early twentieth century, observed that "teachers . . . were for the most part refined and well-prepared," and cared deeply for their work.⁶³

Former Rainy Mountain students held mixed opinions about their teachers. Fred Bigman, who learned under teachers in public schools as well as at the reservation schools, saw no real distinction between the two. "I don't see any difference," he said. "Teachers always teachers. . . . I do what they tell me. I mind them."⁶⁴ Guy Quoetone schooled under missionary teachers prior to enrolling at Rainy Mountain. He preferred missionaries because "I think that they were really more interested that we learn."⁶⁵ Parker McKenzie remembered "a wispy, bossy . . . as cook during my early years at Rainy Mountain. Her actual name was Miss Slappy, and she bossed by it; it wasn't a name the students pinned on her."⁶⁶ The woman's true name was Elizabeth Schleppy, and her reputation seem well deserved according to the opinions of those with whom she worked. Some teachers were genuinely liked. Flora A. DeLay, for example, was still alive in 1963 when the first reunion of former Rainy Mountain students was held. She

was invited, said Parker McKenzie, because she was "a dedicated teacher and well liked."⁶⁷

Despite the effort to enforce strict order, occasionally a serious breach of the rules occurred. One such incident came in the spring of 1909 and involved accusations of sexual misconduct between several white female employees, a male employee, and some of the school's older Indian boys. The case centered on rumors that Arthie Edworthy, an assistant matron, and Arthur Curtis, the disciplinarian, had carried on an affair that had left Edworthy pregnant. "He thought he had Miss Edworthy in a fix," reported a local man. "They were unable to knock it and he wanted money to get away." When the rumors reached Cora Dunn she ordered an investigation that produced fifty-one sworn letters, affidavits, and statements that ran to more than 120 pages.⁶⁸

The investigation produced disturbing evidence of student complicity. Witnesses testified that Edworthy and another female employee were often in the company of male students at night. All involved admitted that this was true, including the two women, but insisted that nothing untoward ever occurred. Sydney Holmes, a clerk at nearby Boake's trading post, said that he observed the older school boys "go down to the blacksmith shop near the store and wait for Misses Edworthy and Connor to come by, when the boys would join them. I seen this happen four or five times after nightfall." Corwin Boake, owner of the trading post, testified that he found Edworthy's actions "indiscrete. . . . I based my opinion on having seen her at times leaving the store after nightfall to be met by Arthur Curtis." He also reported that a number of "the bigger school boys wait for her to come out of the store and join her on her way back to the school."

The real bombshell came when Cecil Horse, an eighteen year-old former student, reported that he and a handful of other students visited the women in their rooms regularly. He admitted having sex with Connor but not with Edworthy, whom he said never approached him.⁶⁹

In his sworn statement Curtis said that he bragged to Horse about sleeping with Edworthy but maintained this was actually a lie. "I was fooling," he said. "We were joshing around." (His room mate was Lewis Toyebo, who testified that he did not believe Curtis had slept with either of the women.) Edworthy admitted to having male visitors but said that they were always gone by the 9:00 curfew. She denied all the accusations and told Cora Dunn that she had enough evidence to sue the Indian Service for libel. For her part, Cora Dunn arranged a visit to the school by the agency physician ostensibly to have her father examined. Once there, however, Dunn directed him to Edworthy's quarters to administer a pregnancy test. The results were negative.⁷⁰ Edworthy took an unpaid leave of absence in March 1909, returned late that spring, and resigned in August of 1910. Curtis and Connor also left the school.⁷¹

There was more to life at school than the classroom and vocational training that dominated student's lives. A wide variety of extra-curricular activities went on regularly and offered welcome relief from the school's routines. On the campus students could participate in reading circles, evening meetings, and lectures. After James McGregor's arrival as principal in 1910 a school newspaper appeared and athletic teams became quite popular. Most holidays were celebrated, especially Christmas, when a week's vacation allowed children to go home. It was the only time all year that they left the campus for an extended time. There was also an

annual Christmas dinner, complete with turkey (or pork in years when the budget was tight) and small gifts. Halloween, New Year's Day, and Easter ("which was the only time I ever saw eggs", said Parker McKenzie) were also celebrated. Indeed, to encourage "the inculcation of patriotism," the Indian Office regularly issued guidelines reminding the schools to observe appropriate holidays. In 1891, Commissioner Morgan called attention to all of the usual holidays plus Washington's Birthday, Arbor Day, and Franchise Day.⁷²

Playing in Rainy Mountain's school band was by far one of the most popular activities for students. Cora Dunn started the band sometime in the late 1890s and it became an institution unto itself. A bandstand was built in the center of the campus in 1906 and Dunn herself directed rehearsals and performances. Music played an integral role in the introduction of Angloamerican culture at Indian schools across the country. In Cora Dunn's opinion no other aspect of Rainy Mountain's curriculum was as effective in that process. In 1895 she requested funds for a piano, justifying the purchase in part on the grounds that it would greatly improve the school's ability to cultivate the students' sense of advancement. "I attend personally to the instruction of the music pupils," she wrote, "and find them more enthusiastic and responsive in this than in any other branch of study." She was counting on the Indian Office's support "to make the musical features of this school a power in the intellectual and moral elevation of the pupils." The office agreed and in late November of 1896 the school received a piano.⁷³

Within two years she gathered together enough instruments to form a small band. Applicants for positions at the school were quizzed as to their musical

training and Dunn went out of her way to find and hire teachers, disciplinarians, and other staff members who were qualified to teach music. In this she was supported by the Indian Office, which tried to select applicants for reservation school jobs who could teach music. In 1897, for example, Dunn requested authority to hire a disciplinarian for the school who could not only drill the boys but also teach music.⁷⁴ On another occasion she wanted an assistant matron who could also play the clarinet cornet. The actual duties for the job "are those of farm laborer including milking," she noted, but as long as she was hiring she wanted an employee with musical ability.⁷⁵

The band proved a huge success. "The proficiency of the Rainy Mountain band is a matter of pride and no school influence has contributed more to the advancement of the pupils," she wrote in 1907.⁷⁶ Indeed, students eagerly participated and showed impressive talent. Parker McKenzie said that Dunn produced "wonderful school bands from fourteen to twenty-year olds who learned to play the masterpieces even before some mastered the fourth grade." On a visit to the campus in the summer of 1990 he stood by the remains of the principal's cottage, motioned in the direction of the bandstand and commented that he could still see Cora Dunn marching purposely toward her waiting students, baton in one hand, sheet music in the other.⁷⁷

Off-campus trips provided an especially welcomed respite from school routines. With the exception of the Christmas holiday students did not leave the campus during the year except in cases of illness or emergency. The outing system, popularized at schools like Carlisle where advanced students were sent to live and work in surrounding homes and businesses, was not used at Rainy

Mountain. In response to the commissioner's inquiry in 1910 as to the absence of the system at Rainy Mountain, Agent Ernest Stecker replied that the number of pupils old enough to participate was not large. Moreover, he wrote that "all of those who are of proper age are needed at the schools to successfully conduct the school farms, gardens, laundries, etc." Finally, he feared that Kiowa parents would not only hamper the program and unduly influence the students, they would likely regard the outing system as "enforced labor."⁷⁸

For thirty-nine out of forty weeks every school year, then, students did not leave the campus for more than an afternoon trip. Band members occasionally traveled on overnight trips, but this was rare. Parents were allowed to visit, but school rules usually kept such occasions short. Cora Dunn restricted such visits to Saturday afternoons, and occasionally forbade them completely. For most students, the chance to go to the nearby town of Gotebo, or to Boake's trading post a mile or so from the campus, represented a special treat. Parker McKenzie said that during his years the school allowed trips to Gotebo on alternate Saturdays. Such outings were considered a privilege earned by good behavior. Boys without demerits could also use Saturday afternoons for a trip to Boake's trading post. Girls went as well, but always with chaperons. Trips to Boake's or to town were often used to stock up on food. Because most students regarded school food as barely sufficient in both appeal and quantity, day trips were an important opportunity to pick up "eats" with the money they received as allowance or wages. Crackers, bulk cookies, pork and beans, sardines, candy and other luxuries were especially popular.⁷⁹

Myrtle Ware also remembered buying what she called "eats" at Boake's,

mostly apples or oranges. Saturday afternoons the matrons escorted groups of girls to the store. About once a month she went to Gotebo (sometimes more often if the band — to which she belonged — was playing), where she sometimes got to see her father, who would bring her ribbons and candy.⁸⁰

Rainy Mountain also sponsored athletic teams for both sexes. Like the band, these teams became a source of school pride and also offered the chance to get away from campus. Cora Dunn endorsed sports at the school (though not as enthusiastically as she did the band) and always included athletic equipment in her annual request for supplies. Baseball games against neighboring reservation schools and local teams began as early as 1902. "The boys are taking great interest in playing ball this year," she reported that year, "and have arranged match games with the ball clubs of the surrounding towns."⁸¹ Lewis Toyebo played shortstop for the team and remembered that "about the only other team we played was Gotebo, then we just played among ourselves, just to have some exercise." Girls participated as well. Sometime around 1910 they began their own basketball team.⁸²

After James McGregor's arrival as principal in 1910 the athletic programs grew rapidly. By 1912 he had helped to arranged athletic meets between the reservation's boarding schools that included baseball, high jumping, running, and pole vaulting. To this was joined an academic meet with contests in writing, reading, spelling, and arithmetic. His enthusiasm got him elected president of a newly formed athletic association. (The letter informing him of this development noted dryly that the vote had come during a meeting "at which you were unable to be present.") In addition to baseball, which seems to have been the most popular

sport at the school, students played volleyball, tennis, and ran on the track team. On a visit to the campus in the summer of 1990 Parker McKenzie, then ninety-two, playfully jogged in place and attributed his good health to the fact that he had once been a member of the Rainy Mountain track team. Like the band, athletics represented an important introduction to American ideals and culture. Tennis, volleyball, baseball, and football all figured prominently in the transformation of Indian youngsters. Administrators extolled the virtues of exercise and lauded the healthy effects of vigorous competition.⁸³

Finally, a rich and sometimes closely guarded unofficial life kept students busy when not in school or otherwise occupied. Although school administrators tried to regulate all that students did, the children inevitably found ways to get around such attempts. On one level the activities were meant simply to retain some level of autonomy. James Silverhorn said that after the school day was over "the boys used to all go up on the hill — up on Rainy Mountain and stay up there until supper time. Just to take a walk."⁸⁴ Likewise, the clandestine conversations in Kiowa in which most students participated at one time or another preserved an important measure of identity untouched by the school.

Such activities also relieved the monotony of school life. Parker McKenzie reported that students engaged in a wide variety of games and self-made amusements. In addition to the usual pursuits of baseball, tag, or marbles (the impending showdown of self-designated world champions caused eager anticipation. "We regarded it almost as much as the World's Series now is regarded."), there was a student circus located behind Rainy Mountain. Cast-off furniture and other junked odds and ends were scavenged and put to use as props.

A band provided accompaniment on imaginary instruments made from wooden sticks and drums made out of discarded tubs. Aerialists, tumblers, and acrobats wearing long-handle underwear for tights performed on mattresses while cowboy rope artists and clowns entertained the crowd. A menagerie of rabbits, possums, "a rat or two," squirrels, and snakes was a popular attraction. One boy won acclaim for his gorilla act — complete with a fur suit crafted from a worn-out mohair mattress and wooden teeth — during which he growled and hung from a chain. Two others created a buffalo complete with cow's skull and horns. Admission was a uniform button, preferably brass.⁸⁵

School administrators probably knew of the circus' existence, but there is no indication that they ever tried to close it down or restrict it. However, the circus produced effects not entirely welcomed. Apparently it was so popular that matrons and disciplinarians fumed over the mysterious wholesale loss of uniform buttons. School supply invoices for May 1909, and April 1910 (within the period during which McKenzie was associated with the circus) showed orders for a total of six gross of coat and vest buttons.⁸⁶ From the perspective of former students Rainy Mountain was a collection of contradictions. It existed to prepare them for life but could not adequately train them. It meant to strip them of their cultural identity but failed to do so. It sought to transform them but in actuality only changed them. Some students learned well and left the school with advantages they would have otherwise missed. "If it hadn't been for Rainy Mountain School, I probably would not be typing this account," wrote Parker McKenzie. "Despite the hardships we encountered there, they were well worth the time. . . . It provided us the opportunity for an education, though rudimentary for most of

us."⁸⁷ Yet McKenzie, who spent nearly forty years of his adult life as a Bureau of Indian Affairs employee, never gave up his Kiowa identity. He originated and perfected a written system for the Kiowa language and assumed prominence as a tribal historian.

Other former students also carried fond memories away from the school, despite its often unpleasant circumstances. "But I really did, I really did like that school," said Sarah Long Horn. "I'm always thankful that I went to that school because that's lots of things that I had . . . learned from that place."⁸⁸ On the occasion of his ninetieth birthday Lewis Toyebo told his descendants that he had "fond memories [of Rainy Mountain]. . . . I now see the Kiowa people have made rapid progress from the tipi to the halls of higher education. . . . That was the wish and prayer of our ancestors who have gone on."⁸⁹

For most of these students the school did not succeed in destroying their cultural identity. It forced an accommodation, and it surely worked changes in their lives. Undoubtedly some left the schools ashamed of their Indianness and determined to keep it buried. Most, however, came through it with their sense of identity intact. Rainy Mountain could not take from them the fact of who they were.

Notes

1. See Robert A. Trennert, Jr., *The Phoenix Indian School: Forced Assimilation in Arizona, 1891-1935* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988), especially chapter six; Basil H. Johnston, *Indian School Days* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1898); Sally J. McBeth, *Ethnic Identity and the Boarding School Experience of West-Central Oklahoma American Indians* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1983); Henrietta Man, "Cheyenne-Arapaho Education, 1871-1992," Ph.D. dissertation, University of New Mexico, 1982.
2. Thomas Jefferson Morgan to George Day, November 14, 1892, Rainy Mountain School Records: Record Group 75, National Archives, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (hereafter cited as RMS, OHS).
3. Interview with Myrtle Paudlety Ware, November 11, 1967, T-76: 2, Doris Duke Oral History Collection, Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Library Archives, Norman, Oklahoma (hereafter cited as DDOH); interview with Annie Bigman, June 14, 1971, M-1: 3, DDOH.
4. Guy Quoetone interview, March 23, 1971, T-37: 16, *ibid.*
5. Sarah Long Horn interview, June 27, 1967, T-62: 6-7, *ibid.*
6. Fred Bigman interview, June 14, 1967, T-50: 24-26, *ibid.*
7. James Haumpy interview, July 11, 1967, T-81: 6, *ibid.*
8. "Happy 90th Birthday Lewis Toyebo, February 28, 1982," Commemorative

birthday celebration reminiscence in the possession of Mrs. Ruby Williams of Fort Cobb, Oklahoma. I am indebted to her for sharing this document with me (hereafter cited as "Lewis Toyabo Birthday"); Cora Dunn to John Blackmon, January 30, 1906, RMS, OHS.

9. Parker McKenzie to Clyde Ellis, August 1, 1900.

10. Big Tree to James Randlett, August 30, 1905, RMS, OHS. McBeth identifies four reasons for attending the boarding schools: 1. It would enable children to cope more effectively with a changing cultural environment. "Now," said one Kiowa-Apache man, "we in White man's world. Today. We got to go that way." 2. Schools provided clothes and other necessities. "I wanted to go home and be with momma, but she said 'Well, if you come home we'll only be eating one meal a day, and so I think you should go to Riverside.'" 3. Death of a parent often meant the child was sent away to school. 4. They went because their friends were there. 5. Difficulty in the public schools, embarrassment over poor performance. 6. Opportunity to associate with other Indians. *Ethnic Identity and the Boarding School*, 108-111.

11. Cora Dunn to Randlett, September 5 and September 14, 1900, RMS, OHS. For an account of allotment on the Kiowa-Comanche reservation, see William T. Hagan, *U.S.-Comanche Relations: The Reservation Years* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990), especially chapters 9, 11, and 12.

12. Cora Dunn to Randlett, March 16, 1905; Cora Dunn to John Blackmon, September 11, 1906, RMS, OHS.

13. William A. Jones to William T. Walker, October 1, 1898, *ibid.*; *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs* (hereafter cited as *ARCIA*), 1898: 6-7.
14. McKenzie to Ellis, August 1, 1990.
15. Guy Quoetone interview, T-637, 17: DDOH.
16. Annie Bigman interview, T-57, 16: *ibid.*
17. Sarah Long Horn interview, June 27, 1967, T-62: 9, *ibid.*
18. "Lewis Toyebo Birthday."
19. *Ibid.*; McKenzie to Randle Hurst, October 23, 1987, in the possession of the author; Myrtle Ware interview, T-76: 4, DDOH.
20. McKenzie to Hurst, October 23, 1987; McBeth, *Ethnic Identity and the Boarding School*, 99-100.
21. Sarah Longhorn interview, T-62: 10, DDOH.
22. Fred Bigman interview, T-50: 24, *ibid.*; Parker McKenzie, "How Written Kiowa Came Into Being," n.d., in the possession of the author. I am indebted to Bill Welge of the Oklahoma Historical Society for supplying me a copy of this document.
23. McKenzie to Ellis, August 1, 1990; McKenzie to Hurst, October 23, 1987; McBeth, *Ethnic Identity and the Boarding School*, 102-103.
24. McKenzie to Hurst, October 23, 1987; McBeth, *Ethnic Identity and the Boarding School*, 105.

25. Sarah Long Horn interview, T-62: 10, DDOH; McBeth, *Ethnic Identity and the Boarding School*, 105-106.

26. Myrtle Ware interview, T-76: 5, DDOH; Harry Tofpi, Sr. interview, August 3, 1991.

27. Myrtle Ware interview, T-76: 10, DDOH; McKenzie to Hurst, October 23, 1987. Parker McKenzie said that during his years at Rainy Mountain and later at the Phoenix Indian School he and his fellow Kiowas eagerly sought one another out to practice their language. Although some lost their language, most seemed to retain it. McBeth has written that "the retention of Native languages is relevant to ethnic interests because a language can express a system of social values and lend credence to a social group," see *Ethnic Identity and the Boarding School*, 134-135.

28. McBeth, *Ethnic Identity and the Boarding School*, 106-107; Cora Dunn to Baldwin, May 27, 1895, RMS, OHS.

29. Cora Dunn to Randlett, February 13, 1900, RMS, OHS.

30. Hagan, *U.S.-Comanche Relations*, 196; James Mooney, "Calendar History of the Kiowa Indians", *17th Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1895-1896* (Washington: D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1898), 222-223, 360; Annie Bigman interview, T-57: 18-19, DDOH; Fred Bigman interview, T-50: 27-28, DDOH.

31. McBeth, *Ethnic Identity and the Boarding School*, 86-87.

32. James Haumpy interview, T-81: 6, DDOH.

33. *ARCLIA*, 1895: 6.

34. *Annual Report of the Superintendent of Indian Schools*, in *ARCIA*, 1902: 420-421.
35. *Ibid.*, 421.
36. *Ibid.*, 424, 428.
37. McBeth, *Ethnic Identity and the Boarding School*, 89.
38. *ARCIA*, 1903: 10.
39. *Ibid.*, 10-11.
40. Rainy Mountain Indian School Calendar, 1913-1914, RMS, OHS. This regimen was typical of other schools as well. For a discussion of the similarities at a Choctaw mission school, for example, consult Christopher J. Huggard, "Culture Mixing: Everyday Life on Missions Among the Choctaws," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 70(Winter 1992-1993): 432-449.
41. *Ibid.*; James McGregor to Stecker, January 8, 1914, RMS, OHS; McBeth, *Ethnic Identity and the Boarding School*, 100.
42. *ARCIA*, 1916: 9-23.
43. F. H. Abbott to Ernest Stecker, February 11, 1911, RMS, OHS.
44. Quarterly Report for Indian Schools, December 1912, *ibid.*
45. Cato Sells to Ernest Stecker, February 15, 1913, *ibid.*
46. Quarterly Report for Indian Schools, March 1914, *ibid.*

47. McKenzie to Hurst, October 23, 1987; McKenzie, "How Written Kiowa Came Into Being"; C. F. Hanke to Stecker, March 10, 1915, RMS, OHS.
48. McKenzie to Ellis, August 1, 1990.
49. Fred Bigman interview, T-50: 24, DDOH.
50. Myrtle Ware, T-76: 7-8, *ibid.*
51. Writing samples by Alma Bigtree, March 4, 1895, and Isabel Horse, June 3, 1907, RMS, OHS.
52. Eric Lassiter interview, March 16, 1993.
53. Sarah Long Horn interview, T-62: 8-9, DDOH.
54. Fred Bigman interview, T-50: 28, *ibid.*
55. McKenzie to Hurst, October 23, 1987.
56. Myrtle Ware interview, T-76: 3, 5, DDOH.
57. William Lone Wolf interview, T-42, 8, *ibid.*
58. McBeth, *Ethnic Identity and the Boarding School*, 92.
59. *Ibid.*, 92-93.
60. Parker McKenzie interview, August 1, 1990.
61. Lillie McCoy to Baldwin, June 3, 1896, RMS, OHS.
62. McBeth, *Ethnic Identity and the Boarding School*, 97.

63. Lucy Gage, "A Romance of Pioneering," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 29(Summer 1951): 297.
64. Fred Bigman interview, T-50: 29, DDOH.
65. Guy Quoetone interview, T-149, np, *ibid.*
66. McKenzie to Hurst, October 23, 1987.
67. McKenzie to Ellis, August 1, 1990.
68. Report on case of Miss Arthie Edworthy, Assistant Matron, Rainy Mountain School, April 24, 1909. Record Group 75, Kiowa Agency Classified Files, 1907-1939, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (hereafter cited as Edworthy Report, KAE, NA).
69. *Ibid.*
70. *Ibid.*
71. Cora Dunn to Stecker, April 1, 1909; Descriptive Statement of Changes in School Employees, March 8, 1909, RMS, OHS.
72. Parker McKenzie interview, August 1, 1990; Morgan to Indian Agents and Superintendents of Indian Schools, October 22, 1891, RMS, OHS.
73. Cora Dunn to Browning, December 19, 1895, RMS, OHS.
74. Cora Dunn to B. F. Taylor, November 29, 1897, *ibid.*
75. Cora Dunn to Randlett, February 25, 1905, *ibid.*

76. Cora Dunn to Blackmon, April 25, 1907, *ibid.*
77. McKenzie to Hurst, October 23, 1987; McKenzie interview, August 1, 1990.
78. C. F. Hanke to Stecker, March 10, 1910; Stecker to Hanke March 14, 1910, KAE, NA.
79. Cora Dunn to Nichols, September 27, 1894, RMS, OHS; McKenzie to Ellis, August 1, 1990; McKenzie to Hurst, October 23, 1987.
80. Myrtle Ware interview, T-76: 9, DDOH.
81. Cora Dunn to Randlett, April 23, 1902, RMS, OHS.
82. "Lewis Toyebo Birthday."
83. James McGregor to Stecker, October 10, 1912; Unknown to McGregor, October 29, 1912; R. W. Bischoff to C. V. Stinchecum, March 16, 1917, all RMS, OHS.
84. James Silverhorn interview, September 28, 1967, T-146: 4, DDOH.
85. McKenzie to Hurst, October 23, 1987.
86. Supply invoices, May 25, 1909 and April 25, 1910, RMS, OHS.
87. McKenzie to Hurst, October 23, 1987.
88. Sarah Long Horn interview, T-62: 14, DDOH.
89. "Lewis Toyebo Birthday."

CHAPTER VI

SHIFTING PRIORITIES: THE PROGRESSIVE ERA

As the early twentieth century developed, the Indian school system underwent important changes. New political, scientific, and social attitudes contributed to a climate of opinion that brought a troubling perspective to Indian education. By the end of the First World War, the future of Rainy Mountain School was increasingly in doubt. Although it served an important role in the effort to bring education to the remote corners of one of the country's most needy Indian reservations, the school's usefulness, and that of boarding schools in general, was becoming questionable. Several factors help to explain this. The most important was the changing philosophy inside the Indian Office concerning assimilation and education's role in accomplishing it. Frederick Hoxie argues convincingly that during the first two decades of the twentieth century the government's goals and assumptions about assimilation and Indian participation in mainstream society changed dramatically; the optimism of the late nineteenth century asserting that progress was a natural human condition gave way to profoundly pessimistic opinions. These new interpretations labeled Indians as racially backward, culturally deficient, and intellectually feeble.¹ After 1910 Rainy Mountain would suffer even greater troubles as a result of such thinking. Buffeted by changing currents in government policy and the popular mood, Indian

education faced severe challenges in the early twentieth century. For Rainy Mountain the challenges would ultimately be too much.

In 1892, Thomas Jefferson Morgan had written that there were "no insuperable obstacles in the way of blending Indian children with white children." By 1920, however, Commissioner of Indian Affairs Cato Sells spoke for an Indian Office that had retreated from such a position. Reflecting a much more limited view of assimilation, Sells commented that education policymakers had "no other choice than to regard the Indian as a fixed component of the white man's civilization." By "fixed," he meant accepting a permanently subordinate position on the periphery of American society and not, as had once been imagined, meaningful participation in it.² In a world where education and assimilation had been used interchangeably, schools were readily accepted and often genuinely supported. Now, as troubling questions were raised about the ability of Indians to assimilate, schools were increasingly seen as having a limited utility.

Policymakers in the post-Civil War era had relied in part on scientific opinion in the formulation of policy. The goals and assumptions of assimilation, for example, reflected the generally optimistic view held by most late nineteenth-century ethnologists and anthropologists that Indians could and should be transformed from savages into citizens according to the standards of white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant America. By the turn of the century, however, these largely self-taught anthropologists lost their place to professionally trained academicians who came to control sociological and anthropological studies (and thus Indian studies) by World War I. This was a critical shift, for it meant replacing the forward-looking cultural evolutionists, on whom the government had relied for

advice concerning assimilation, with thinkers whose ambivalence and occasional hostility toward Indians helped to change policy directions dramatically.³

A useful example comes in the contrast between the generation that produced anthropologists like Lewis Henry Morgan and that which produced his successors. Morgan, the most eminent anthropologist of the late nineteenth century, believed firmly in the inevitability of social evolution. All cultures, he wrote, moved at varying speed from simple to more complex modes of existence. The evidence for the linear progression from savagery to barbarianism to civilization was abundant and universal; Western civilization had gone through it, so too would the Indians. Thus, Indians were not necessarily inferior or deficient intellectually; they lacked certain institutional and environmental advantages. "The history of the human race," Morgan declared, "is one in source, one in experience, one in progress."⁴

For Morgan, the issue was not if the transformation of Indians could occur, but how and when. Economic change pointed the way. Property relationships were especially critical, for Morgan saw them as the way to change on a series of levels.

It is impossible to overestimate the influence of property in the civilization of mankind. It was the power that brought Aryan and Semitic nations out of barbarism into civilization . . . Governments and laws are instituted with primary reference to its creation. . . . With the establishment of the inheritance of property in the children of its owner, came the first possibility of the strict monogamian family.⁵

In Morgan's wake came John Wesley Powell, Alice Fletcher, and others who agreed that transformation was both necessary and possible. For much of the

late nineteenth century, when policymaking was still influenced by humanitarian forces, the government turned to this group for advice on Indian matters. As director of the Bureau of American Ethnology, Powell (and his assistants) dominated both professional anthropology and policy-making. Working behind the scenes, careful to avoid political intrigues, Powell exerted pressure on the Indian Office to enact policies he believed were consistent with the social evolution theories that lay at the heart of Indian assimilation.⁶ He offered what Frederick Hoxie describes as "a chilling condensation" of the social evolutionist blueprint: separate Indians from their homes and their past, divide their land into individual parcels, make them citizens, and draw them into American society. Powell's suggestions had scientific precision. Who could doubt that they were reasonable and practical?⁷

Alice Fletcher agreed with Powell in terms of joining the anthropological community and policymakers but tended to be more outspoken. This was especially true concerning government sponsored education for Indians.⁸ For Fletcher, education and allotment were absolutely central to the transformation of Indian children. "The task of converting the American Indian into the Indian American," she wrote in 1890, "belongs to the Indian student." An early advocate of Indian education, she believed that the surest path to change was the classroom. Commissioned in 1888 to lead a nationwide survey on Indian schools, she closed her final report by saying that "more . . . [and] better equipped schools were a national need."⁹ Without them, the government's plans would likely fail to produce lasting results.

When the government turned to this generation of scientists it heard a

nearly unanimous voice. Social evolution was an indisputable fact which could be accelerated by the careful and precise application of certain environmental forces, chiefly education and allotment. There were disputes, to be sure, about the rate of progress possible among the various tribes; and looking at the era with the benefit of historical hindsight it is easy to see flaws. Morgan's use of the Iroquois, for example, as a sort of base from which to derive meaningful models for other tribes did not prove valid. And of course the optimism of Morgan, Powell, and others was characterized by a healthy dose of ethnocentrism; still, the Indian problem was not considered insurmountable. The important point is that when approached for an opinion, the scientific community responded with an optimistic answer. And hearing what they accepted to be an authoritative assessment, policymakers based measures on it designed to achieve transformation.

Policies based on such thinking would produce Indians poised to join mainstream society. At its heart policy demanded that Indians become culturally indistinguishable from their anglo neighbors in all important ways. Schools were generally considered the centerpiece of this process. As long as popular opinion, scientific observation, and policy assumptions formed a certain core of beliefs, schools remained important components of the policy-making process. Shifts in that core, however, endangered the substance of the Indian schools, for the loss of any part imperiled the system. And that is precisely what happened in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. At schools like Rainy Mountain, where the struggle simply to maintain some sense of direction, the consequences would be very important.

Rainy Mountain matured in the midst of a changing climate of scientific

opinion. A new cadre of social scientists came on the scene and surveyed the issues, arriving at radically different conclusions from an earlier generation. Often casting aside the idea that progress was a natural condition, these new experts perceived a much greater distance between the races than had been previously assumed. Thus the inevitability and even the appropriateness of assimilation came open to challenge.¹⁰ The optimism of Powell, for example, was met with and replaced by the skepticism of professionals who described Indians as alien, backward, barbarian, "zoomimic", or sub-human. Rejecting the confidence of the late nineteenth century, new thinkers focused on various characteristics of Indians to justify their classification as culturally deficient people locked in a world from which few could escape.

The preoccupation with race, for example, marked a dangerous precedent in the interpretation of culture. By seizing on race as a determinant, leading voices like Madison Grant and Daniel Brinton opened the way to a reformulation of culture and its foundations that resisted the notion of change. By implication this meant assimilation was an unrealistic hope. Moreover, by promulgating a view of cultural worth that placed a premium on skin color, racial determinists automatically assigned Indians, among others, to an inferior position in society.¹¹

It is, of course, too simplistic to say that this alone accounted for the shifts in policy that occurred in the early twentieth century. This is especially so with regard to the emerging disciplines of anthropology and sociology. Critics of the racial determinists, for example, argue that there was more going on than that. The point is conceded, but with important caveats.

It is true that some anthropologists looked more optimistically at culture.

Most prominent was Franz Boas, who interpreted the Indian question in a very different light from most of his contemporaries. Unconvinced by the racial determinism of the era, Boas helped to introduce cultural relativism to the field of Indian studies. In general he saw much about native culture that suggested a rich complexity and innate value. At the same time, however, he regarded Indians as a vanishing race. In 1906 he said that "day by day the Indians and their cultures are disappearing more and more. . . . Fifty years hence nothing will remain." He was wrong, of course, but anthropology still includes an emphasis described by Jacob Gruber as "ethnographic salvage." Boas might have disagreed with the racial determinists, but he did not offer a particularly positive alternative. Despite his prominence, Boas never truly dominated professional anthropology in such a way as to exert meaningful influence with regard to policy-making. The Bureau of American Ethnology was hostile to the Boasian clique, and he suffered at the hands of anti-Semites who distrusted him and his students. Divisions among prominent anthropologists thus helped to worsen the ambivalence that confronted policymakers.¹²

Joined to this new interpretation of the Indian question was a panoply of popular ideas and cultural icons contributing to the impression that assimilation was wrong-headed. Popular opinion in the form of literature and photography, for example, began to reflect an increasingly romanticized, nostalgic view of Indians. Pulp Westerns, dime novels, and arcade movie reels all highlighted Indians as the vanishing race. Museums and Wild West shows promised scintillating re-creations of Indian life and the Old West. When Hollywood joined the fray the metamorphosis was complete.

Photographers like Edward Curtis who rushed to capture the last fleeting moments of a disappearing race had an especially powerful impact. Careful to retouch any evidence of the modern world that tainted his meticulously planned scenes, Curtis intended to convince his audience and his patrons that a once glorious way of life was soon to be gone. Considering the enduring power of his work, Curtis very nearly succeeded. In his world there was no Indian problem; they only existed because he conjured them up. Moreover, Curtis had to conjure them up because they were, he believed, on their way to extinction. The kind of concern reflected in his works, and that of other image makers, had nothing to do with civilizing Indians and everything to do with immortalizing them.¹³

Some of the clearest expressions of the conquered Indian doomed to extinction came from artists and sculptors. Like Curtis, so-called cowboy artists Charles Russell and Frederic Remington captured and popularized a mythical image of Indians that quickly became part of the cultural baggage of early twentieth-century America. Again, this is important because the perception of Indians as a romantic breed that flourished only in the old, conquered West, deflected reality. Why worry about their assimilation (and their schooling) if they were gone? James Earl Frazer's sculpture "The End of the Trail," which debuted at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco in 1915, was a particularly potent expression of this sentiment. Designed on an epic scale (two and one-half times life size), the piece depicted a slumped Indian astride a listless pony, lance pointing downward. Its impact was electric and it proved to be one of the exposition's most popular attractions. Speaking about the message conveyed by the piece, Fraser commented that it was the "idea of a weaker race being

steadily pushed to the wall that I wanted to convey." Few other pieces of art so completely captivated the public's imagination. "The End of the Trail" became an enduring symbol of the romantic West and an icon to the vanishing Indian.¹⁴

Finally, political decision-making reflected a noticeable shift to the West at the turn of the century. There, attitudes were widely anti-Indian. Compassion for Indians was nearly nonexistent. Beginning with Theodore Roosevelt's administration in 1901, a Western perspective increasingly influenced both White House and the Congress. Indeed, Roosevelt represented personally the intellectual and political forces that soon came to dominate policy-making. He and his "cowboy cabinet" of self-styled experts like novelist Owen Wister, journalists Francis Leupp and Hamlin Garland, and artist Frederic Remington accepted the changing attitude of the day toward Indian assimilation. Under Roosevelt, and subsequently under Taft and Wilson, the Indian question lost its place as a national concern. Like many Americans, Roosevelt was convinced that Indians and other lesser races probably were incapable of assimilation. Although the majority of Indians "must change," he noted, they could only do so gradually. "It will take several generations to make the change complete."¹⁵

The impact of a western shift was revealed most tellingly in congressional politics. Between 1889 and 1912, for example, ten new states — all from the West — entered the union. The most immediate consequence of this for Indian affairs was that key committee posts went increasingly to senators and representatives from the West. The nine senators who chaired the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs between 1893 and 1920, for example, were all Westerners who accepted the new order of things without exception. Calling for practicality over Eastern

philanthropy, they redirected policy goals by scaling back expenditures and rejecting the previous generation's comparatively rosy assessment of the issues. Thus began the eclipse of the reformers who had molded policy since the days of the Peace Policy. Control of the Indian question came to rest almost completely in the hands of western politicians whose views on Indians tended to be unencumbered by concerns about moral reform. Also, the men who occupied the commissioner's office at the Bureau of Indian Affairs between 1900 and 1928 continued as in the past to be political appointees with no experience among Indians. But for Francis Leupp, who actually had some first-hand knowledge of Indians (he considered them racially backward), commissioners were selected for their political loyalty and business sense, and not for their understanding of the issues.¹⁶

The reappraisal of assimilation's goals and policies prompted policymakers to lower their expectations for Indians. If assimilation was a questionable assumption — and surely it was by the 1910s — then it was equally clear that the means of achieving it were also open to debate. The promise of membership in the mainstream now gave way to a more ambiguous place. In a hierarchically arranged society, assimilation no longer meant complete membership for Indians. According to Frederick Hoxie it now meant "locating each group in a discrete place within the social structure." For Indians that place was the border of American society.¹⁷

Obviously, the changing goals and assumptions of assimilation meant that the means attached to it came under scrutiny. For the Indian Office this forced a close critique of allotment, citizenship, and education — the centerpieces of the

old approach. Severe blows were leveled against these institutions, but nowhere was the attack more keenly felt than in the Indian school system. It had been a sacrosanct part of the nineteenth century Indian Office, held up as the agent of transformation in even the most difficult circumstances. By the 1920s the system had been scaled down, redefined, and handed over to experts who believed wholeheartedly in a new policy. Rainy Mountain School, a small outpost in the old system, would not weather the changes very well.¹⁸

The rhetoric of education had historically trumpeted a sort of "all things are possible" approach. The reality of political interference and other limitations aside, Indian education had enjoyed at the very least a reputation as a problem-solving institution of remarkable importance. As the twentieth century began, however, the certitude of pro-education reformers began to fail, signaling a new era philosophically and administratively for Indian schools. Of enormous importance in this regard was the erosion of philanthropic and reform support from the Christian Reformers who had dominated Indian policy, especially education, since the days of Grant. The new political fortunes that attended the rise of the modern West help in part to explain this trend, but there was more to it. Indeed, in the first decade of the twentieth century, their preeminence in Indian affairs, according to Paul Prucha, was "severely shaken, if not indeed shattered."¹⁹

To their dismay, many Peace Policy era reformers found they no longer controlled policymaking, nor were they particularly effective in influencing the selection of those who did. Once they had had a strong role in appointments inside the Indian service, especially in sensitive areas like schools; now they

contended with more politically powerful adversaries who used the Indian Office for different ends. Thomas Jefferson Morgan, W. N. Hailmann, Carl Schurz and others represented a kind of reform spirit that flowered briefly in the late nineteenth century; by the twentieth century, however, they were gone. More often than not, reformers had to confront Western senators and representatives who had powerful influence in patronage and policy decisions. Even President Roosevelt admitted ruefully that when it came to the Indian Office, "I simply cannot get a man confirmed unless the senators from that state approve him."²⁰

It was bad enough when agents had been the targets of intense political patronage battles; now the process reached all the way to the highest levels of the Indian Office. (Of course this had always been the case. But it was surely a different situation to have men like Frederic Remington influencing policy rather than someone like Albert K. Smiley, Lewis Henry Morgan, or even Richard Pratt.) Groups like the Indian Rights Association and the Lake Mohonk Conference now saw their prestige and influence slip away. As the twentieth century unfolded, it became increasingly clear that the old, deliberate, humane programs were losing precious ground to new, less thorough ones being pushed by policymakers who were the vanguard of a new generation of leaders. Once gone from the scene, personalities like Morgan and Powell, among others, would not be replaced by like-minded individuals. This, of course, led to profound reevaluations of policy goals and assumptions.

In their stead came a generation of administrators who carried the banner of progressive reform and scientific management of the Indian service. Often lacking the philosophical and personal passion for careful reform that had

characterized an earlier generation, the new policymakers tended as a rule to be less patient, more concerned with achieving goals, and generally suspicious of passion when it came to Indian rights. For them, the ultimate goal was the dismantling of the Indian Office, a fact that in and of itself would be evidence of a permanently solved Indian problem. Rather than continuing to struggle with the difficult problems posed by assimilation, new policymakers thought in terms of finding solutions quickly and efficiently. It was an old goal; achieving it, however, necessitated speeding up the process even more and redefining exactly what the goals of an assimilation agenda were.

In the minds of most policymakers not much changed as far as overall goals were concerned. A changed Indian, self-sufficient and freed from wardship, remained the ideal. But deciding how that existence was to be achieved, as well as what defined it, posed problems. Still, the ultimate end remained clear. As a reminder that the result was non-negotiable, the Board of Indian Commissioners thundered in its 1901 annual report that the object of the Indian Office was to "make all Indians self-supporting, self-respecting, and useful citizens of the United States. The Indian Bureau," it continued, "should always aim at its own speedy discontinuance!" Success was to be measured not by self perpetuation but by "self-destruction!"²¹ But what was a self-supporting, self-respecting, and useful citizen? In the new era how could progress be realistically defined and practically defined?

As always, individualization remained the key to the destruction of Indian culture. But whereas an earlier generation of reformers had believed deeply in the ability of Indians to move into mainstream society, more contemporary

thinkers hedged their bets. By altering programs like education and allotment, Americanization could be hastened and goals met all the more quickly.

Accelerate the pace of allotment, make it easier to obtain clear title, limit the years students could stay in school, lower curricular expectations, make Indians subject to citizenship and state and federal laws more quickly — these and other things were mentioned as examples of how the Indian question could be solved expediently, judiciously, and above all economically. Some otherwise respectable voices even advocated throwing Indians to the wolves; Cato Sells, for example, was only too happy to accelerate the competency process that allowed Indians to claim title to their individual allotments. Doing so exposed them to all kinds of temptations and situations with which they were not prepared to deal. Sells argued they must either sink or swim. For his part Sells was willing to let large numbers sink.

Policymakers reminded critics that it did Indians a greater disservice to keep them in a state of near-thralldom than to release them to find their own way. In 1907, Commissioner of Indian Affairs Francis Leupp observed that the Indian Office was engaged in a multitude of works for which it really had no legitimate responsibility — irrigation, forestry, and reclamation, for example — and which only reinforced the dependence of Indians on the government dole. "All my work," he wrote, "is guided by my general aim of preparing the whole Indian establishment for going out of business at no very distant date."²² Doing business as usual only slowed the inevitable consequences of finally forcing Indians to stand on their own feet. For the social Darwinists who ran the Indian Office, resisting the need to get on with the business at hand was unnatural and unwise.

Beginning with Commissioner of Indian Affairs William Jones, who took office in May 1897, and continuing down through Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Burke, who served through Coolidge's administration, the five men who held the office of commissioner accepted an increasingly narrow definition of assimilation and married it to a similarly narrow view of what Indian schools ought to achieve. Thomas Jefferson Morgan's plans for a four-tiered school system resembling the public school system in thoroughness and comprehensiveness had failed to emerge during the 1890s. At best, the system became and remained a patchwork.²³ By 1900 new ideas about the Indian schools were quickly gaining support, prompting what Prucha admits were goals "explicitly more modest."²⁴

Commissioner Jones heralded those more modest hopes himself when he wrote in his annual report for 1900 that:

The Indian school system aims to provide a training which will prepare the Indian boy or girl for the everyday life of the average American citizen. It does not contemplate, as some have supposed . . . an elaborate preparation for a collegiate course through an extended high-school curriculum. . . . It is not considered the province of the Government to provide either its wards or citizens with what is known as 'higher education.'²⁵

Like many experts, Jones believed that practical knowledge and training should lay at the heart of the Indian schools. Rudimentary learning in math, science, history, geography, hygiene, and music was clearly necessary but should not be undertaken as major components of the curriculum. The greatest amount of time should go to more practical areas — agricultural training, domestic skills, cooking, dairying, tailoring, upholstering, baking, and so on. Vocational training of course had

formed the core of the Indian school curriculum since the days of Carlisle. In some ways, then, what happened in the early twentieth century was an intensification of an already well established process. Yet it was also a different process, for it was based on and justified a view of Indians that was decidedly more limited than ever before. Having convinced themselves that Indians were perpetually backward, policymakers could safely construct policies that ensured their backwardness. Lake Mohonk conferees would have blanched at such thinking.

Superintendent of Indian Education Estelle Reel observed in 1901 that the Indians' future lay in vocational training and not in more formal studies. Referring to lessons for plowing, for instance, she wrote that "upon this work more than any other depends the advancement of the Indian." As Hoxie has suggested, those who agreed with her moved aggressively to strip the Indian schools of what little real learning existed to begin with and sought instead to replace it with more practical, vocational instruction. Emphasizing domestic skills for girls, for example, Reel reported that every girl should learn to bake bread and "must be taught how to cut bread into dainty, thin slices and place [them] on plates in a neat, attractive manner." Of history and civics, she was moved to observe that students should know only enough "to be good, patriotic citizens." According to Hoxie, here was evidence of a curriculum of depressingly low expectations.²⁶

In addition to embracing a limited curriculum for the Indian schools, Jones also began a campaign to reduce the number of schools and to pare the government's commitment to boarding schools off the reservations. Jones believed

that off-reservation schools were poor investments. Reviewing the statistics of schools like Carlisle reinforced his opinion. "Analysis of the data obtained by this office," Jones wrote in 1901, "indicates that the methods of education which have been pursued for the past generation have not produced the results anticipated."²⁷

Closing them down would save enormous sums of money and reinforce Reel's vision of practical training. Rather than enduring the escalating costs of finding, transporting, feeding, clothing, and returning students thousands of miles to and from the reservations, why not place them in boarding schools on the reservation? In Jones' opinion, such an arrangement fit more reasonably within the goals of Indian education. In addition, reservation boarding schools could be similarly replaced in time with far less expensive day schools. Jones' vision called for a simplified and reorganized school system.²⁸

When he left office at the end of 1904, however, Jones had not succeeded in closing any of the government's more than two dozen off-reservation schools. On the other hand, he had begun a shift in where the majority of students were schooled; not surprisingly, reservation boarding schools showed the highest growth rates. It would only be a matter of time before more significant changes became apparent.²⁹

Francis Leupp succeeded Jones. A Progressive journalist, a one-time member of the Board of Indian Commissioners, and an agent of the Indian Rights Association, Leupp continued in the same tradition as Jones, advocating even bolder changes.³⁰ Indeed, according to Hoxie, with the appointment of Leupp, "the Indian office embarked on a comprehensive reorganization of its educational

programs."³¹ Those changes mirrored Leupp's opinion that Indians were intellectually feeble, culturally moribund, and best suited to menial jobs. Speaking to the National Education Association in 1907, the commissioner observed that "the Indian is an adult child [with] the physical attributes of the adult with the mentality of about our fourteen-year-old boy."³²

Agreeing with those who believed Indians hobbled by their race, Leupp advocated lowered standards and decreased involvement on the part of the federal government in areas such as education. There were, after all, limits to what might realistically be accomplished. "The Indian," he wrote, would "always remain an Indian." It was a mistake to "push him too rapidly into a new social order." For those who hoped that the commissioner might eventually accept a more enlightened opinion of the Indian, Leupp observed in his first annual report that such optimism was usually unwarranted. "Nothing is gained," he said, "by trying to undo nature's work and do it over."³³ The optimism of Thomas J. Morgan went into total eclipse.

Like Jones, Leupp focused his attack on boarding schools. Calling for "a marked change in the Indian educational establishment, always in the direction of greater simplicity and a more logical fitness to the end for which it was designed," the commissioner endorsed enlarging the day school system and opposed any increase in boarding schools.³⁴ His reasons were clear. In the first place, such a move would save money. Like Jones, Leupp considered the cost of educating students at off-reservation schools to be exorbitant. "We spend on these now nearly \$2,000,000 a year, which is taken bodily out of the United States Treasury and is, in my judgement . . . a mere robbery of the taxladen Peter to pay the non-

taxladen Paul and train him in false, undemocratic, and demoralizing ideas. The same money . . . would have accomplished a hundredfold more good, unaccompanied by any of the harmful effects upon the character of the race." On average, he continued, the government spent between \$167 and \$250 per student. In day schools, by contrast, the sum was between \$36 and \$67 per student. Accepting an average of \$50, Leupp argued that day schools could accomplish the same work as boarding schools at one-fourth or one-fifth the cost.³⁵

Leupp voiced other concerns about the Indian schools. Chiefly he worried about how to justify them. Two issues bothered him. First was the fear that schools were not engaged in practical work. Calling them "simply educational almshouses" and a "well-meant folly," the commissioner argued in 1907 that the schools were unrealistic:

The pupil grows up amid surroundings which he will never see duplicated in his own house. Steam heating, electric lighting, mechanical devices for doing everything — these cultivate in him a contempt for the homely things which must make up his environment as a poor settler in a frontier country. His ideas of the relations of things are distorted; for his mind is not developed enough to sift . . . between the comforts which are within his reach and the luxuries which are beyond his legitimate aspirations.

The schools indulged Indian children so badly that in the end they fell prey to "an ignoble willingness to accept unearned privileges." Agreeing with Estelle Reel, Leupp sided with those who advocated limited curricula. He accepted a gloomy view of Indians and believed that attempting to elevate them beyond their natural place was wrong. To attempt it meant teaching "false, undemocratic, and demoralizing ideas."³⁶

Second, the commissioner agreed with others who maintained that separate schools for Indians were becoming increasingly difficult to justify. Social scientists and education experts had already begun to question the ability of the so-called backward races to assimilate; it was not long before the institution most responsible for causing that transformation came under assault itself. Some of the critics were very influential. Herbert Welsh, for example, supported Carlisle and Hampton, but wrote in 1902 that the Indian race was "distinctly feebler, more juvenile than ours." The principal of Hampton said in 1900 that "Indians [are] people of the child races. . . . I believe we should teach them to labor in order that they may be brought to manhood." In 1892 the journal of the American Academy of Social and Political Sciences added that "There is a wide gulf between the civilization of the Indian and that of the white race . . . the two races may not be placed in the same category."³⁷ Reminding his listeners that the government was not then engaged in providing separate educational facilities for other minorities, House Indian Affairs Committee Chairman John Stevens thundered that in the South, "4,000,000 Negroes (who were as much wards of the government as the Indians are now) [were] turned loose . . . without one red cent being appropriated by Congress. . . . Likewise, why should not the red man be cared for in the States where they live?" Leupp echoed this by asking "Where else does the United States Government maintain special race lines in education?" This reflected what Hoxie says was a determination to build "permanent, segregated, inferior schools in the Indians' own communities," a decision that "would be more fitting than a continuation of the evangelical policies of the 1880s."³⁸

In his attempts to close off-reservation boarding schools and to limit

educational opportunities on the reservation, he revealed not only an ambivalent attitude toward Indian education, but also a similarly uncertain position on where non-white peoples belonged in American society. Any man who could argue that Booker T. Washington had been successful because "the black man [was] to him a black man, and not merely a white man colored black," could hardly be counted on to endorse a school system that operated on the premise that education would change Indians completely into models of white America.³⁹

In mid-June 1909, Leupp left the commissioner's office, giving it to his hand-picked successor, Robert G. Valentine. For the next four years, the trends set in motion by Jones and Leupp continued apace. Described by Prucha as "a solid Progressive, committed to economy and efficiency," Valentine enthusiastically embraced Leupp's plans and pushed for further reductions in education. Writing in his first annual report in 1910, Valentine observed that, with the exception of the Apaches and Navajos who lacked even the most basic schools, "there will probably be no further need of new boarding schools." Moreover, he continued, those still in operation could finally be put out of service as public schools enrolled more and more Indian children. Calling the public schools "a definite means of prompting the assimilation of the Indians into American life," the commissioner called them the "final step" in both getting Indian youth into schools and the government out of the education business. Indeed, the record suggests significant success in the matter. In 1912, for instance, the commissioner's report showed 17,011 Indians in public schools; by 1914 the number had risen to 25,180.⁴⁰ Under Valentine the movement begun by Jones and continued by Leupp finally reached full speed. Schools like Rainy Mountain — remote, small,

serving fairly small numbers of children — were the most likely targets of this development. As budgets leveled off and philosophical changes emerged during the Progressive era, reservation boarding schools became increasingly imperiled.

Like his predecessors, Valentine also held a fairly pessimistic view of Indians and believed that their education ought to reflect a more realistic approach. He revealed his opinion in 1910 when he wrote that students at non-reservation schools would receive the "kind of training that will best fit [them] for the conditions prevailing at home."⁴¹ Far from liberating Indians from the reservation and preparing them for entry into the mainstream, schools now prepared them for a return to the community from which they had come. It was not at all what Pratt and Morgan and an earlier generation of reformers had intended.

In 1912, for example, Valentine observed that special attention was being given to instruction of young girls. "The home condition of the Indians is one of the most unsatisfactory features of the Indian problem. To affect this directly, the character and efficiency of the training given Indian girls must be improved." Barely a generation prior to this, W. N. Hailmann, former superintendent of Indian Education, had implored Indian parents to give him their children so that he could give them an education and this "the great emancipation." Now Valentine, Reel, and others wanted to keep Indian students on the reservation. "Every Indian, like every white man, is best fitted for some one thing," he wrote in 1912. "We are trying to find that thing."⁴² He had already settled on what that thing was; in 1911 Valentine himself wrote that "the whole policy of the Government concerning the Indian race may be described as an attempt to make

it function industrially in the civilization with which it is now surrounded." To this end, more emphasis was placed every year on "proper industrial education." Like Leupp, who appreciated "certain racial traits of the Indian, such as his lack of initiative [and] his hereditary lack of competition," Valentine recognized clear limitations. Improvement of a sort consistent with the acknowledged racial and cultural peculiarities of Indians had replaced the total transformation Pratt and Morgan had demanded.⁴³

The last of the Progressive-era commissioners of Indian Affairs, Cato Sells, took over in June of 1913 and served throughout Woodrow Wilson's administration. Typically with no prior experience or special knowledge of Indians, Sells, a Texas banker, did not move very far away from the policies of the previous administrations.⁴⁴ Sells announced in 1913 that although he intended to protect Indian rights to the extent that natives might "ultimately take their rightful place as self-supporting citizens of the Republic," his "fixed purpose [was] to bring about the speedy individualizing of the Indians." This he did by working to remove guardianship, to lower the barriers to competency certification, and to limit more sharply than ever the role of the Indian schools. "The aim of the Indian schools," he noted in 1915, "is not the perfect farmer or the perfect housewife, but the development of character and sufficient industrial efficiency . . . through instruction in the agricultural, mechanical, and domestic arts."⁴⁵ Again, the Indian Office viewed the work of the Indian schools through the lens of what was proper and possible for a race of limited means and abilities.

In 1916 Sells adopted a new course of study for Indian schools that divided the schools into three levels: primary, pre-vocational, and vocational. Primary

instruction began in the day schools where grades one through three met. Pre-vocational training began at the reservation boarding school and continued through the sixth grade. For the relatively few who then went on to off-reservation boarding schools, a more fully developed vocational program was available. "The course had been planned," wrote Sells, "with the vocational aim very clearly and positively dominant."⁴⁶

In 1918, Sells clarified the new course of study. In his annual report, he made the connection between education and race clear. "We must also take into account the development of those abilities with which he is peculiarly endowed and which have come to him as a racial heritage," Sells commented, including "religion, art, deftness of hand, and his sensitive, esthetic temperament." Those who understood the reality of the circumstances would no doubt appreciate the fact that the work of the Indian schools was "essentially practical rather than idealistic."⁴⁷

Sells drew attention to what he called certain "nonessentials" of the Indian schools. These included the study of geography, arithmetic, history, and physiology. "It is a savings of time and expense to leave them out," he wrote, and "thus make room for more practical and useful subjects." For example, in arithmetic such subjects as powers and roots, ratios, averages, approximations, divisibility, foreign money, metric system, partial payments, duodecimals, and stocks and bonds were eliminated from the course of study in Indian schools. By then, the Indian Office was openly rejecting the call to include subjects which were standard in public schools. Sells was moving toward a specialized curriculum that suited the needs of Indians and of the society that defined them as second-

class citizens. In unapologetic language, he noted that "the development of the all-around efficient citizen is the dominating feature." By eliminating "needless studies" and using "a natural system of instruction," Indians would conceivably be prepared for their "rightful place as self-supporting citizens of the Republic."⁴⁸

Three years later, in 1921, Sells' successor, Charles Burke, echoed that sentiment. Running the schools efficiently and in an orderly fashion was critical. For only then would Indian students get through "the dangerous transition period between the close of school and the time when they should fill worthy places in our social order."⁴⁹ The metamorphosis of the Indian schools seemed complete.

Taken collectively, the commissioners who served between Jones and Burke reflected a reordering of priorities that sounded the death knell of schools like Rainy Mountain. Jones' wish to close the off-reservation boarding schools in favor of reservation day schools was eventually replaced by a similar move to close reservation boarding schools as quickly as possible. Students would be shifted either to day schools or, whenever possible, to public schools. Citing the importance of efficiency and economy, Progressive-era policymakers approached education dispassionately. Failing to appreciate the role that Rainy Mountain School and schools like it played in Indian communities, the Indian Office pushed with increasing vigor to close such plants and either transfer students to public schools (policy that looked and sounded persuasive on paper but which in reality was largely a failure) or to let them shift for themselves. Indeed, Commissioner Jones noted in 1901 that students who had attended government school for six or seven years ought to be dismissed and sent out to make their way. After all, these students had "had fair opportunity to develop his or her characteristics."⁵⁰ In the

face of such thinking, the survival of the Indian school system seemed open to question. It did not, in fact, disappear, but it withered badly.

Against this changing interpretation of the Indian school system, Rainy Mountain School had little chance of survival. It comes as no surprise that the school's closing came in the midst of the events discussed above. Whether challenged on the basis of fiscal necessity, educational priority, or policy direction, the school could not survive. Even in the relatively hopeful years of the late nineteenth century Rainy Mountain had never been a very well run place. Now that policymakers had adopted a more limited view of assimilation, education came in for closer scrutiny. This meant that either the school would fall in line with the new wisdom of narrowly focused minimal standards of education for its students, or it would be closed. Either way the future looked unappealing.

Notes

1. Frederick Hoxie, *A Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate the Indians, 1880-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), especially chapters 1-3.

2. *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 1892, 5 (hereafter cited as *ARCIA*); *ARCIA*, 1920: 11. The best summary of the issues affecting Indian policy in this period is Fred Hoxie, *A Final Promise*. This is the only systematic assessment of the era. He argues that significant changes occurred after about 1900 that heralded a new, profoundly pessimistic mood in the Indian Office. For similar assessments see Brian Dippie, *The Vanishing American: White Attitudes and U.S. Indian Policy* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1982), especially 177-243; see also Curtis M. Hinsley, Jr., *Savages and Scientists: The Smithsonian Institution and the Development of American Anthropology, 1846-1910* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1981). Hoxie's thesis is not unchallenged. Paul Prucha disagrees and believes that elements of continuity were more dominant in the era than were elements of change. "Some social scientists," he writes, "preached a hierarchy of superior and inferior races; but the men who formulated federal Indian policy and programs did not accept such dogmas," *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians*, 2 vols. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), II, 761. I believe the weight of the evidence makes Hoxie's interpretation much more persuasive.

3. See Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 115-146 for a summary.

4. Lewis H. Morgan, *Ancient Society* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1877),
7. For treatments of Morgan see Robert Bieder, *Science Encounters the Indian: The Early Years of American Ethnology, 1820-1880* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986, chapter 6; Bernard J. Stern, *Lewis Henry Morgan: Social Evolutionist* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1931).

5. *Ibid.*, 426. As Hoxie points out, however, Morgan realized that the function of property in a capitalist, industrializing society could be problematic. Thus he favored gradual extension of allotment in voluntary form, *A Final Promise*, 260-261.

6. See Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 20-24. On Powell see William C. Darrah, *Powell of the Colorado* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951); Wallace Stegner, *Beyond the Hundredth Meridian: John Wesley Powell and the Second Opening of the West* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1954); Curtis Hinsley, Jr., "Anthropology as Science and Politics: The Dilemmas of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1879-1904," in Walter Goldschmidt, ed. *The Uses of Anthropology* (Washington D.C.: American Anthropological Association, 1979).

7. Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 24.

8. On Fletcher's career see Joan Mark, *A Stranger In Her Native Land: Alice Fletcher and the American Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988); Mark, *Four Anthropologists: An American Science in Its Early Years* (New York: Neale Watson Academic Publications, 1981), especially chapter 2; June Helm, ed., *Pioneers in American Anthropology* (Seattle: University of Seattle Press, 1966), 29-81. With

regard to Indian education Hoxie notes that Fletcher "cultivated congressmen, testified in support of larger appropriations . . . and organized VIP tours to the [Carlisle] campus," *A Final Promise*, 25.

9. "Indian Education and Civilization," Senate Executive Document no. 95, 48th Congress, 2nd session, serial 2264, 173.

10. Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 115-117; Dippie, *The Vanishing American*, 22-242.

11. See the works of Madison Grant, Daniel Brinton, W. J. McGee, William Ripley and others. Collectively they suggest an interpretation clearly at odds with that of the generation which had preceded them. See John S. Haller, *Outcasts from Evolution: Scientific Attitudes of Racial Inferiority, 1859-1900* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1971); Robert M. Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York: Knopf, 1978), 59-61; George W. Stocking, Jr., "American Social Scientists and Race Theory, 1890-1915," in Stocking, ed. *Race, Culture, and Evolution: Essays in the History of Anthropology* (New York: Free Press, 1968).

12. See Hoxie's comments on the role of the Boasians, *A Final Promise*, 134-143; Boas quoted in Dippie, *The Vanishing American*, 232; see also Jacob Gruber, "Ethnographic Salvage and the Shaping of Anthropology," *American Anthropologist* 72(December 1970): 1289-1299.

13. See Dippie, *The Vanishing American*, 199-221; Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 83-114. Hoxie's comments on the World's Fairs of the era are especially interesting. See also Richard Drinnon, *Facing West: The Metaphysics of Indian Hating and Empire*

Building (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1980). On Curtis consult Barbara Davis, *Edward S. Curtis: The Life and Times of A Shadow Catcher* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1983). On the popular imagery of the day, especially as it concerned Indians, see Richard Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth Century America* (New York: Atheneum, 1991); and William H. Goetzmann and William N. Goetzmann, *The West of the Imagination* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1986).

14. Fraser quoted in J. Walter McSpadden, *Famous Sculptors of America* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1924), 281. Since 1968 Fraser's sculpture has been housed and displayed at the National Cowboy Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma where it continues to impress visitors as a meaningful expression of the American Indian experience. For a discussion of other artists and their role in creating the vanishing race idea see Dippie, *The Vanishing American*, 199-222, also William N. Goetzmann and William H. Goetzmann, *The West of The Imagination* (New York: Knopf, 1966).

15. Theodore Roosevelt, *A Book Lover's Holidays in the Open* (New York: Charles Scribner, 1919), 74.

16. This assessment relies heavily on Hoxie's analysis in *A Final Promise*, 103-112, 245-252.

17. *Ibid.*, 238.

18. This study treats only education as an example of the changing values and priorities inside the Indian Office. Other issues, however, are equally good

barometers of the shift. In addition to assessing education, Hoxie, *A Final Promise* summarizes brilliantly the impact such change had on land policy, citizenship, politics, and public opinion. My analysis rests heavily on his. Other sources reveal similar trends. On land, see Janet McDonnell, *The Dispossession of the American Indian, 1887-1934* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991); J. P. Kinney, *A Continent Lost, A Civilization Won: Indian Land Tenure in America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1937); Leonard Carlson, *Indians, Bureaucrats, and Land: The Dawes Act and the Decline of Indian Farming* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1981); David M. Holford, "The Subversion of The Indian Land Allotment System, 1887-1934," *Indian Historian* 8(Spring 1975): 11-21. For conditions on the Kiowa-Comanche Reservation during the era see William Hagan, *United State-Comanche Relations: The Reservation Years* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990), 201-285.

Briefer assessments of the period include John Berens, "'Old Campaigners, New Realities': Indian Policy Reform in the Progressive Era, 1900-1912," *Mid-America* 59(January 1977), 51-64; Kenneth O'Reilly, "The Progressive Era and New American Indian Policy: The Gospel of Self-Support," *Journal of Historical Studies* 5(Fall 1981), 35-56; Randolph C. Downes, "A Crusade for Indian Reform, 1922-1934," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 32(December 1945), 331-354.

19. Prucha, *The Great Father*, II, 772. See also Prucha, "The Decline of the Christian Reformers," in Prucha, ed. *Indian Policy in the United States: Historical Essays* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1981), 252-262.

20. Roosevelt to Lyman Abbott, September 5, 1903, cited in Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 112.

21. *Report of the Board of Indian Commissioners*, in *ARCIA*, 1901: 4-5.
22. *ARCIA* 1908: 11; Prucha, *The Great Father*, II, 779-780.
23. See Hoxie, "Redefining Indian Education: Thomas J. Morgan's Program in Disarray," *Arizona and the West* 24(Spring 1982), 5-18.
24. Prucha, *The Great Father*, II, 826.
25. *ARCIA*, 1900: 14.
26. Reel's comments from *ARCIA*, 1901: 419-457, which contains a summary of the revised course of study. The entire report was published separately as *Course of Study for the Indian Schools of the United States, Industrial and Literary* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1901). The only scholarly assessment of Commissioner Jones is W. David Baird, "William A. Jones, 1897-1904," in Robert M. Kvasnicka and Herman J. Viola, eds., *The Commissioners of Indian Affairs, 1824-1977* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979), 211-220; Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 195-196.
27. *ARCIA*, 1901: 39.
28. *Ibid.*, 1902: 25-31. See Prucha's discussion in *The Great Father*, II, 816-819.
29. In his final annual report, Jones offered what Prucha calls "a very rosy picture of accomplishments and of Indian potential," see *ARCIA*, 1904: 39-49.
30. On Leupp consult Don Parman, "Francis Ellington Leupp, 1905-1909," in

Kvasnicka, *Commissioners of Indian Affairs*, 221-232; Nicah Furman, "Seedtime For Indian Reform: An Evaluation of the Administration of Commissioner Francis Ellington Leupp," *Red River Valley Historical Review* 2(Winter 1975), 495-517. See also Leupp's memoir, *The Indian and His Problem* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910); Prucha has a useful summary in *The Great Father*, II, 766-769.

31. Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 198.

32. Leupp, "Indians and Their Education," *Proceedings of the National Education Association*, 1907, cited in Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 198. See *ibid.*, for a summary of Leupp's administration.

33. *ARCIA*, 1905: 8-9.

34. *Ibid.*, 1907: 21.

35. *Ibid.*, 1907: 24, 27.

36. *Ibid.*, 20-26.

37. Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 192.

38. Stevens quoted in *Congressional Record*, 58-3, 1147, cited in Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 191-192; *ARCIA*, 1907: 24.

39. Leupp, "Why Booker T. Washington Succeeded in His Lifework," *Outlook*, 31 May 1902, 327. For a discussion of the impact on education of what Hoxie calls "racial pessimism," see Donald Spivey, *Schooling For the New Slavery: Black Industrial Education, 1868-1915* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1978); Hoxie, *A Final Promise*,

191-194, 198.

40. *ARCLIA* 1910: 14-15; *ibid.*, 1912: 181-193; *ibid.*, 1914: 136. See Prucha's discussion, *The Great Father*, II, 823-835.

41. *ARCLIA*, 1910: 16.

42. *Ibid.*, 1912: 38, 41.

43. *Ibid.*, 1911: 29. Leupp quoted in Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 202.

44. For a summary of Sells see Lawrence C. Kelly, "Cato Sells, 1913-1921," in Kvasnicka, *Commissioners of Indian Affairs*, 243-250.

45. *ARCLIA*, 1915: 4-5; Prucha, *The Great Father*, II, 829-830.

46. For a discussion of the 1916 plan see *ARCLIA*, 1916: 8-22; see also Prucha, *The Great Father*, II, 829-832.

47. *ARCLIA*, 1918: 20, 26.

48. *Ibid.*, 20-21.

49. *Ibid.*, 1921: 5.

50. Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 196.

CHAPTER VII

DECLINING FORTUNES

As the changes of the Progressive era became more fully felt, their effect on education began to filter out through the entire Indian school system. Targets like Carlisle, which required large sums to operate, were obviously affected by the narrowing educational approach of the Progressive era. Moreover, Pratt had made his share of political and ideological enemies. On more than one count, he and his supporters could therefore expect to see their work challenged. Before the 1930s had passed, most of the large off-reservation boarding schools were shut down. Those that survived became little more than vocational training centers that reflected local politics rather than concerns for Indians. But by shifting its attention from the large off-reservation institution to reservation schools, the Indian Office began a process that resulted in reducing other types of schools as well. Caught in the bureau's drive to produce a more efficient, streamlined operation, schools like Rainy Mountain proved easy to close. Because it was relatively small and chronically troubled the school could be safely targeted for closing. With public school facilities within short distance of most of its students, and with three other boarding schools serving the same Indian community, the Indian Office could martial a strong case for ending Rainy Mountain's service.

For those who had followed the school's history, the events that brought on its closing were not wholly unanticipated. Indeed, considering the struggle required from the very beginning simply to maintain some semblance of order, it is a surprise that the plant was not closed earlier. By the second decade of the twentieth century, events began to occur that proved fatal to the school's existence. For its last ten years, the institution continued to educate Kiowa children; it did so, however, against an ever-increasing tide of troubles.

Serious problems began to appear after 1905 when a series of official reports and inspections revealed troubling circumstances in virtually every aspect of the school's life. As she had done for much of her tenure as the school's principal, Cora Dunn shouldered the burden as well as she could and tried to lead the school out of its troubles. By 1909, however, a series of poor evaluations ended her career as well as her husband's. Her forced resignation late in the year marked a turning point in the school's administration. Rainy Mountain would never have another administrator like her; in her absence much of what had made the place a success seemed to be lost. Replaced by a series of well-intentioned but ill-supported successors, the school literally began to fall to pieces. Within a year the first serious attempt to close the school was made. From then until its closing in September 1920, a series of crises kept the school's future in doubt. Rainy Mountain struggled in its last decade of service against ever-mounting pressures.

The warning signs had never been far from the surface. Isolation, lack of funds, high employee turnover, and extraordinarily difficult circumstances characterized the school's predicament for almost its entire history. Dunn and her

staff attempted to make the best of the situation, but by the first years of the twentieth century, the tide turned against them. Indications of what was coming appeared in 1909, when two major inspections occurred. The first, in April, reported that under the circumstances the school seemed to be functioning as well as could be expected. Special Agent C. L. Ellis wrote during his brief stay that "the several departments . . . seemed to be run in an efficient and orderly manner." With the exception of badly overcrowded sleeping arrangements, blamed on the chronic lack of space, all seemed reasonably well. Ellis took special care to note that despite its difficult circumstances, the school had no trouble getting full enrollment. Indeed, unless accommodations were improved, he feared it would be "necessary to reduce attendance. . . . There is no difficulty in keeping up the present attendance from the surrounding scholastic population."¹ Except for the usual problems typical of most reservation boarding schools, Ellis found little out of order. It was a charitable report, but not an entirely accurate one.

Only months later a second inspection contained a decidedly different assessment of the school's health and of Cora Dunn's fitness to continue as principal. In early July 1909, Commissioner Robert Valentine wrote to Kiowa-Comanche Agent Ernest Stecker to inform him that a recent inspection of the Rainy Mountain plant by a Special Agent McConihe revealed evidence of serious shortcomings, including uncomplimentary and troubling opinions of Dunn's performance. The report proved to be the undoing of her career as principal at Rainy Mountain.² Although McConihe found some aspects of the school's operation tolerably run, on balance most of what he saw struck him as below

standard and even dangerously deficient. What little good he found was restricted almost entirely to the girls' dormitory, which he judged cramped but otherwise neat. Like Ellis, McConihe described sleeping arrangements that were uncomfortably crowded and in violation of standards. Classrooms were likewise cramped and suffered from poor facilities and enormously large classes. It was bad enough, he noted, that the school's blackboards were "miserable affairs . . . and a menace to the eyesight of the pupils." That problem, however, paled in comparison to the fact that a single teacher was responsible for 110 pupils spread through three grades, all meeting at the same time and in the same room. Even by Rainy Mountain standards, this was judged "too great a task for one teacher."³

Turning his attention to the boys' dormitory and other areas of the school, McConihe reported a litany of problems. He found further evidence that "this school is badly overcrowded and that children are being compelled to bear with discomforts entirely unnecessary," including doubling up in single beds. Worse, sanitation was being virtually ignored. Although the health of the students was good at present, McConihe warned that "it would not take much to start an epidemic here under the present conditions." In a school where "lung trouble" and trachoma were often out of control, this was unacceptable.⁴

The general appearance of the boys building was bad. "Dirt and disorder abounded. . . . The linen rooms were in much confusion. . . . Closets [were] strongly impregnated with impurities." Floors were "very dirty," and McConihe was so overwhelmed by the wash room that he considered it a menace to health: "I pronounce [it] as filthy. Towels have been up for five days [a well-known source of trachoma] and most were as muddy as though the boys had wiped their

shoes with them, others were too soiled to be used on the face." Employees set a poor example, too. McConihe judged most of their living quarters as "keeping with the rest of the building showing an utter lack of cleanliness and tidiness."⁵

As he surveyed the rest of the campus, McConihe found and reported conditions that suggested a poorly run and inefficiently administered school. (Of course, he was reporting on the cumulative effects of nearly two decades of neglect and shortcuts on the part of the Indian Office. His report made no mention of the school's somewhat difficult history.) He judged the study room "the most unattractive . . . I have ever seen," and wrote that dust and dirt were to be seen "on all sides." The outdoor privies, long a problem and an embarrassment to Cora Dunn, were "in a frightful condition." McConihe ordered they be hauled off, burned and new ones constructed in their place. The store house for the school's oil and other flammable supplies failed to meet standards; Dunn was directed to submit an estimate for a new building in which to store such materials. Due to limited classroom space, the commissary building, including the dining hall, had been pressed into service. As a result, it was overcrowded and poorly organized. Supplies were stored improperly where "mice and other vermin have a good opportunity to attack" them. McConihe concluded that a great deal of waste and deterioration probably occurred. Commissioner Valentine added a new storage facility to the growing list of corrective measures for the school.⁶

The school's agricultural and industrial areas also came under McConihe's withering scrutiny and like so much of the rest of the campus, they were found to be wanting. The horse barn was "in a filthy condition and the extreme disorder clearly indicated to me that the person in charge of this work was not fitted to

instruct boys in industrial work and the example set for them tended to be wasteful and careless." Addressing Alfred Dunn's failure as the industrial teacher, McConihe was:

thoroughly convinced that Mr. Dunn is not giving as much attention to the affairs of the school as he should and that he has other interests in the neighborhood that are taking up some of his time. I was told that he is interested in hog raising and has a small place near the school where he has some hogs. He told me that one time he took some of the school hogs to his place because there was not sufficient feed for them at the school.⁷

Dunn's admission about the hogs only reinforced McConihe's low opinion of him and his program. Commissioner Valentine added his own remarks concerning Dunn's actions. "Such gross neglect as is evidenced," he wrote, "deserves severe censure." Agent Stecker was instructed to bring this to Dunn's attention and to ensure that the situation was remedied immediately.

Other things caught McConihe's eye as well. Meals he judged to be amply prepared and varied. Milk and butter, however, were "two things unknown to the children." Of course, Cora Dunn had complained of this before. McConihe reported that the school had only three milk cows, two of which were very nearly dry. Further, he discovered that what little milk there was went to the cook, who used it for feeding sick pupils. The balance (by which McConihe implied the majority) went to the Dunns for their personal use. Justifying the practice on the grounds that he and other employees were paying for the feed, Alfred Dunn said that Agent Stecker knew and approved of what was going on. Incensed, McConihe angrily reported that although there was not enough milk for pupils to use in their morning coffee, "the employees have taken what few cows there were for their own use."⁸ Nothing, it seemed, ran according to government standards.

When he turned his attention to the school's staff and administration, McConihe reported that in those areas, too, there were serious problems. Having already noted the overcrowded conditions in the classrooms, and by implication the teaching problems associated with them, McConihe wrote that the employees rarely met to discuss matters of curriculum. "I asked the employees when they had their meetings to discuss the affairs of the school and to make suggestions for its betterment. None had been held I was told." Worse, when he inquired after Cora Dunn's attention to administrative details, employees apparently informed McConihe that general inspections by her "were rarely made." Moreover, when asked if she came around very often to oversee or inspect class work, one teacher replied that the principal had visited her class only once. The impression overall was that the school lacked any substantive direction, was hobbled by inattention to important details, and generally seemed deficient in many ways. Indeed, wrote McConihe, "there was on every hand the appearance of a lack of system and no head."⁹

In his concluding remarks, McConihe spoke directly to what he believed was the source of the school's ills:

I am constrained to believe that the interests of the Service would be better served by causing a change in both the positions of the Principal Teacher and the Industrial Teacher. I do not believe that the head of this institution should be filled by a woman and have as one of her subordinates her husband. . . . I am thoroughly convinced that Mr. Dunn is not giving as much attention to the affairs of the school as he should and that he has other interests in the neighborhood that are taking up some of his time. . . . I do not believe that Mrs. Dunn has given such attention to her work and her duties as her position demands. From the conditions existing in the boys' dormitory and building it is very evident that she has been very lax. This plant needs new blood at its head, a man to build it up and put it on a basis where it will go ahead and show something from its resources. It is

essentially a man's job, and a man, too, that has had some experience. . . . The other employees are doing the best they know how but they need more supervision and encouragement than I think they are at present receiving. I respectfully recommend the transfer of both Mrs. and Mr. Dunn to other positions elsewhere.¹⁰

McConihe's report had an immediate effect. Although no knowledgeable person at the Kiowa Agency could have been surprised by many of the report's conclusions, its tone was markedly different from previous inspections. The Indian Office seemed to be losing patience with the place, and Commissioner Valentine's letters to Agent Stecker about the matter lectured the agent in no uncertain terms. In early September, Stecker replied to Valentine's July letter.¹¹ In a point-by-point response, he informed the commissioner of changes being instituted at the school. Among other things, Stecker promised that "proper care and attention" would be paid to neatness and health. Privvies would be destroyed and a requisition submitted for construction of new ones. Likewise, an estimate was forwarded for consideration with regard to a new oil house. The barn was receiving close attention. The "milk question" was thoroughly understood. Fire drills would be regularly practiced. McConihe had reported that fire drills were virtually unknown. When he attempted to turn the water on at one fire plug, he could not do so. "It appeared to be rusted," he wrote.¹²

Now that the school's poor condition had been frankly admitted by all concerned, Stecker asked for a new school building and employee living quarters. He pleaded his case by telling Sells that "they are required to complete this plant." He referred to the more well-kept Fort Sill and Riverside schools and requested that a building similar to the ones there be erected as soon as possible at Rainy Mountain.¹³

He also reported that "the Principal's attention was promptly called to the shortcomings of this school and a copy of this letter was furnished Mrs. Dunn with such instructions as were deemed necessary under the circumstances." Probably hoping to show the commissioner that changes had already begun, Stecker reported that Alfred Dunn had resigned. Cora Dunn would remain for the coming year.¹⁴

In fact, Cora Dunn stayed only through the first of the year before retiring from the service. On December 18, 1909, she tendered her resignation to the Indian Office and requested that it take effect February 28, 1910. James H. McGregor arrived at the school on March 1, 1910, to assume duties as principal and Cora Dunn joined her husband in retirement.¹⁵ It had been a remarkable era. For nearly fifteen years she had guided the school through a calamitous, troubled existence. Her letters and official reports reveal a woman devoted to the children and determined to put them on the road to what she believed was a better life. For much of her tenure, however, the galling realities of the place taxed her and, in the end, overwhelmed her. Caught between the demands for efficiency and order that came from the Indian Office, and the very difficult circumstances that characterized Rainy Mountain School, Cora Dunn made the place as liveable as she could. As she departed in the winter of 1910, Dunn left a school that had begun as, and remained, a beleaguered haven. Nonetheless, it had been a better place for her presence.

With Cora Dunn's departure, the Indian Office hoped for a fresh start at the school. Unfortunately, this was not to be the case. In fact, the school's troubles only increased. Principals who followed Dunn each inherited a situation

that did not improve much over the next decade. Despite some important changes, and attempts to strengthen the school's overall operation, Rainy Mountain remained in poor circumstances. Combined with the momentum of the era to scale back Indian education and to economize where ever possible, officials seriously considered the idea of ending the school's service. Official reports and evaluations over the next ten years revealed a strained relationship between the school, the agency, and the Indian bureau that ultimately Rainy Mountain.

In fact, the school's future was so shaky that an immediate attempt to close it came in the wake of the McConihe report. Sometime during the early spring of 1910, someone inside the educational division of the Indian Office suggested that the government close Rainy Mountain. The source of the suggestion is not entirely clear, but there is evidence that Stecker himself initiated the discussion. On May 4, 1910, Supervisor of Schools H. B. Pairs wrote to Valentine to acknowledge a recent letter from the commissioner's office relative to the closing of Rainy Mountain. "I am of the opinion that it would be well to act favorably upon the recommendations," wrote Pairs, "provided of course that the Rainy Mountain School can be disposed of in a satisfactory manner."¹⁶ On May 16 Valentine responded that the office had the matter under consideration but could not move on it until Congress enacted legislation. In fact, J. H. Dortch, chief of the educational division, had already issued a memorandum to the appropriate House and Senate committees for such action. "The office wishes to see Rainy Mountain Boarding School closed," he wrote, and intended to "apply the proceeds to the enlargement and improvement of the Fort Sill School. . . . A proposed draft of a bill for the sale of the plant is submitted for your consideration."¹⁷ By the

end of May the proposal was before committees in both houses of Congress. In the House, the draft of the bill justified the closing by noting that the Fort Sill School was suitably located to take in the Kiowa students and that "in the interest of economy and good administration the future maintenance of the Ft. Sill School in lieu of the two schools as at present conducted is deemed advisable."

Moreover, should the Indian Office decide to keep Rainy Mountain in operation, "various expenditures will be required for repairs and for the construction of several new buildings." For an Indian Office in an economizing mood, the availability of the Fort Sill School and the admitted need for costly repairs were persuasive elements in the move to close Rainy Mountain.¹⁸

In the Senate similar action occurred. On May 25 a bill to authorize the sale of the school was introduced and referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs. It authorized the Secretary of the Interior to appraise and sell "the lands, buildings, and appurtenances known as Rainy Mountain Boarding School" and to use the proceeds for the construction of new buildings and for repairs and improvements at the Fort Sill School.¹⁹

News of the action in Washington did not reach Stecker at the Kiowa-Comanche until late August. In a letter to the commissioner dated August 24, he informed Valentine that Special Agent Edgar A. Allen had told him only that day of the developments. "As this was the first information I have received since I recommended the disposition of said school to Mr. Allen, I respectfully request . . . a copy of the bill . . . in order to keep in touch with all matters pertaining to schools under my supervision."²⁰ It took Dortch nearly a month to respond to Stecker's request. On September 23 he sent Stecker a copy of the Senate bill and

reported that it was still before the Committee on Indian Affairs.²¹

And then the matter was dropped; the bills died in committee. No effort being made to revive them, Rainy Mountain survived to start the 1910 school year. By any measurement, it had been a curious spring and summer. The Indian Office appeared intent on pushing the matter through but did not bother to contact the Kiowa agency personnel until late that summer. And only after Stecker requested it did the Office send him a copy of the Senate bill. Moreover, by the time Dortch's letter and the copy of the bill reached Stecker, opening day had nearly arrived. The surviving correspondence does not indicate that any plans were discussed to effect the transfer of Rainy Mountain students to Fort Sill or Riverside. Nor is there any evidence that officials at those schools were consulted about the matter.

For an Indian Office so openly concerned about efficiency and economy, this was poor planning indeed. The letters from Stecker to Washington, and vice-versa, showed no sense of urgency, no compulsion to solve the matter quickly. One comes away from a reading of the documents convinced that those involved in the discussions, especially in positions of high authority, were not very concerned about what was happening. Although the correspondence never explicitly says so, there is a clear sense that whatever happened to Rainy Mountain during that spring and summer, it was not worth much worry. Rainy Mountain was already beginning to slip into the twilight.

Having averted the attempted closing of the school, McGregor and Stecker still faced the considerable task of putting Rainy Mountain in order. McConihe's report of June 1909 and its litany of violations and substandard conditions

required McGregor to make significant changes and improvements. As always, however, he had to do so with limited funds and with the knowledge that things probably would not get much better. Nonetheless, McGregor took over a school that sorely needed strengthening. He ran a much more organized school than his predecessor, and there was a fair amount of administrative housecleaning, especially personnel changes. If he lacked the almost parental love that Cora Dunn had shown for the place, he countered with a rigorous improvement program that attacked weaknesses in the school's various departments and programs.

As to McConihe's numerous complaints about cleanliness, hygiene, and safety, McGregor responded by initiating a full review of the school's operation. He coupled this with a personal request for extensive repairs and additions to the school that he detailed in a letter to Stecker in April 1910 for the fiscal year 1911.²² It is a revealing list for it suggests that the physical condition of the school was quite poor. Knowing that Cora Dunn had fought every year for appropriations to remedy similar problems is a reminder that the physical state of Rainy Mountain had not been a priority with the agency or Washington at any point in its first two decades of life. Now McGregor faced the same continuing battle. He listed repairs to existing buildings as a top need. "The buildings are in need of much repair," he wrote to Stecker. "Both dormitories are defaced very badly. Sixty-eight window panes in one dormitory and fifty-six in the other were broken when I came." All of the walkways needed repair, and the sewer, water, and lighting systems required extensive improvements. The boys' dormitory, for example, was still without a modern lighting system of any kind.²³

Most pressing was the need for a new building and an improved water system, problems as old as the school itself. The two main dormitories had served since the turn of the century as combination dorm, classroom, employee quarters, lecture hall, and meeting room. Both buildings were chronically overcrowded and suffered because of it. With living conditions such as they were, and with poorly functioning or non-existent necessities like modern toilets and lights as the norm, conditions had become strained. To Agent McConihe's estimate of needs for the school, McGregor added \$10,000 for a new classroom building. In addition to the new building, McGregor asked for employee quarters, something the school had never had. The custom at Rainy Mountain was for staff to live in the dorms or to take up residence in the various buildings across campus. Hoping to provide a more comfortable and professional environment, McGregor requested private quarters for his staff. Doing so would not only alleviate a pressing concern but would also free more room in the dorms for students. "This would bring the capacity of the school up to 150 pupils," he noted, which was its approved size.²⁴

McGregor got his walks repaired and the window panes replaced, but he did not get a new building. Nor did the Indian Office allocate funds to repair or renovate the other main buildings to his satisfaction. Like Dunn, he was learning to live with limited assistance. McGregor found it difficult even to keep the plant simply in working order. In October 1910, for example, he informed Stecker that despite repeated requests for repairs to the water system, the situation was once again becoming desperate. A drought only made matters worse, and McGregor was forced to write that "the water supply at this school is almost exhausted." He was making preparations to haul water from a spring three miles distant. The

school was thus without fire protection — to say nothing of the inconvenience for washing, cooking, and bathing — and "the water pressure amounts to nothing."²⁵

In the fall of 1910, another official inspection (most schools received two or three such visits a year) revealed that the school was still failing to meet health and hygiene standards.²⁶ Of course, with such a poorly functioning water system, this came as no surprise. Referring to a report filed the previous April, the Indian Office inquired as to whether or not sufficient bedding had been procured to alleviate the crowded sleeping conditions in the dormitories. The office could not promise to assist the agency in paying for such goods but commented that a report was necessary "in order that it may be determined whether or not it will be possible or advisable to make the expenditure at the present time." Fire extinguishers had been authorized, finally, but the office wanted to know if they had in fact arrived. In reply, McGregor wrote that the school needed "60 beds, 60 mattresses and 180 blankets. The estimated cost of this is \$1,000.00. The beds and mattresses now in use are old and badly worn . . . [and] . . . unsanitary."²⁷ He promised to maintain higher standards of cleanliness and noted that new towel racks had been installed, complete with numbers corresponding to those put in students' clothing. Finally, fire extinguishers had actually arrived. He could not get a new building, employee quarters, more staff, or repairs to the water system. But he could get towel racks with personalized numbers above them. It was a troubling comment on the lack of support rendered by the government.

Matters did not improve as McGregor's term unfolded. In his estimate of needs for fiscal 1912, he once again reported that numerous repairs and major renovations were still urgent.²⁸ Under repairs he listed five major building (both

of the dorms, dining room and kitchen, barn, and laundry) and asked for \$1,100 for work that he characterized as "absolutely necessary." Again he asked for a new school building (but lowered the sum from \$10,000 of a year earlier to \$7,000) and employees' quarters, saying that "present building permits care of about only one-half of scholastic population. . . . School has no employee quarters. Necessary for employees take rooms in school building." Continuing, McGregor noted that repairs to the water and sewer systems were "urgently needed," and that the "school urgently needs installation of a new [lighting] system." As if those were not enough, he concluded that the telephone line "was urgently in need of repair." All told he listed "urgent needs" at \$16,360. "Absolute necessities" were less - only \$1,960.64. Thus, for repairs and urgently needed additions, the school required not less than \$18,820.64. Of course, McGregor knew that he would most likely get little if any of what he requested. The previous year, for example, he had made requests of \$875; the Indian Office appropriated only \$200.

By now McGregor's correspondence to Stecker and the Indian Office had taken on an air of increasing frustration and irritation. Criticized by inspectors for failing to meet standards, he discovered that appropriations never covered the school's barest needs. What he considered basic necessities — new water systems, lighting, and improved facilities — were reduced or ignored by his superiors. Forced to cobble together his own solutions, reliant on limited funds, faced with an openly indifferent or, at best, an unsympathetic Indian Office, McGregor continued as best he could to make the place work.

In March 1913, however, he and Stecker once again found themselves answering to Washington for the school's recurring problems. The commissioner's

office refused to approve McGregor's repeated requests for repair funds and had the temerity to inform him that "the water system at the school must be improved. . . . Toilets cannot be used, the children are not properly bathed, and the laundry is hampered by this lack of water." But a plan submitted by the bureau's supervisor of engineering contained details for a major renovation of the water and sewer system. McGregor endorsed it. Unfortunately, the estimated cost was \$1,800. The entire repair budget for the school being only \$600, the office requested that McGregor postpone his estimate for general repairs "until it is known what action the Indian Office will take in the matter of supplying funds for the water system." If the funds available proved insufficient, a final remedy presented itself. Fifty of the school's ninety-four dairy cattle might be sold at \$30.00 per head, producing \$1,500. Combined with the anticipated \$600 from the office, this would cover the cost of a new water system. "The cattle are valuable . . . and should not be disposed of," noted the Office, "but water is a greater need and must be supplied."²⁹ The plan never gained authorization; three years later, his successor was still asking for a new water system.

A second letter from the Indian Office to Stecker in March 1913 mentioned the issues again. "A new school building is one of the very urgent needs of the school," wrote the commissioner's office. "The present arrangement is entirely unsatisfactory. . . . A school building containing three classrooms each . . . an assembly room with a capacity for seating 200 people, two small rooms to be used for employees quarters and two toilet rooms [are] what should be considered." The employee mess building was "in very bad condition," the laundry building needed repairs, and an electric lighting system was recommended.

Despite the undoubted necessity for the light system, the clerk writing to Stecker admitted that he was "quite confident the Indian Office will not allow" it.

Attention was brought to an acetylene system at the Kaw School that was not in use; Stecker was directed to make inquiries about obtaining it.³⁰

The matter of a reliable water supply was an especially serious one; its absence meant that in addition to the inconvenience of hauling water and enduring primitive latrines, the school also lived with diseases caused by unsanitary conditions. It is with regard to this circumstance that the indifference of the Indian Office is most clearly revealed. By far the most dreadful of the consequences of Rainy Mountain's water and sewer problems was the high instance of trachoma, a malady of the eye, which if untreated leads to irrevocable blindness. It was known colloquially as "sore eye disease." Caused usually by unsanitary conditions, especially dirty water, the disease caused acute pain in the eyes when subjected to light. In severe cases, the lids fused shut as a result of secretions in the eye. Those who came down with it were usually confined to darkened rooms.

Coincidence would have it that as McGregor began his term at Rainy Mountain, the school suffered a prolonged period of trachoma that was directly and indisputably linked to the poor level of hygiene among students. For any who doubted the cost of neglecting basic necessities such as modernized water and sewer systems, the situation at Rainy Mountain was a sobering reminder.

At the time of his appointment McGregor inherited a school whose facilities were in shockingly poor repair and whose students suffered from trachoma at unheard of rates. In April 1912, for example, the temporary

physician assigned to the school reported that seventy-nine of 147 students suffered from the disease; 10 percent of them were so badly afflicted that they required operations.³¹ The following December, McGregor advised Stecker that sanitary drinking fountains had been installed and that new vaults were under construction for the outdoor toilets. Lime and carbolic acid in liberal amounts would help to keep the pits from breeding disease. But the continuing battle to secure clean water for bathing and washing remained. "It is hoped," wrote McGregor, "that the Office will take IMMEDIATE action and provide funds for constructing an auxiliary water supply until more water can be procured . . . three small boys must be bathed in the same bath water and then only every other week. I am aware that this is a bad thing to do." Of course, the situation could be helped by the appointment of a regular physician. "It would enable us to fight the trachoma scourge systematically," noted McGregor. This was especially true in light of the fact that the school was more than thirty miles from the agency physician at Anadarko.³²

No significant improvement or repairs to the water system were provided over the course of the next few years. The medical situation declined accordingly. In mid-April 1913, McGregor wrote angrily to Stecker and lectured the agent concerning the government's negligence. Having requested a trachoma specialist months earlier, McGregor reminded Stecker that the request had been held in abeyance; thus McGregor curtly requested Stecker to inform Washington of the prevalence of trachoma at the school. He also took the chance to lecture the agent himself concerning conditions at the school. Of the two specialists sent to Rainy Mountain in the preceding two years, "one of them stayed six days and

rushed away. . . . Another stayed, by urging, three days." McGregor was especially peeved at the agent's apparent disregard for the school's circumstances. "It seems to me that the fact that Rainy Mountain is isolated . . . does not lessen the obligations of the Indian Office. I have taken the trouble to note that the specialists and other visiting officials from the Indian Office spend much longer periods at other schools." McGregor went on to remind Stecker that he had submitted plans months before for a new water system but had been told, as usual, that funds were not available. "The statement that no more funds are available does not satisfy me when I read of an Agency here and there being furnished an automobile." Anxious to find a remedy, McGregor requested authority to begin work himself on a new water system, and he implored Stecker to appoint a physician to the school.³³

When Washington curtly informed Stecker and McGregor several days later that funds for new water system were not available, McGregor flew into a rage.³⁴ It was difficult to understand how such a decision could be made, wrote McGregor, especially in light of all of the information in the hands of the office. "I must, in duty to a deplorable condition and suffering children," he wrote, "request the Office . . . to reconsider. . . . Surely the Indian Office will not allow [these] conditions to longer exist." Rainy Mountain had the highest trachoma rates in the Indian schools, its students were bathed irregularly, clothes were not properly washed and rinsed, and the school had no fire protection. "Is it not time," pleaded McGregor, "that relief be furnished Rainy Mountain School?"³⁵

Apparently McGregor's wrath had some effect. In December 1913 authorization was made to provide the services of a regular physician at the

school. However the doctor would not receive the standard salary of \$1200 per year but only \$500 per year.³⁶ In the meantime the school held special meetings devoted to eradicating disease. In early December 1913, for example, "Tuberculosis Day" featured a discussion titled "Our Efforts, Handicap, and Results along Hygienic and Sanitary Lines at Rainy Mountain School." After opening comments by McGregor, students from the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades read compositions about health. A series of five-minute talks by staff members followed on topics ranging from work and exercise to "Danger of Dust and How to Avoid It." The agency physician came next with a thirty-minute talk on the prevention of tuberculosis. A rousing finale was delivered by William B. Freer, who addressed "The Dangerous Fly."³⁷

How much good this did is not clear. It surely did not solve the problems and disease continued. In the same month that "Tuberculosis Day" was held, a visiting inspector recommended that a specialist be sent to the school as soon as possible to begin "a campaign against trachoma. Reportedly 98% pupils affected."³⁸ McGregor reported in late January 1914 that Dr. B. A. Warren had achieved good results in treating cases of trachoma at the school. Many cases were so advanced, however, that the assistance of another doctor or trained specialist (or both) was advised. "I wish to add that this school has the highest per cent of trachoma of any Indian school in the United States," wrote McGregor. Given the evidence, how could the Indian Office fail to provide another specialist?³⁹ The response was usually that of funds prevented it from doing so. There is no evidence in the surviving records that another physician or trained specialist was ever appointed.

Over the next several years the situation did not improve. Medical reports from 1916 and 1917 indicate rates of trachoma that can only be described as epidemic. From a student body of 168 in March 1916, an astonishing 163 were listed as infected with trachoma. In 1917 it was just as bad when 154 children were afflicted. In order for infected children to maintain some level of activity the school purchased thirty pairs of dark glasses. In the absence of a physician, and without a modernized water and sewer system, it was the best that could be done.⁴⁰ The expenditure of less than \$2000 on such a system would likely have solved the problem. In McGregor's opinion it was little enough to ask. In an Indian Office obsessively concerned with efficiency and economy, however, Rainy Mountain did not receive much attention. McGregor could not even get a new school building, how could he ever expect something as mundane as a new water system?

In addition to poor physical facilities, McGregor also faced a staff that was often only marginally talented. He discovered that turnover was rampant and that those hired as replacements were more likely than not the rejects or malcontents from other schools. In December 1912 a review of the employee corps produced an exceedingly poor evaluation, but one that was not untypical. Although four employees were ranked as excellent, eleven others were "not up to the standard of efficiency to accomplish the work that is required at an Indian school."

Reminding McGregor of the obvious, the report noted that "with so many employees of mediocre attainments the principal cannot accomplish the best work." The inspection did not specifically name those judged to be problems, but it did list their positions. Included were laundress, physician, seamstress, industrial

teacher, disciplinarian, matron, and academic teacher.⁴¹ In other words, several of the school's most important staff members were incompetent or at least ill-suited. Within a month, four of the eleven had resigned, but McGregor admitted to the Indian Office that "in one or two instances the present employee is no improvement over the one who previously held the position, but in general there has been a marked improvement in the personnel of the school force." In a separate letter, the principal tried to defend his staff, noting that if some of them were not the best caliber (he described the seamstress, who resigned, as "a moral degenerate") the rest were doing the best they could under the circumstances.⁴²

At the end of the 1913 term, matters had not improved significantly. A year-end inspection concluded that advanced and intermediate students seemed to have good teaching and capable instructors, but the youngest pupils suffered badly by comparison. Although the teacher, Florence Hickman, was judged to be "conscientiously inclined and willing," her class "was almost in a continual state of confusion." Students were listless and disrespectful and showed little progress in language training and other critical areas. Overall, matters appeared barely satisfactory, but only because McGregor and a handful of employees "support the school and hold it up to the standard it now maintains. For the most part, the work of the greater part of the other employees is neutralized by their very apparent lack of initiative." The school could not possibly "do efficient work with so many weaklings among employees." Noting that it was only fair to mention the difficulties under which the school operated, the report closed by stating that a new school building, more instructional materials, and replacements for the kindergartner, girls' matron, disciplinarian, and boys' matron would improve the

situation.⁴³

All of this took a heavy toll on McGregor. As the opening of the 1913-14 term approached, he poured out his frustrations in two letters to Stecker. In the first, written at the end of July, McGregor lamented that the fall term "brings to mind very vividly the fact that nothing has been done, so far as I know, to provide a suitable school building for this school." Acknowledging that hundreds of other requests from other schools and agencies would soon flood the Indian Office, he felt compelled to write that "I doubt if there is another school that can present as strong a claim for the need as Rainy Mountain. Without exceptions, the Inspecting Officials readily concede this point. The facts are this School has not received its just dues and its importance has not been appreciated." Again he pressed for a new building and reminded the agent that a separate school building had never been furnished despite the fact that the school served a population desperately in need of education. "I believe they deserve better treatment," wrote McGregor.⁴⁴

In the second letter, sent just after the school opened in September, McGregor was more adamant in his criticisms and deeply troubled by what he perceived as willful neglect on the part of the Indian Office. His comments capture the reality of the school's predicament:

School is in session again and for the fourth time I am compelled to use unsuitable and unsanitary rooms for the children. I have tried in vain to get a few of the very essential improvements needed at this school and after four years I am discouraged.

Last year we had . . . an excellent school. The attendance was good — more than 150 pupils — and the interest manifested by the pupils better than in previous years. Yet the Indian Office refused to give us any of the new buildings or equipment requested. Here is the condition. An unfinished plant with an attendance greater than Riverside and almost equal to Fort Sill and the two latter schools well equipped, yet Rainy

Mountain received \$1175 for all improvements for the year and the other two schools received more than \$7000 between them. . . . [Rainy Mountain] children are forced to use the old fashioned lamps at night, the Comanche child has an excellent electric light, the Kiowa boy is forced to go 100 yards through the cold to get to a toilet, the Riverside boy steps across the porch to a toilet. The Rainy Mountain Employees are forced to room in the building with the pupils while the Employees at the other two schools [have] comfortable rooms. . . . The Indian Office must have some good reason for this neglect. I can see but one legitimate reason and that is the early abandonment of the school. I have been in the Indian Office and believe that it would not allow such an injustice to be dealt to Rainy Mountain if it were the intention to continue the school.

It will be remembered that I have in an application for transfer. . . . I like the work very much and am interested in the Indian problem . . . but I cannot long remain at Rainy Mountain among the many handicaps that surround me. Further, I have been here almost four years and if I have not earned a promotion in that time I am free to say that I should get out.⁴⁵

In December 1913 the school's annual inspection described it as "well managed" despite the "lack of proper housing and equipment and some rather inefficient employees." McGregor was credited with "in most respects excellent work, and is a strong influence for good among the somewhat difficult Kiowa Indians." The school's attendance "is regular and the discipline good. I found here the most enthusiastic body of Indian boys and girls that I have seen in any reservation school," noted the inspector. He attributed much of this to McGregor's presence. Acknowledging the school's poor condition, the report called attention to its importance in this region. The Kiowa country was sparsely populated and lacked adequate public schools. "This fact, together with the crowded condition of the boarding school . . . call for consideration of the question whether the school should not be enlarged at least to the extent of providing another class room and an additional teacher."⁴⁶ McGregor could take some comfort from the fact that the school's problems were not entirely unknown

to his superiors; at the same time, however, he got little support from them.

By the middle of the 1913-14 term, McGregor's resolve was beginning to break down. Since his arrival at the school, nothing substantive had been done to improve its condition, and as each year passed expressed opinions that revealed a deepening sense of despondence. In March 1914 he wearily approached Stecker again on matters at the school; this time the letter was almost completely personal. "I have passed the fourth year at Rainy Mountain without a change in salary," he wrote, "and without the help from the Indian Office that the school deserved. I am tired of it." Moreover, the situation had become a strain on his wife, who had agreed to serve as a teacher since coming to the school. He asked for an increase in pay or a transfer. It would be with regret that he left Rainy Mountain, he noted, "but I know that it is an injustice to my family to remain much longer." Unless a change was made, McGregor announced that he would "make other arrangements. . . . It is my intention to leave Rainy Mountain during the next school year." He had not fixed a date but wanted to give Stecker ample time to locate a replacement.⁴⁷ Clearly, McGregor had all of the place and its problems that he could stand. He was gone by the end of 1914.

McGregor was not alone in his concern for the school's condition. In February 1914 Delos K. Lonewolf wrote to Commissioner Cato Sells on behalf of the Kiowa Business Committee, a collection of prominent Kiowa leaders, to express the committee's fears about the condition of the school and about the apparent neglect of the Indian Office. In reply, Assistant Commissioner of Indian Affairs E. B. Meritt told them "that the Office has been quite fully informed as to conditions there and the need of extensive repairs. . . . I wish to be as liberal" as

possible. "You will understand, of course," he continued, "that there are many other Indian Schools in need of the same assistance. . . . At this time there is almost no money available for constructive purposes or repairs, but I assure you that the Rainy Mountain School will not be overlooked next year."⁴⁸

For once the office was true to its word. Shortly after Lonewolf and McGregor had voiced their latest worries, the bureau authorized funds for the construction of a new school building. More than that, the money allocated actually represented sufficient funds to get a sturdy, worthwhile building; instead of the \$7,000 McGregor had requested earlier, the Office authorized \$10,000.⁴⁹ Finally, good fortune had come to Rainy Mountain. The building, completed in early 1916, had classrooms and a large assembly hall with a seating capacity of 210. In March 1916 the Office approved expenditures for an acetylene lighting system on campus.⁵⁰

Some relief from the water problem also appeared in 1915. Parker McKenzie remembered that water closets were added to the boys' dorm as part of an annex built sometime in 1915. A new pipeline running from the side of Rainy Mountain to the school was laid in the same period and was connected to a pump house and reservoir that dated from 1913. It was not the kind of system McGregor had wanted, but it did alleviate some of the worst problems.⁵¹

Ironically, all of this came at about the same time that McGregor left Rainy Mountain. Unwilling to endure another year under such conditions and anxious to provide a better environment for his wife and family, he left the school in late 1914 to accept a position at the Rosebud agency in South Dakota. Soon after, he transferred to the Pine Ridge agency and school.⁵²

Between Cora Dunn's forced resignation in 1910 and McGregor's transfer in late 1914 Rainy Mountain made no significant progress. The problems that had troubled it during its first two decades continued; some, especially health, became worse. Unfortunately, McGregor could not convince the Indian Office that improving Rainy Mountain's facilities should have high priority. McGregor can be credited with making some improvements and for attempting to bring a renewed spirit to the place, but the severity of the situation was more than he could handle. By the time he left the school it was entering its last years of service. The two men who followed him as principal had neither the will nor the support necessary to save the place.

Notes

1. Inspection Report of C. L. Ellis, April 24, 1909, Record Group 75, National Archives, Kiowa Agency Classified Files, 1907-1939, Establishment or Abolition of Schools (hereafter cited as KAE, NA).

2. Lengthy excerpts of the report and Valentine's comments are in Robert Valentine to Ernest Stecker July 7, 1910, Rainy Mountain School Records, Record Group 75, National Archives, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City (hereafter cited as RMS, OHS).

3. Overcrowded classrooms had plagued the school since its opening. The Indian Office never tired of lecturing agents and principals about remedying the situation. At Rainy Mountain an adequate number of teachers were never hired, even in the aftermath of inspections like McConihe's in 1909. See, for example, J. H. Dortch to Stecker, October 19, 1909, RMS, OHS.

4. Valentine to Stecker, July 7, 1909, *ibid.*

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.* Parker McKenzie remembered that Dunn regularly drove his hogs away from the school to a local farm prior to inspections. McKenzie also said that Dunn fed his hogs with government corn, McKenzie interview, August 1, 1990.

8. Valentine to Stecker, July 7, 1910, RMS, OHS; Conditions in the dining

hall were usually somewhat difficult. McKenzie remembered milking cows twice daily, but commented "we never saw no milk, and butter, too, on our tables. Most of it went to the campus quarters of married employees." His memory of meals differed significantly from the comments on McConihe's report. "We were forever hungry," said McKenzie, McKenzie to Randall Hurst, October 23, 1987, in author's possession.

9. Valentine to Stecker, July 7, 1910, RMS, OHS.

10. *Ibid.*

11. Stecker to Valentine, September 3, 1909, *ibid.*

12. Valentine to Stecker, July 7, 1909, *ibid.*

13. Stecker to Valentine, September 13, 1909, *ibid.*

14. F. H. Abbott to A. M. Dunn, July 26, 1909, *ibid.* This letter accepted Dunn's resignation "to take effect when your successor reports." In late August Charles H. Allender of Grand Junction, Colorado received an appointment as Industrial teacher at the school, Abbott to Allender, August 23, 1909, *ibid.* In the meantime, the office also accepted the resignation of several other employees as a result of McConihe's inspection.

15. Abbott to Cora Dunn, January 5, 1910, *ibid.*

16. Valentine to H. B. Peairs, April 29, 1910 and Peairs to Valentine, May 4, 1910, both KAE, NA.

17. Valentine to Peairs, May 16, 1910; "Memorandum For Legislative Committee," *ibid.*

18. House Document 930, Sixty-first Congress, second session.

19. Senate Document 8390, Sixty-first Congress, second session.

20. Stecker to Valentine, August 24, 1910, RMS, OHS.

21. Dortch to Stecker, September 23, 1910, *ibid.*

22. McGregor to Stecker, April 14, 1910, *ibid.*

23. *Ibid.*

24. A hand drawn map of the campus reproduced from memory by Parker McKenzie indicates a combination commissary and classroom building erected in late 1910 at the south side of the grounds. No record of such a building being erected at that time exists. Map and description in the possession of the author. The Annual Statement of Government Buildings and Improvement at Rainy Mountain for 1909-1913 in the records of the Oklahoma Historical Society indicate no such building. See also McGregor to Stecker July 31, 1913, RMS, OHS.

25. McGregor to Stecker, October 16, 1910, RMS, OHS.

26. C. F. Hanke to Stecker, November 12, 1910, *ibid.*

27. McGregor to Stecker, November 21, 1910, *ibid.* See also Stecker to Valentine, November 25, 1910, *ibid.* It is interesting to note that the original inspection calling for fire equipment occurred on April 7, 1910. Stecker did not

request authority to purchase the equipment until May 16, 1910; it was actually ordered in late September and delivered in mid-November, seven months after the matter had first been raised. This kind of administrative foot dragging was typical.

28. Estimate of Needs for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1912, RMS, OHS.

29. Supervising Principal to Ernest Stecker, March 10, 1913, *ibid.*

30. Valentine to Stecker, March 19, 1913, *ibid.*

31. McGregor to Dr. Ferdinand Shoemaker, April 18, 1912, *ibid.*

32. McGregor to Stecker, December 16, 1912; Stecker to Valentine, December 19, 1912; McGregor to Stecker, August 10, 1912; Valentine to Charles Norton, August 26, 1912, *ibid.*

33. McGregor to Stecker, April 16, 1913, *ibid.*

34. Abbott to Stecker, April 19, 1913, *ibid.* A voucher dated June 30, 1913 did indicate an expenditure of \$60.00 for a pump house and concrete reservoir at the school.

35. McGregor to Stecker, April 29, 1913, *ibid.*

36. Lewis G. Lavlin to Sells, December 11, 1913, *ibid.*

37. "Program of Tuberculosis Day," December 7, 1913, *ibid.*

38. Annual Report of Rainy Mountain School, December 13, 1913, KAE, NA.

39. McGregor to Stecker, January 29, 1914, RMS, OHS.

40. Physician's Semi-Annual Report, Rainy Mountain School, December 31, 1916 and March 31, 1917; Invoice from October 17, 1917, *ibid.*
41. C. F. Hanke to Stecker, February 13, 1913 and April 8, 1913; Charles Eggars to Stecker, March 20, 1913, *ibid.*
42. McGregor to Stecker, April 2, 1913; Stecker to Valentine, April 14, 1913, *ibid.*
43. Inspection Report of Kiowa Agency School: School Work and Employees, May 1, 1913, KAE, NA.
44. McGregor to Stecker, July 31, 1913, RMS, OHS.
45. McGregor to Stecker, September 22, 1913, *ibid.*
46. Annual Inspection of Rainy Mountain School, December 1913, KAE, NA.
47. McGregor to Stecker March 21, 1914, RMS, OHS.
48. E. B. Meritt to Delos K. Lonewolf, February 16, 1914, *ibid.*
49. Contract between the United States of America and Herman Peeper and James F. Wass, May 21, 1915, *ibid.*
50. Inspection Report of Kiowa Agency Schools: Academic Training, September 13, 1915, KAE, NA; Voucher for 210 opera chairs for "recently completed new school building" at Rainy Mountain, September 21, 1916, RMS, OHS.
51. Parker McKenzie to Bill Welge, January 26, 1987, and June 6, 1990, in

author's possession.

52. Parker McKenzie to Clyde Ellis, August 1, 1990; McKenzie to Henry McKenzie November 15, 1973, in author's possession. McGregor later gained acclaim for his published account of the Wounded Knee episode.

CHAPTER VIII

"THE KIWAS NEED THEIR SCHOOL, THEY CANNOT VERY WELL GET ALONG WITHOUT IT"

McGregor left Rainy Mountain as the school as it entered its last years of service. Possibly he anticipated this, for he constantly reminded Agent Ernest Stecker that a transfer would be greatly appreciated. Stecker, too, left as the Kiowa-Comanche agent, replaced in April 1915 by C. V. Stinchecum, whom Parker McKenzie described as "Boy, he was all business!"¹ By then the future of the school was imperiled. During McGregor's tenure it did little more than muddle through one crisis after another, surviving in the midst of the usual dilemmas; this was not his fault, but like Cora Dunn, he discovered that he simply could not combat the school's continuing problems. When he left the school in the winter of 1915 it had only a handful of years left.

McGregor's successor was John Crickenberger, who arrived in January 1915 after he and his wife transferred from Tohatchi, New Mexico.² Crickenberger stayed only about one year before giving way to R. W. Bischoff, who ran the school until it closed in the fall of 1920. During Crickenberger's short term, he did little more than keep the school going. The brevity of his tenure and his unfamiliarity with the school seem to have prevented him from attempting

anything more than acting as caretaker.³

It did not take long, however, for Crickenberger to run afoul of the Indian Office. In March Agent Stecker learned from the Indian Office that the school had once again received a poor evaluation. "Many of the children are not making good progress in their studies," went the report. "This leads to the conclusion either that the instruction has not been efficient . . . or that teachers have not been alert . . . or else that some of your pupils are mentally backward." To support its findings, the Office referred Stecker to Rainy Mountain's quarterly attendance report, which showed a number of pupils who had been at the school for as long as seven years but who languished in the first and second grades. Nearly twenty such cases appeared on the report, almost 10 percent of the student body.⁴ Stecker instructed Crickenberger to review the school's records carefully to ascertain the cause of the school's poor performance and was warned that "class room instruction will have very careful attention in future visits to all schools." On an optimistic note Crickenberger's supervising principal, J. W. Smith, expressed assurance "that Rainy Mountain will show up very favorably in this year's work in all departments."⁵

Crickenberger replied that his teachers "are all good . . . certain pupils have made good progress . . . there are no children here who [are] . . . feeble minded." The cause for the school's lack of progress lay not with its staff or students but with its poor facilities. Evening study sessions were impossible, for example, "because we do not have the lights." He pleaded for the agency to "give us up to date classrooms, good lights for evening work, another teacher, and give the Principal time to supervise closely the work." Only then would the children make

good progress. In answer to the Indian Office's specific query concerning students who had lingered in the first and second grades after years of effort, Crickenberger suggested that many reasons could explain the situation — irregular attendance or sickness for example. Yet, he was unwilling to give up on such students or to dismiss them. "These, like the poor, are ever with us," he said.⁶

An official inspection in September 1915 produced only luke-warm praise. Noting that industrial education was given "some attention," the inspection went on to say that due to the "lack of facilities and of sufficient number of employees, little in the way of systematic instruction can be given. There is great need . . . of better facilities . . . in order that the children of this school maybe given opportunities to which they are entitled." It all sounded very familiar. But all was not lost; the inspector did note with pleasure that "great care" had been taken to prevent students from marking books and destroying property.⁷

Five months later, another inspection revealed some improvements. Crickenberger had implemented a new course of study emphasizing industrial training, including evening study three nights a week. The Indian Office received the news with pleasure and went so far as to recommend hiring a domestic science teacher. With the exception of trachoma, which still plagued the school "to a considerable extent," Rainy Mountain seemed to be in satisfactory condition. Commissioner Sells reminded all concerned that he wanted "to get this school on a basis of successful industrial operation as rapidly as possible."⁸

Crickenberger left the school at the end of the 1915-1916 term. His replacement, R. W. Bischoff, stayed until the place closed in September 1920. During his administration the usual barrage of complaints continued to flow out of

the Indian Office. In December 1916 Bischoff got his first taste of an official inspection when Edgar Allen made a stop of several days at the school. The course of study was finally being followed according to Allen, but only "as [it] is in most schools . . . followed in part." There was no music instruction; pupils were judged to be quite large and old; industrial instruction was satisfactory in a few classes, fair in some, and scarcely existent in the rest. The health of the students seemed to be good.⁹ Overall, it was not an especially laudatory report, but it did find some bright spots. It is worth noting that in his reply to the report Stinchecum asked the commissioner to remember that in addition to the school's well-known problems, there had been "no less than twelve changes in teacher's positions . . . since July 1, 1915." He also commented that as Rainy Mountain was patronized almost entirely by Kiowas who "did not take readily to the school" (which was decidedly untrue), the agency faced a continual struggle just to get and keep children long enough to make some meaningful change in them.¹⁰

By this time, however, the school's usefulness was coming to an end. As negative or barely acceptable evaluations piled up year after year, and as conditions continued to remain marginally acceptable, it was only a matter of time before the office decided to close it and transfer its students. Although records from Bischoff's term do not reveal much in the way of day-to-day life at the school, neither do they suggest that any significant improvement occurred. That being the case, the move to close the school began in earnest in late 1919.

During the fall of 1919 the Indian Office announced plans to close twenty-five reservation boarding schools in Oklahoma, including Rainy Mountain.¹¹ This was consistent with the government's stated intention to scale back such schools

and of place Indian children in public schools. Isolated and troubled, it had been a source of worry and frustration since nearly the day it had opened. With three other boarding schools in the vicinity (Fort Sill, Riverside, and Anadarko) and with public schools within easy distance of most of Rainy Mountain's school-age population, closing the plant would not work undue hardship on anyone. At least that was how Washington saw things.

The decision to close the school became apparent by August or September of 1919. Informed by the Indian Office that his agency's budget for school and agency buildings was being decreased by \$4,000 for the coming year, Stinchecum wired the Office for an explanation. He noted that such a decrease would leave him only \$2,000 to operate four schools, field stations, and a hospital. "Absolutely impracticable to keep property in condition with such meager allowance. Request reconsideration."¹² In reply Commissioner Sells wrote that because Stinchecum's annual report for the agency indicated "that practically all children on the Kiowa Reservation live within three miles of a public school," and because of declining enrollments in the agency's boarding schools, one of those schools would have to close. Due to its poor condition, Rainy Mountain was at the top of the list.¹³ Thus, Stinchecum would not have to allot funds toward the school, which helped to explain the decision to reduce the agency's funds. Stinchecum wrote back to Sells to say that although the views of the office about closing Rainy Mountain "correspond exactly with my own," he still needed the \$4,000 for repairs at the agency's other schools and buildings. Without it "we cannot make a dollar's worth of repairs during the rest of the year."¹⁴ Sells was apparently unmoved by the request.

In February 1920 the office authorized a full review of the agency's schools. Reporting in early March, Dr. R. S. Russell revealed conditions at Rainy Mountain that were appallingly poor. With the exception of the principal's cottage and the boys' dormitory, the rest of the school was "in a generally disreputable condition. . . . The plant, taken as a whole is a disgrace to our service." The girls' dormitory, "once the pride of the school, is in such a state of repair that it is a crime to house nice girls in it." Most of the other buildings were judged to be beyond repair or actually "falling to pieces." At a minimum the place required \$25,000 in repairs. The work force was small, demoralized, and inefficient — the result, partially, of the miserable conditions under which it lived. The students showed little evidence of schooling. The girls were observed wearing shawls and blankets, and the boys were "a more progressive looking lot." Russell was distressed that he heard "no Indian pupil use a word of English, a fact this is, in my judgement, one of the strongest arguments for the discontinuance of this school."¹⁵

With other boarding schools nearby, and with public schools available to all of Rainy Mountain's students, Russell built a compelling case against the place. Riverside and Fort Sill were in excellent condition, produced well-trained students, and were reputable schools. Moreover, the trend toward putting Indian children in public schools was well established. Between 1916 and 1921, for example, the number of Indian children enrolled in public schools in the area had grown from 152 to 749; the enrollment in boarding schools had declined from 628 to 431. Russell estimated that for 1921 there were at least 467 eligible school-age pupils in the area, not enough to fill the agency's four boarding schools unless one was

closed. The best interest of the Kiowas, he continued, lay with the enrollment of their children in public schools at the earliest opportunity. Resisting the move would only harm the children. Rainy Mountain should close, reasoned Russell, "if for no other reason than to force the Kiowa children who attend it into contact with the White children in public schools." To those Kiowas who objected, Russell forcefully reminded them that it was they, in fact, who had first begun the present turn of events by enrolling their children in public schools, "cutting thereby the total number of available children to a number insufficient . . . to allow an enrollment at the four [boarding] schools" run by the agency. According to bureau officials, Rainy Mountain was the least suitable of the schools to save. The Indian Office had fixed upon it as the one to close, "an opinion with which," noted Russell, "I have no hesitancy in saying, I am in full accord."¹⁶

The decision to close the school set off a storm of protest. The sources of the protest were interestingly varied, ranging from outraged whites who objected vociferously to schooling their children with half-civilized Indians, to the Kiowas for whom the school seemed a debt owed them and an indispensable component of their tribe's progress toward membership in American society. Word had barely gotten out before the tribe began an intensive campaign to keep the school open. Writing to Congressman Scott Ferris in Washington in November of 1919, Sherman Chadlesone, a Kiowa, spoke with great passion against closing the school. He reminded the representative that if Rainy Mountain closed there would be no school for the Kiowas. But the Comanches, Caddos, Delawares, and Wichitas on the other hand "will still have their schools." He did not wish to see the tribe "deprived of their good school, they loved Rainy Mountain School." In

Chadlesone's opinion all the school needed "was a little more backing by the Indian Office and it will do twice as much for the Kiowa children." During its time the school had turned out scores of good students who had gone on to become successful citizens; they owed their chance in life to Rainy Mountain. "If Rainy Mountain School can do these good things for Kiowa children," he asked plaintively, "why should it be abolished?" In closing Chadlesone implored Ferris to help the tribe. "The Kiowas need their school," he wrote, "they cannot very well get along without it."¹⁷

Within days Ferris wrote to the commissioner to make inquiries about the situation. Assistant Commissioner E. B. Meritt replied in late November that owing to the large number of Kiowa children in public schools, and because of the extraordinary expense involved in repairing the plant, the school could not be maintained.¹⁸ In the meantime, Congressman James McClintic of Oklahoma made inquiries to the office about reconsidering its decision. In late January he wrote to Sells to tell him that the "rumor" concerning the school's closing had reached him. "I do not know of any school that is more ideally located than this institution," wrote McClintic. "Inasmuch as the attendance is sufficient to maintain it I cannot see how your Department could consistently entertain an idea looking towards its discontinuance. I trust there is no truth to this report."¹⁹ Like Ferris, McClintic received a curt reply that repeating the office's position. This time Assistant Commissioner Meritt added that the \$20,000 to \$25,000 necessary for repairs could hardly be justified for "a school plant which is not actually required for the education of Indian children."²⁰

Before long a flurry of telegrams and letters from Rainy Mountain

supporters began to pour into the office protesting the school's closing.

Representative Ferris took a particularly active role. In a series of telegrams to high ranking public officials he insisted that the Indian Office was making a mistake that would cause great harm to the Kiowas. In separate (but identical) pleas to Secretary of the Interior Franklin Lane, Commissioner Sells, and United States Senator Robert Owen of Oklahoma, Ferris attempted to win support. "The Kiowa Indians feel hurt that an order has been established abolishing the Rainy Mountain School," he wrote. "The Indians are heart broken about it," continued Ferris, and had sent a delegation with a petition to Washington. "Will you not be good enough to see what can be done for them?"²¹ Wearied by the browbeating his department was taking, Sells shot back a terse answer to Ferris. "It is policy to place Indian children in public schools whenever they are available," wired the commissioner. Large numbers of Kiowa children were already in those schools. Moreover, the sum required to repair the plant was more than \$40,000. (Apparently the earlier sum of \$20,000 did not sway Ferris and others; \$40,000 was a much more intimidating figure.) In reply to Senator Owen, Sells hastened to explain that "the closing of the Rainy Mountain School will not deprive any Indian child . . . and I feel it is the proper course to pursue."²²

Representative McClintic personally took the tribe's petition to Commissioner Sells. Signed by 146 members of the tribe, including many former students, the petition was a plea against taking the school from a tribe that very much wanted and needed it. In a letter to Kiowa spokesman Robert Onco, McClintic promised to continue to discuss with Sells what he considered "the unjustness of the order." He went on to say that the suddenness of the decision

had caught him off guard. "I have watched the Indian legislation . . . in order that the appropriations for the maintenance of the Indians in western Oklahoma would not be reduced." When the Committee on Indian Affairs did not take any action indicating a drastic reduction in the number of the state's government boarding schools, McClintic said he felt sure that no significant changes were going to be made. Unimpressed by the commissioner's suggestion that nearly \$40,000 was needed to put the plant in working order, McClintic told Onco that he had commissioned a friend in nearby Gotebo to investigate the facts and report as soon as possible. In the meantime, McClintic would push the issue as hard as he dared. Adopting a less dogmatic stance, Sells courteously notified the senator in mid-March that he "had not entirely completed my further consideration of the situation" and would be happy to give it and the tribe's petition "due attention."²³

The petition submitted by the tribe suggested that the emotional bond to the school felt by many Kiowas was much stronger than the Indian Office knew. It also revealed a deeply felt devotion to the school. Rainy Mountain represented a vital link to the non-Indian world for their children; many Kiowa parents and adults believed that it was virtually the only chance their children would have to receive the training and instruction necessary to make successful lives. Although agents and inspectors had complained over the years about the occasional obstinance of the Kiowas, it was equally true that the school filled to capacity every year. As Parker McKenzie observed, his parents as well as many others never doubted the school's importance and never tried to keep their children away. Losing it meant having to send their youngsters to public schools, where they were not welcomed, or to the agency's other boarding schools, which were

not as conveniently located and which were populated by other tribes. Despite the concerns that many parents about health conditions and other circumstances at the school, it nonetheless represented an important opportunity for Kiowa children.

"To discontinue the institution would mean the removal of the very backbone of the tribe," began the petition. Rainy Mountain was where their children got their first knowledge of the outside world. Sending them to white schools was impractical and dangerous. "No white teacher . . . who even has an interest and sympathy for the Indian child will long endure the patience required to remold" that child. The circumstances of Kiowa life would only "breed contempt for the Indian children in public schools." The petition charged that several local school districts had gone so far as to refuse to enroll Indian children; another had relegated them to separate rooms. Prejudice and mistrust ran deep in the white communities and Kiowa parents feared the worst if their children were forced to attend public schools. "The best Indian pupil in every respect . . . is the one that has been in attendance at a Government school long enough to learn to speak English, understand the necessity of cleanliness, good health, right living, and the general habits of the whites."²⁴

The petition closed with a plea for the rights of the Kiowa tribe. "We need more education and better education," it said, "but little progress will be made if the circumstances cited above are permitted." Discontinuing the school might seem wise for financial reasons, "but the welfare of the tribe ought to be paramount." The tribe requested that a member of the Board of Indian Commissioners be authorized to investigate the matter thoroughly; it was sure that

such an investigation would recommend that the school be continued because, very simply, "We need it."²⁵

Given its less than stellar condition, it seems unlikely that the tribe would have rallied such support for the school. Yet that is precisely what occurred. For some the school was a simple matter of an obligation to be borne by the government. Others properly feared the consequences of losing Rainy Mountain; sending their children to white schools or even to the agency's other schools was a distasteful alternative. Still others seem to have known that despite the limitations at Rainy Mountain, it at least gave their children something resembling an education. Shortly after the commissioner received the petition, Agent Stinchecum wrote to him with evidence that he believed damaged the tribe's claims. Stinchecum had shown the petition to the agency's day school inspector who "carefully analyzed" it and determined that many of its signers in fact had little to do with the school. According to his findings, Stinchecum wrote that most of the petition's signers either had no children in the school, did not live in the Rainy Mountain district, had children in public schools or other boarding schools, had withdrawn their children from Rainy Mountain, or refused to send them to school. Fifty-six, for example, were listed as either having no children at the school, or as being too old or too young to have children.²⁶ This was misleading at best. Many of those labeled as having no children in the school, for example, were former students who could presumably speak from personal experience with regard to the school's importance. Only twenty-nine were listed as having children in public schools; only four had children in other boarding schools. Three were listed as refusing to send their children to Rainy Mountain. Overall, Stinchecum's

notations of the list did not reveal any legitimate complaints. He appears simply to have been reaching for any support he could find.

On the matter of an independent review from the Board of Indian Commissioners, he noted that Warren K. Moorehead of the Board had visited the agency. Stinchecum, however, characterized Moorehead's opinions as "of really no value." He had not actually visited the school and according to Stinchecum "in fact knows nothing whatever concerning the matter other than the fact the Indians oppose the closing of the school at this time." The decision to close the school was sound, Stinchecum concluded, and he would be "much disappointed to know the Office reaches any other conclusion."²⁷

The Indian Office answered the tribe's petition with the same explanations that it had given all other interested parties. In late February the assistant commissioner replied in writing to the tribe's representatives that it was the settled policy of the government to place Indian children in public schools where it was possible to do so. This was done out of a concern for economy and because it represented the "best interests of the Indian children." Furthermore, records showed that a "large percentage" of the district's children had access to public schools. Finally, Rainy Mountain was in the poorest condition of the agency's boarding schools and would require "a great deal of money to put it in good condition." The letter gave no indication that the tribe's protest had produced any reconsideration of the matter.²⁸

Having rebuffed the Kiowas, the Indian Office still had to deal with a second source of resistance in the form of white school officials and parents. Their anger was no less immediate than that of the Kiowas and some of the same

fears drove it. Like the Kiowas, whites were less than willing as a rule to have their children in the same schools as Indian children. It was not their fault that the school had fallen on hard times and they were not happy about suffering because of it. And at least one citizen saw sinister events unfolding. J. W. Dellinger of Gotebo wrote somewhat breathlessly to Representative McClintic in January 1920 to call his attention to "a rumor now agitating our people recently." The government, according to Dellinger, had "sold all the Indian School property to the Catholic Church and hereafter they will be conducted under that denomination." It was his duty to inform McClintic that "against such action all the citizenry of this country enter their solemn protest right now."²⁹

If the rest of the area's whites failed to see a papist plot unfolding before their very eyes, they at least saw something they did not like and did not intend to tolerate. Mr. J. M. Rule, president and manager of *The Democrat-Chief* of Hobart began the attack with a letter to Senator Owen in mid-February 1920. A thinly tirade attack against allowing Indian children to attend public schools, Rule's letter revealed a sentiment typical of many whites in the area. "This school is necessary for the proper . . . education of the Indian children," wrote Rule, "who pick up their education slowly and cannot be given proper attention by instructors in the public schools." The citizens of Hobart were unanimously in favor of keeping the school open, he concluded, and he was sure that Owen would lend his valuable assistance to seeing that Rainy Mountain survived.³⁰

Mrs. J. F. Baldridge, chairman of the Kiowa county chapter of the American Red Cross, and writing on its letterhead to Senator Owen, was more direct. Her group's reasons for opposing the school's closing were twofold. First,

the local schools were already crowded beyond capacity. Closing Rainy Mountain would only encumber an already overburdened school system. Second, and more important, she argued that the Kiowa children were not ready to enter public schools. "The Indian standard of living is centuries behind that of the ordinary American," she wrote. The Indian child did not know how "to keep clean, how to eat at a table, how to sleep in a bed, or even how to wear citizen's clothing."

Although schools like Rainy Mountain worked diligently to give Indian children instruction in these and other areas, it was a slow process fraught with dangers.

"The Indian child is a menace to all of his associates until he has been taught the laws of hygiene and clean living," she continued, and that could only occur in a place like an Indian boarding school. If Rainy Mountain closed Kiowa children would lose their only chance "to learn how to live in a clean, sanitary way."³¹

Hers was a terribly provincial world view, and it was typical of the local communities.

The superintendent of the Hobart public schools took his turn next. In late February F. A. Balyeat brought the issue up in a letter to Senator Owen. Echoing Baldrige, he confirmed for the senator that the Hobart schools were, in fact, badly overcrowded and unable to accommodate any more students. Moreover, it was his opinion as a professional educator that Indian children were unfit for public classrooms. "It has been the experience of our teachers," he wrote, "that the Indians cannot be started in school . . . without crippling the work of the room and greatly retarding the progress of the Indians." He observed that most of the Kiowa children spoke little or no English and thus suffered badly in comparison to their more accomplished white counterparts. Indian children responded "very

reluctantly" to public school methods of instruction; his school was not equipped to provide the special environment that Indians needed. Even if he had the staff and was willing to accept such a task (and he was not), here was a fact that no school could undo; "we submit that the Indian is greatly handicapped by this futile attempt to civilize him by trying to get him to learn what he cannot understand."³²

Even if Indian children were capable of learning at the same pace as whites (and Balyeat clearly believed they were not), they would not be welcome. He told the senator that "with few exceptions the Indian children who attended the Hobart Schools are unwelcome and repulsive to the whites." Because Indian children were almost always dirty and bred disease, they were unable to mix comfortably with whites. Teachers occasionally refused to accept rooms that had Kiowa children in them. After careful consideration Balyeat concluded that Indian children would be a menace to the safety and progress of his schools. He closed by observing that he had lived among Indians since his boyhood and did not, of course, wish to see them deprived of their schooling. By the same token he did not wish to see them mixed in among his system's students and encouraged Owen to prevent the closing of Rainy Mountain.³³

A flood of similar complaints eventually reached the Indian Office. Most of them were based on the belief that Indians were unfit for schooling in the public system. From the chamber of commerce in Mountain View came the revelation that "sixty percent of the Indian children have trachoma and are not in condition to be placed in public schools. Will not take much more than regular amount to run school and put in fairly good repair." The president of the school

board at Mountain View noted that all of the local public schools were badly overcrowded. "White people protest against Indian children attending schools to which they pay no taxes. Unsanitary Indian children not desired in public schools." The Hobart Commercial Club struck a pose of righteous indignation: "We have lived in this country too long for a new comer from the extreme east . . . not experienced with the Indian to make us submit to any such" change. The club generously offered to host a tour of the school's grounds for the Indian Office "so they can see actual conditions. School has approximately 150 students, some of them wearing blankets. Believe expense in 1920 would not exceed 1919."³⁴

The Gotebo Chamber of Commerce noted that it had actually visited the school and found that a "very small amount of money will be needed for repairs. . . . The Superintendent of the Indian Agency at Anadarko has never seen fit to spend any reasonable amount for repairs." Absorbing Kiowa children into the white schools was characterized as "a big mistake," and the chamber believed that the commissioner's estimate for repairs was badly exaggerated; any "reasonable man" would see that something like \$4,000 would put the school in good order. The Bank of Gotebo agreed and its spokesman argued that \$5,000 would be sufficient. It called Sells' estimates "ridiculous." The Farmer's and Merchant's National Bank of Hobart added its opinion by noting that Rainy Mountain was "the only school in the county that can afford necessary facilities for Indian children."³⁵

Of course, this was the kind of thing the Indian Office did not want to hear. Stinchecum quickly attempted to soften the impact of such protests by

drafting a letter to Sells in mid-March. As to the concern about the health of Rainy Mountain's pupils he assured the commissioner that this was a very infrequent problem. "As a rule our Indians are fairly tidy," he wrote, "and are at all times in reasonably presentable condition." On the whole he believed they would blend nicely with white school children. The recent protests were merely an attempt, he was certain, to influence the commissioner's office. Stinchecum argued that for every case in which an Indian child had been found unsuitable for schooling due to health reasons he could just as easily find one involving a white child. On the "one or two occasions" when investigation had revealed problems with Indian children every necessary step had been taken to remedy the situation. On the issue of Indian children as unwanted in the public schools he told Sells that "as a matter of fact, our pupils have been, in nearly every case, actually welcomed as public school pupils."³⁶

How Stinchecum could arrive at this opinion is not clear. The overwhelming majority of the messages received in his office and in that of the commissioner bitterly opposed the action and showed a clear desire to resist it. Agency records, moreover, indicate that Stinchecum did not visit Rainy Mountain more than twice a year; his knowledge of the details surrounding the case seems to have been largely second-hand. That he wished the school closed is certain. The place had been troublesome for years. No doubt he was anxious for a permanent solution to its problems. He also resisted simply transferring Rainy Mountain's students to the agency's other boarding schools. That was inconsistent with government policy and would have kept him directly responsible for several hundred school children of whom he was ready to be rid. Quite possibly he

sympathized with local whites, for his attitude toward the Kiowas was not notably compassionate or even friendly. Still, his instructions were to close the school and place its students in the area's public systems, and this he did.

As the spring of 1920 came and went it was clear that the appeals by the tribe and local whites to keep the school open would fail. In May Stinchecum wrote Sells to say that the date for closing had been set at June 30. The only staff necessary after that date would be a small contingent to harvest the school's small crops, look after the buildings, "and close up affairs generally." He requested \$2,500 for fiscal 1921 to cover those costs. The Indian Office replied that in its opinion the proceeds from the crops ought to be sufficient to cover any expense incurred in shutting down the place.³⁷ At the end of June the students were sent home and the buildings were closed.

Now the Indian Office took up the matter of what to do with the school. With buildings, tools, supplies, and land appraised at more than \$98,000, the office hoped to sell most or all of it to the highest bidder.³⁸ In August most of Rainy Mountain's beds, mattresses, laundry equipment, and dry goods were shipped to the agency's other schools.³⁹ Disposing of the physical plant was all that remained to be done. In late summer a solution appeared. A number of people approached the Indian Office about transforming Rainy Mountain into a sanatorium for tubercular veterans. At the end of June the chairman of the Oklahoma City chapter of the Red Cross, presidents of the chambers of commerce, Lion's Club and Kiwanis Club, and YMCA, chairman of the Soldier's Welfare Committee, and the chaplain of the American Legion Post wired a telegram to Owen. In it they urged him to arrange the transfer of the school to

the Public Health Service for use as a tuberculosis treatment center. "Not a single bed in the state of Oklahoma available for a tubercular soldier," went their message. "All men are sent outside of the state and suffer from homesickness and do not recover as they would in Oklahoma City. Have a heart." Similar pleas went to Representative Ferris. Owen and Ferris forwarded the messages to the Indian Office. Commissioner Sells responded that he would take the matter under consideration and wired Owen that he had already tendered the offer to Public Health. If it wanted the school Sells indicated he would gladly approve the action.⁴⁰

On August 6 Sells wired the adjutant of the Charles B. Burke American Legion Post in Madill, Oklahoma, to inform him that the Public Health Service "has my consent to use Rainy Mountain School as hospital [for] ex-soldiers. Understand Surgeon General has matter under consideration." At the end of the month he sent a similar message to the adjutant of the Dobb-Frazier American Legion Post in Duncan. "This Office has already consented to the use of the plant for hospital purposes," wrote Assistant Commissioner E. B. Meritt, "and understands that the United States Public Health Service . . . has the matter under advisement."⁴¹ At the agency Stinchecum was busy disposing of the school's property and equipment. In early October he informed Sells that the school's remaining livestock, desks, and chairs had been shipped to the agency's other schools. Anticipating the arrival of a physician to administer the hospital at Rainy Mountain he requested approval to reserve one of the cottages for a residence.⁴²

In late October, however, the office ordered Stinchecum to hold further action at the school in abeyance; apparently Public Health officials had not in fact

come to a decision.⁴³ At the end of the month the Surgeon General's office informed the Indian Office that it would not take Rainy Mountain after all; the school's isolation and remoteness rendered it impractical. In addition, the Surgeon General was of the opinion that "climatically and structurally it is not adapted to the purposes for which the Public Health Service are in need."⁴⁴ Stinchecum closed the school's building and removed the rest of its supplies and equipment. That fall, for the first time in twenty-seven years, Rainy Mountain sat empty and unused.

From 1910 to the school's closing in 1920, its fortunes steadily declined. The shifting priorities of the Indian Office during the Progressive era meant that schools everywhere suffered the effects of willfully limited programs. The narrowing view of education's role, buttressed by Rainy Mountain's continuing poor circumstances, marked the school as an easy target for elimination. It might have survived longer had the era's policymakers been more optimistic in their evaluation of Indians; they were not, and Rainy Mountain proved helpless in the face of that fact.

Notes

1. Parker McKenzie interview, August 1, 1990.
2. J. W. Smith to John Crickenberger, January 27, 1915; Ernest Stecker to Cato Sells, February 27, 1915, Rainy Mountain School Records: Record Group 75, National Archives, Oklahoma Historical Society, Indian Archives Division. Oklahoma City (hereafter cited as RMS, OHS). Like McGregor's wife before her, Crickenberger's wife accepted a teaching position at the school.
3. See Crickenberger to J. W. Smith, February 8, 1915 and C. F. Hanke to Stecker, March 10, 1915 for indications of this, RMS, OHS.
4. Hanke to Stecker, March 10, 1915, *ibid*.
5. Smith to Crickenberger, March 23, 1915, *ibid*.
6. Crickenberger to Smith, April 1, 1915; Crickenberger said much the same thing to Cato Sells, see Crickenberger to Sells, April 14, 1915, *ibid*.
7. Inspection Report of Kiowa Agency Schools: Course of Study, September 15, 1915, Record Group 75, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Kiowa Agency Classified Files, 1907-1939, (hereafter cited as KAE, NA).
8. Inspection Report of Kiowa Agency Schools: Course of Study, February 13, 1916; Stinchecum to Sells, August 22, 1916; and Sells to Stinchecum March 28, 1916, *ibid*.
9. Edgar Allen to Sells, March 16, 1917, *ibid*.

10. Stinchecum to Sells, January 5, 1917, *ibid.*
11. Sherman Chadlesone to Representative Scott Ferris, November 8, 1919, *ibid.*
12. E. B. Meritt to Stinchecum, September 4, 1919; Telegram from Stinchecum to Indian Office, September 8, 1919, RMS, OHS.
13. Sells to Stinchecum, September 16, 1919, *ibid.*
14. Stinchecum to Sells, September 19, 1919, *ibid.*
15. Sells to R. S. Russell, February 26, 1920; Russell to Sells, March 8, 1920, KAE, NA.
16. *Ibid.*
17. Chadlesone to Ferris, November 8, 1919, KAE, NA.
18. Ferris to Sells, November 14, 1919, *ibid.*
19. James McClintic to Sells, January 24, 1920, *ibid.*
20. Meritt to McClintic, January 30, 1920, *ibid.*
21. Telegrams from Ferris to Franklin Lane, Robert Owen, and Sells, February 3, 1920, *ibid.*
22. Telegram from Sells to Ferris, February 4, 1920; Owen to Sells, February 3, 1920; Sells to Owen February 4, 1920, *ibid.*

23. McClintic to Robert Onco, February 6, 1920; Sells to Owen, March 18, 1920, *ibid.*

24. Petition of the Kiowa Tribe, January 1920, *ibid.*

25. *Ibid.*

26. Stinchecum to Sells, February 18, 1920, KAE, NA.

27. Just prior to this letter Stinchecum wired the office to say that public schools were available to nearly all of Rainy Mountain's students: "Indian children have as good an opportunity as white children living in the same space. . . . School should by all means be closed," telegram from Stinchecum to Indian Office, February 5, 1920, *ibid.*

28. Meritt to George Hunt, February 20, 1920, *ibid.*

29. J. W. Dellinger to McClintic, January 20, 1920, *ibid.*

30. J. M. Rule to Owen, February 13, 1920, *ibid.*

31. Mrs. J. F. Baldrige to Owen, February 14, 1920, *ibid.*

32. F. A. Balyeat to Owen, February 16, 1920, *ibid.*

33. *Ibid.*

34. "Rainy Mountain School," nd, *ibid.* This document is a compilation of comments received in the Indian Office relative to the school's closing.

35. *Ibid.*

36. Stinchecum to Sells, March 17, 1920, *ibid.*
37. Stinchecum to Sells, May 5, 1920; Meritt to Stinchecum, June 2, 1920, *ibid.*
38. An inventory and property value list from October 1, 1919 showed buildings valued at \$72,385 plus other property (furnishings, desks, tools, and so on) valued at \$25,724, RMS, OHS.
39. Telegram from Stinchecum to Indian Office, August 12, 1920, KAE, NA.
40. Telegram from D. I. Johnston et al to Owen, July 20, 1920; telegram from J. W. Harreld to Sells, July 31, 1920; telegram from McClintic to Sells, August 3, 1920; telegram from Sells to McClintic, August 3, 1920; telegram from Sells to Harreld, August 1, 1920, *ibid.*
41. Telegram from Hill Anglea (?) to Sells, August 6, 1920; telegram from Sells to Anglea, August 6, 1920; J. W. Wilkinson to Sells, August 12, 1920; Meritt to Wilkinson, August 27, 1920, *ibid.*
42. Stinchecum to Sells, October 11, 1920; telegram from Stinchecum to Indian Office, August 1, 1920, *ibid.*
43. Meritt to Stinchecum, October 28, 1920, *ibid.*
44. Surgeon General to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, October 29, 1920, *ibid.*

CONCLUSION

As Parker McKenzie wandered across the ruins of the Rainy Mountain campus one August afternoon in the summer of 1990, he came across the concrete base of the school's flagpole. Hidden by grass, McKenzie did not see it until he stepped on it. Looking down to see what he had found, McKenzie said "How about that," and immediately stood at attention and placed his hand over his heart, a lesson learned from his years at Rainy Mountain almost a century ago. A moment later he resumed his story about his life as a young boy on the Kiowa-Comanche Reservation. I was struck by the seeming contradictions; an hour earlier McKenzie had been giving me driving directions in Kiowa, carefully explaining the differences in tense, inflection, and tone. He talked easily of this Indian family or that Indian family, and of the survival of various Kiowa cultural traditions. Finding the flagpole base, however, took him back to a time and place that stood in stark relief to all that he had been busily telling me; indeed that earlier era had been intended to make conversations like the one we were having impossible.

Like many other former students, McKenzie is an example of how the boarding schools simultaneously failed and succeeded. They failed inasmuch as they did not destroy Kiowa identity or culture. Cutting children's hair, dressing them in new clothing, and teaching them to farm, bake, or sew did not necessarily

transform identity. Given the circumstances at Rainy Mountain it was unlikely that such a transformation could have been achieved anyway. Yet the school succeeded in important ways, another contradiction considering the conditions that often prevailed. Hundreds of young Kiowas went through the place and gained important experience and skills that they used after leaving school. Obviously, fluency in English was a critical factor; most students appear to have left the school with varying levels of proficiency but also with enough knowledge to survive. The vocational instruction they received likewise made it possible for them to make their way in the world that lay outside the campus. It was not a perfect preparation, and it was not what they deserved, but it helped to ease the transition from the life that their parents had led to the very different one that they faced.

The irony is that in the process of beginning their new lives, most students did so by combining two worlds. Ruby Williams, for example, came from a Kiowa family that kept the sacred Kiowa sun dance talisman called the *taiame*. By the time she entered boarding school at Riverside in the 1930s, however, her family had converted to Christianity and were faithful Baptists. Yet she had strong ties to the heritage and culture represented by the *taiame*. Her great-grandmother, who lived with Ruby's family when Ruby was a child, was born in the 1820s, lived until the 1920s, and witnessed enormous changes in Kiowa culture.

Ruby and her siblings remember being told by their great-grandmother that being Kiowa in the early twentieth century meant accepting a new and different world. Learn English, go to church, and get an education, they were told, but never stop being Kiowa. It was possible, they discovered, to keep their Kiowa

identity alive even in the midst of great cultural change and adaptation. Today Ruby and her children remain deeply involved in the cultural life of the Kiowa community in and around Fort Cobb and Carnegie. Every July, for example, they attend the annual gathering of the Kiowa Gourd Clan. An old and venerated society through which many Kiowas affirm the ties and relationships that ensure the maintenance of Kiowa identity, the Gourd Clan is a critical component in the survival of contemporary Kiowa culture. It was possible, indeed it was necessary, to join different worlds together in order to keep Kiowa identity viable. Thus the seeming contradiction of going to boarding school and staying Indian was not so much a contradiction or surprise as it was simply a fact of life; Kiowas had changed many times during their history, the boarding schools were only the latest in a long series of similar events. Learning English, for example, or learning a trade, were the very things that made it possible to function in the modern world, but not at the cost of retaining important cultural ideas. Indeed, it was the maintenance of their cultural base that made it possible for many Kiowas to endure the world around them.¹

Other students expressed similar feelings. James Silverhorn went through the boarding schools but remained closely associated with important tribal institutions. He joined the Native American Church around 1932, for example, and assumed prominence as one of its leaders in the Kiowa community. As an adult he kept four of the Kiowa sacred medicine bundles. Fred Bigman also joined the Native American Church, and like many former students used it as an avenue to maintain his culture. Harry Tofpi, Sr., left Riverside School in the 1930s, served in the military for nearly thirty years, and retired to Meeker,

Oklahoma where he became a stalwart in the Native American Church and Kiowa Gourd Clan. When asked if the schools ever took his cultural identity away he replied, they "couldn't, I didn't let that happen." Billy Evans Horse also attended Riverside in the 1930s and like Tofpi became a prominent peyotist and singer. Horse's grandfather, himself a product of Rainy Mountain, taught Billy about the peyote church, Gourd Clan, and other traditions so that he could maintain his sense of identity.²

The pattern is unmistakably clear; former boarding school students retained important elements of Kiowa culture, combined it with what they learned at the schools, and went on with their lives. Frederick Hoxie attributes this partially to the fact that when the federal government scaled back the intensity and breadth of the Indian school system during the Progressive era it gave Indians breathing room. By retreating from a liberally defined assimilationist agenda in which every detail was important, to one that accepted limited possibilities for Indians, the government ironically removed important impediments to preserving culture. Because many experts believed that Indians were on their way to extinction anyway, it made little sense to engage in expensive — and futile — attempts to change them. According to Hoxie, the irony is that by doing so, the government encouraged, even allowed, a plural society to emerge in Indian communities.³ Sally McBeth concurs. In her examination of western Oklahoma tribes and the reservation boarding school experience, McBeth finds that "the very segregationist and assimilationist beginnings of the Oklahoma boarding schools effectively, if inadvertently, seem to have fostered the formation of an Indian identity."⁴

Other important changes helped as well. During the 1930s the

"evolutionary assimilation" of John Collier's Indian New Deal recognized the vitality of native culture and officially forbade its destruction. Collier emphasized the usefulness of cultural diversity and allowed students to retain their tribal heritage. Forced assimilation would never again figure in the bureau's official policies. The foundation established in part by boarding school students like those from Rainy Mountain flourished in the decades to come.⁵ Having survived the severe trial of the reservation era, former students retained a core of values, actions, and practices that helped to ensure the tribe's identity.

Rainy Mountain School can barely be seen from the road now. The mountain is there, an enduring landmark for new generations of Kiowas. The campus, however, is largely gone, save for the tumbledown remains of a few buildings. But it remains a powerful place, not least so because most living Kiowas have relatives who once lived at the school, roamed its campus, and were molded by its forces, good or bad. Kiowas visit the mountain regularly to cut sage or cedar for ceremonial use and for many of them the trip to Rainy Mountain is much like a pilgrimage; the combination of the mountain's historical importance and the school's emotional past is palpably real. Visitors to the mountain invariably talk about the school and discuss what it must have been like for the grandfathers, great-aunts, or cousins who went there. And they always speak with reverence about those people, for as Harry Tofpi, Sr., said, the souls of those small children are still there.

Notes

1. Ruby Williams interview, July 2, 1989. For many Kiowas, groups such as the Gourd Clan, Black Leggings, and O'hama Society represent vital links to traditional tribal culture. Songs play an especially critical part of this process for they represent a sort of storehouse that protects and transmits various traditions and stories. The survival of the Kiowa language and of these and other institutions during the difficult reservation era mark a critical point in the maintenance of contemporary Kiowa culture. Almost without exception former boarding school students from the early twentieth century formed the core of the groups that prevented the eclipse of such knowledge.

2. James Silverhorn interview, September 28, 1967, T-146, 1, Doris Duke Oral History Collection, Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Library Archives, Norman, Oklahoma (hereafter cited as DDOH); Fred Bigman interview, T-50, 1, DDOH; Harry Tofpi interview, August 3, 1991.

3. Frederick Hoxie, *A Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate the Indian, 1880-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 237-244.

4. Sally J. McBeth, "Indian Schools and Ethnic Identity: An Example from the Southern Plains Tribes of Oklahoma," *Plains Anthropologist* 28(Spring 1983): 120. McBeth comments at greater length on this in *Ethnic Identity and the Boarding School Experience of West-Central Oklahoma American Indians* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1983).

5. The literature on the Indian New Deal is copious. The best single source remains Kenneth Philp, *John Collier's Crusade for Indian Reform, 1920-1954* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1977).

WORKS CITED

Primary Sources

Manuscripts

Norman, Oklahoma. University of Oklahoma Archives.

Western History Collections:

Doris Duke Oral History Collection.

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Oklahoma Historical Society

Indian Archives Division:

Kiowa Agency Files.

Washington, D.C. National Archives.

Record Group 75, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs:

Kiowa Agency, 1907-1939, Classified Files.

Correspondence

McKenzie, Parker to Flora DeLay, June 7, 1963.

McKenzie to Mrs. Henry T. Choquette, April 2, 1965.

McKenzie to Bill Welge, January 26, 1987; June 6, 1990.

McKenzie to Randle Hurst, October 23, 1987.

McKenzie to the author, July 14, 28, and August 1, 1990.

Interviews

Lassiter, Eric. Greensboro, NC. March 16, 1993.

McKenzie, Parker. Mountain View, OK. August 1, 1990.

Tofpi, Harry, Sr. Meeker OK. August 3, 1991.

Williams, Ruby. Fort Cobb, OK. July 2, 1989.

Other Miscellaneous Documents

"Happy 90th Birthday Lewis Toyabo, February 28, 1982," Commemorative
birthday celebration reminiscence in the possession of Ruby Williams, Fort
Cobb, OK.

McKenzie, Parker. "Development of Extra-Curricular Activities at Rainy
Mountain," nd. Photocopy in the possession of the author.

Government Documents

Kappler, Charles J. *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, 7 vols. (Washington, D. C.:
Government Printing Office, 1903.)

Superintendent of Indian Education. *Annual Reports*: 1884, 1885, 1890, 1891,
1895, 1896, 1899, 1902, 1903.

U.S. Commissioner of Indian Affairs. *Annual Reports*: 1848, 1849, 1863, 1866,
1870-1921.

U.S. Secretary of the Interior. *Annual Reports*: 1877, 1879, 1880.

Secondary Sources

Books

Battey, Thomas C. *The Life and Adventures of a Quaker Among the Indians.*

Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1968.

Berkhofer, Robert F., Jr. *Salvation and the Savage: An Analysis of Protestant*

Missions and American Indian Response, 1787-1862. New York: Atheneum Press, 1976.

_____. *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian From Columbus to the Present.* New York: Knopf, 1978.

Berthrong, Donald. *The Cheyenne-Arapaho Ordeal: Agency Life in the Indian*

Territory, 1875-1907. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1976.

Bieder, Robert E. *Science Encounters the Indian, 1820-1880: The Early Years of*

American Ethnology. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986.

Billington, Ray A. *Westward Expansion: A History of the American Frontier*, 3rd ed.

New York: MacMillan, 1967.

Boyd, Julian, ed. *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, 18 vols. Princeton: Princeton

University Press, 1950 -.

Boyd, Maurice. *Kiowa Voices*, 3 vols. Fort Worth: Texas Christian University

Press, 1981.

Carlson, Leonard. *Indians, Bureaucrats, and Land: The Dawes Act and the Decline of Indian Farming.* Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1981.

Clifton, James, ed. *Being and Becoming Indian: Biographical Studies of North*

American Frontiers. Chicago: Dorsey Press, 1989.

- Cremin, Lawrence. *American Education: The Colonial Experience, 1607-1783*.
New York: Harper and Row, 1970.
- Davis, Barbara. *Edward S. Curtis: The Life and Times of a Shadow Catcher*. San
Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1983.
- Darrah, William C. *Powell of the Colorado*. Princeton: Princeton University Press,
1951.
- Dippie, Brian W. *The Vanishing American: White Attitudes and U. S. Indian Policy*.
Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1982.
- Dowd, Gregory E. *A Spirited Resistance: The North American Indian Struggle for
Unity, 1745-1815*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992.
- Drinnon, Richard. *Facing West: The Metaphysics of Indian Hating and Empire
Building*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1980.
- Eastman, Elaine G. *Pratt: The Red Man's Moses*. Norman: University of
Oklahoma Press, 1935.
- Edmunds, R. David. *The Shawnee Prophet*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska
Press, 1983.
- Fritz, Henry B. *The Movement for Indian Assimilation, 1860-1890*. Philadelphia:
University of Pennsylvania Press, 1963.
- Goetzmann, William and William N. Goetzmann. *The West of the Imagination*.
New York: W. W. Norton, 1986.
- Goldschmidt, Walter, ed. *The Uses of Anthropology*. Washington: D.C.: American
Anthropological Association, 1979.
- Gray, Elma C. *Wilderness Christians: The Moravian Mission to the Delaware
Indians*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1956.

- Hagan, William. *U. S.-Comanche Relations: The Reservation Years*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990.
- Haller, John S. *Outcasts From Evolution: Scientific Attitudes of Racial Inferiority, 1859-1900*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1971.
- Helm, June, ed. *Pioneers in American Anthropology*. Seattle: University of Seattle Press, 1966.
- Herring, Joseph B. *The Enduring Indians of Kansas: A Century and a Half of Acculturation*. Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1990.
- Hinsley, Curtis, Jr. *Savages and Scientists: The Smithsonian Institution and the Development of American Anthropology, 1846-1910*. Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1981.
- Hoopes, Alban W. *Indian Affairs and Their Administration, With Special Reference to The Far West, 1849-1860*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1932.
- Horsman, Reginald. *Expansion and American Indian Policy, 1783-1812*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992.
- Hoxie, Frederick. *A Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate The Indians, 1880-1920*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- Jones, Douglas. *The Treaty of Medicine Lodge*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1966.
- Kinney, J. P. *A Continent Lost, A Civilization Won: Indian Land Tenure in America*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1937.
- Kvasnicka, Robert M. and Herman J. Viola, eds. *The Commissioners of Indian Affairs, 1824-1977*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979.

- Leckie, William. *The Military Conquest of the Southern Plains*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963.
- Leupp, Francis. *The Indian and His Problem*. New York: Charles Scribner, 1910.
- Malin, James C. *Indian Policy and Westward Expansion*. Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1921.
- Mardock, Robert W. *The Reformers and the American Indian*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1971.
- Mark, Joan. *Four Anthropologists: An American Science In Its Early Years*. New York: Neale Watson Academic Publications, 1981.
- _____. *A Stranger in Her Native Land: Alice Fletcher and the American Indians*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988.
- Mayhall, Mildred. *The Kiowas*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962.
- McBeth, Sally J. *Ethnic Identity and the Boarding School Experience of West-Central Oklahoma American Indians*. Washington D.C.: University Press of America, 1983.
- McDonnell, Janet. *The Dispossession of the American Indian, 1887-1934*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991.
- McSpadden, J. Walter. *Famous Sculptors of America*. New York: Dodd, Meade, 1924.
- Methvin, J. J. *In The Limelight*. Anadarko, OK: Plummer, 1928.
- Mishkin, Bernard. *Rank and Warfare Among the Plains Indians*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1966.
- Morgan, Lewis Henry. *Ancient Society*. New York: Henry Holt, 1877.

- Morgan, Thomas Jefferson. *Studies in Pedagogy*. Boston: Silver and Burdette, 1889.
- Pearce, Roy Harvey. *The Savages of America: A Study of the Indian and the Idea of Civilization*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1965.
- Philp, Kenneth. *John Collier's Crusade For Indian Reform, 1920-1954*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1977.
- Pratt, Richard Henry. *Battlefield and Classroom: Four Decades With the American Indian, 1867-1904*, edited and with an introduction by Robert M. Utley. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964.
- Priest, Loring B. *Uncle Sam's Stepchildren: The Reformation of United States Indian Policy, 1865-1887*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1942.
- Prucha, Francis Paul. *American Indian Policy in the Formative Years: The Indian Trade and Intercourse Acts, 1790-1834*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962.
- _____. *American Indian Policy In Crisis: Christian Reformers and the Indian, 1865-1900*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1976.
- _____. *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians*, 2 vols. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984.
- _____, ed. *Indian Policy in the United States: Historical Essays*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1981.
- Raymond, Dora Neill. *Captain Lee Hall of Texas*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1940.
- Richardson, Jane. *Law and Status Among the Kiowa Indians*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1960.

- Richardson, Rupert N. *The Comanche Barrier To South Plains Settlement*. Glendale: Arthur H. Clark, 1963.
- Roosevelt, Theodore. *A Book Lover's Holiday in the Open*. New York: Charles Scribner, 1919.
- Salisbury, Neal. *Manitou and Providence: Indian, Europeans, and the Making of New England, 1500-1643*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Satz, Ronald. *American Indian Policy in the Jacksonian Era*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1975.
- Sheehan, Bernard. *Seeds of Extinction: Jeffersonian Philanthropy and the American Indian*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973.
- Slotkin, Richard. *Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth Century America*. New York: Atheneum, 1991.
- Spivey, Donald. *Schooling For the New Slavery: Black Industrial Education, 1868-1915*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1978.
- Stegner, Wallace. *Beyond the Hundredth Meridian: John Wesley Powell and the Second Opening of the American West*. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1954.
- Stern, Bernard. *Lewis Henry Morgan: Social Evolutionist*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1931.
- Stocking, George W. Jr. *Race, Culture, and Evolution: Essays in the History of Anthropology*. New York: Free Press, 1968.
- Szasz, Margaret C. *Indian Education in the American Colonies, 1607-1783*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988.
- Tatum, Lawrie. *Our Red Brothers and the Peace Policy of President U. S. Grant*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1970.

- Trennert, Robert A. *Alternative To Extinction: Federal Indian Policy and the Beginnings of the Reservation System, 1846-1851*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1975.
- _____. *The Phoenix Indian School: Forced Assimilation in Arizona, 1891-1935*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988.
- Utley, Robert M. *The Last Days of the Great Sioux Nation*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963.
- _____. *Frontiersmen in Blue: The United States Army and the Indian, 1848-1865*. New York: MacMillan, 1967.
- _____. *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1891*. New York: MacMillan, 1973.
- _____. *The Indian Frontier of the American West, 1846-1890*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984.
- Viola, Herman. *Thomas L. McKenney: Architect of America's Early Indian Policy, 1816-1830*. Chicago: Swallow Press, 1974.
- Walker, Robert. *Torchlights To The Cherokees: The Brainerd Mission*. New York: MacMillan, 1931.
- White, Richard. *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Worcester, Robert. *The Military and United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988.

Articles

- Agnew, Brad. "The 1858 War Against the Comanches." *Chronicles of Oklahoma*

49(Summer 1971): 211-229.

Beaver, R. Pierce. "Methods in American Missions To the Indians in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Centuries: Calvinist Models for Protestant Foreign Missions." *Journal of Presbyterian History* 47(Summer 1969): 124-128.

Berens, John. "'Old Campaigners, New Realities': Indian Policy Reform in the Progressive Era, 1900-1912." *Mid-America* 59(January 1977): 51-64.

Berkhofer, Robert F., Jr. "Protestants, Pagans, and Sequences Among The North American Indians, 1760-1860." *Ethnohistory* 10(Spring 1963): 201-269.

Buntin, Martha M. "History of the Kiowa, Comanche, and Wichita Agency." *Panhandle-Plains Historical Review* 4(Spring 1931): 62-78.

Butler, Josiah. "Pioneer School Teaching at the Comanche-Kiowa Agency School, 1870-1873." *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 8(December 1928): 482-528.

Chaput, Donald. "Generals, Indian Agents, and Politicians: The Doolittle Survey of 1865." *Western History Quarterly* 3(July 1972): 269-282.

Corwin, Hugh. "Protestant Mission Work Among The Comanches and Kiowas." *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 46(Spring 1968): 41-67.

Crimmins, M. L., ed. "Colonel Robert E. Lee's Report on Indian Combats in Texas." *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 39(July 1935): 21-32.

Cutler, Lee. "Lawrie Tatum and the Kiowa Agency, 1869-1873." *Arizona and the West* 13(Autumn 1971): 221-244.

Downes, Randolph C. "A Crusade For Indian Reform, 1922-1934." *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 32(December 1945): 331-354.

Furman, Nichah. "Seedtime For Indian Reform: An Evaluation of the Administration of Commissioner Francis Ellington Leupp." *Red River*

- Valley Historical Review* 2(Winter 1975): 495-517.
- Gage, Lucy. "A Romance of Pioneering." *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 29(Summer 1951): 284-313.
- Gruber, Jacob. "Ethnographic Salvage and the Shaping of Anthropology." *American Anthropologist* 72(December 1970): 1289-1299.
- Hagan, William T. "Kiowas, Comanches, and Cattlemen." *Pacific Historical Review* 40(August 1971): 333-355.
- Haines, Francis. "The Northward Spread of Horses Among the Plains Indians." *American Anthropologist* 40(December 1938): 429-437.
- Hiatt, Burritt M. "James M. Haworth, Quaker Indian Agent." *Bulletin of the Friends Historical Association* 74(Autumn 1958): 80-93.
- Holford, David M. "The Subversion of the Indian Land Allotment System, 1887-1934." *Indian Historian* 8(Spring 1975): 11-21.
- Hoxie, Frederick. "Redefining Indian Education: Thomas J. Morgan's Program in Disarray." *Arizona and the West* 24(Spring 1982): 5-18.
- Huggard, Christopher J. "Culture Mixing: Everyday Life on Missions Among the Choctaws." *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 70(Winter 1992-1993): 432-449.
- "Indian Treaties and Councils Affecting Kansas." *Kansas State Historical Society Collections* 16(Winter 1923-1924): 746-772.
- Jennings, Francis. "Goals and Functions of Puritan Missions to the Indians." *Ethnohistory* 18(Summer 1971): 197-212.
- McBeth, Sally J. "Indian Boarding Schools and Ethnic Identity: An Example from the Southern Plains Tribes of Oklahoma." *Plains Anthropologist* 28(Spring 1983): 119-128.

- Mitchell, Michael D. "Acculturation Problems Among the Plains Tribes of the Government Agencies in Western Indian Territory." *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 44(Spring 1966): 281-289.
- Monahan, Forrest D. "The Kiowa-Comanche Reservation in the 1890s." *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 45(Winter 1968): 451-463.
- _____. "Kiowa-Federal Relations in Kansas, 1865-1868." *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 49(Winter 1971): 477-491.
- Mooney, James. "Calendar History of the Kiowa Indians." Seventeenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, pt. 2. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.
- O'Reilly, Kenneth. "The Progressive Era and New American Indian Policy: The Gospel of Self-Support." *Journal of Historical Studies* 5(Fall 1981): 35-56.
- Simmons, William S. "Conversion From Indian To Puritan." *New England Quarterly* 52(June 1979): 197-218.
- Steele, Aubrey L. "The Beginning of Quaker Administration of Indian Affairs in Oklahoma." *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 19(December 1939): 364-392.
- _____. "Lawrie Tatum's Indian Policy." *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 24(Spring 1944): 83-98.
- Tannis, Norman. "Education in John Eliot's Indian Utopias, 1646-1675." *History of Education Quarterly* 10(Fall): 308-323.
- Unrau, William E. "Investigation or Probity? Investigations Into the Affairs of the Kiowa-Comanche Agency, 1867." *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 42(Autumn 1964): 300-319.
- _____. "Indian Agents versus the Army: Some Background Notes on the Kiowa-

Comanche Treaty of 1865." *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 63(Summer 1969): 129-152.

Voget, Fred W. "The American Indians in Transition: Reformation and Accommodation." *American Anthropologist* 58(April 1956): 249-263.

Wallace, Anthony F. C. "Revitalization Movements." *American Anthropologist* 58(April 1956): 264-281.

Unpublished Manuscripts

Levy, Jerrold E. "Kiowa." Unpublished manuscript in the possession of the author.

Dissertations and Theses

Lester, Suzanne Sockey. "Indian Education: Evolution of Policy Determination." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1989.

Man, Henrietta. "Cheyenne-Arapaho Education, 1871-1982." Ph.D. Dissertation, University of New Mexico, 1982.

Moore, Ida Cleo. "Schools and Education Among the Kiowa and Comanche Indians." MA thesis, University of Oklahoma, 1940.

Pennington, William D. "Government Policies and Farming on the Kiowa-Comanche Reservation, 1969-1901." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1972.

Steele, Aubrey L. "Quaker Control of the Kiowa-Comanche Agency." MA thesis, University of Oklahoma, 1938.

Wild, George Posey. "History of Education of Plains Indians of Southwest Oklahoma Since the Civil War." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1941.

2
VITA

Richard Clyde Ellis

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Dissertation: TO CHANGE THEM FOREVER: SCHOOLING ON THE
KIOWA-COMANCHE RESERVATION, 1869-1920

Major Field: History

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Greenville, North Carolina, March 29, 1958, the
son of Gwen and James B. Ellis.

Education: Graduated from Richard Joshua Reynolds Senior High School,
Winston-Salem, North Carolina, in May 1976; received Bachelor of
Arts degree in English and History from Lenoir-Rhyne College in
May 1980; completed requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy
degree at Oklahoma State University in May 1993.

Professional Experience: Teaching Assistant, Department of History,
Oklahoma State University, August 1986 to May 1989. Lecturer,
Department of History, University of North Carolina at Greensboro,
August 1989 to August 1993.