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THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA
GRADUATE COLLEGE

CHOCTAW INDIAN EDUCATION WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE
TO CHOCTAW COUNTY, OKLAHOMA
An Historical Approach

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of
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BY
ELOISE SPEAR
Norman, Oklahoma

1977

CHOCTAW INDIAN EDUCATION
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CHOCTAW COUNTY, OKLAHOMA
An Historical Approach

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CHOCTAW INDIAN EDUCATION
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

I have been talking to my people, and have advised them for the best, turn their attention to industry and farming, and lay their hunting aside. And here is one point of great work, is just come to hand, before us which is the establishment of a school; and the Choctaws appear to be pleased.¹

Written when a youth by
Colonel David Folsom

Introduction

Choctaw education in Choctaw County, Oklahoma, had its roots in the old Choctaw country east of the Mississippi River. After reaching their new home in the West, the Choctaws established schools patterned after the system which had been so forcibly uprooted. Generally, these schools existed until the coming of

¹ Niles' Register, Vol. XVI (1819), Supplement, p. 97. Folsom apologized for his bad English, saying he had attended school only six months, but he said education was vital to the survival of his people, since the hunting had declined and those dependent upon it had come to want.

statehood. Since then, except for Goodland Indian Orphanage, known today as Goodland Children's Home, the history of Indian education in Choctaw County became the history of the public schools coupled with the government policies related to Indian education. Yet, the Indian students are still there -- the LeFlores, Oakes, Wilsons, Folsoms, Belvins, Springs; the Jeffersons, Walls, Bohannons, Nelsons, Roberts, Ervins, Simpsons, Durants, and McIntyres; the Tims, Fishers, Pisachubbes, Roebucks, and many others.

Background

As one of the Five Civilized Tribes, which included the Choctaw, Chickasaw, Cherokee, Creek, and Seminole, the Choctaws had lived for the most part in the territory which today comprises the state of Mississippi and the western side of the state of Alabama. With an estimated population of 19,000, the Choctaws were not nomads. After almost three hundred years of contact with the white man, they had established themselves firmly as an agrarian people. They built homes and farms, cultivated the land, raised varied herds and crops, including cotton. They carded, spun, wove the cotton into cloth, and made clothing not unlike the style of the white man of comparable financial means. They built roads and mills, engaged in commerce, established a representative form of government, and wrote a code of laws. The Choctaws also came to believe in the value of education and sent their children to schools established by missionaries.²

A number of outstanding white men had intermarried with members of the tribe and exerted a great influence upon the Choctaws. Among the more prominent of these were the Nail brothers and the Folsom brothers; John Pitchlynn and George Harkinds; and the French Canadians, Louis and Michael LeFlore. The sons of these men became leaders of progress and education within the tribe, and most of them settled in or near the section known today as Choctaw County,³ Oklahoma.

In 1818, the newly formed American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, an organization supported by several Christian denominations, established a station among the Cherokee near Chattanooga, Tennessee. In response to a request from the Choctaws, Cyrus Kingsbury, a Presbyterian and an instructor in the Cherokee school, was sent to their country. Within a year, Kingsbury and his four assistants had erected buildings, cleared land for a demonstration farm, and established a mission school at Eliot on the Yalabusha River in Mississippi. The next year with the help of John Pitchlynn and David Folsom, Kingsbury located a mission school a few miles from Eliot at Mayhew. This school opened in the fall of 1821. Shortly after, Newell Station established an event which marks the

Angie Debo, The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1934), p. 37; Czarina C. Conlan, "David Folsom," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. IV, No. 4 (December, 1926), pp. 340-55; Muriel H. Wright, "Tryphena," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. IX, No. 2 (June, 1931), p. 182 n.; Czarina C. Conlan, "Peter Pitchlynn," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. VI, No. 2 (June, 1928), pp. 215-24; Mrs. Lee J. Langley, "Malmaison Palace in a Wilderson," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. V, No. 4 (December, 1927), pp. 371-80; Horatio Bardwell Cushman, History of the Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Natchez Indians (Greenville, Texas: Headlight Printing House, 1899), pp. 392, 400, 402-3, 410.

beginning of the Choctaw system of neighborhood schools. Then, in 1825, an academy for boys was established in Kentucky, the school⁴ which trained many future leaders of the Nation.

By 1830, eleven schools were operating in the Choctaw Nation with a total of 29 teachers and an enrollment of 260 children; in addition, 89 boys were enrolled in the Choctaw Academy and 250 adults had been taught to read in their native language.⁵ Thus began the educational system which was to become the greatest pride of the Choctaws.

In the meantime, other social and political forces were at work. As they became more civilized and affluent, the Choctaws felt the ever-increasing pressure of the white citizens and the United States government to effect removal. Moreover the tribe became racked by internal strife and disagreement, and civil war was narrowly averted. At last, overpowered by a combination of forces from within and without, by terms of the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek signed September 27, 1830, by the three chiefs -- Greenwood LeFlore, Moshulatubbee, and Nitakechi -- the Choctaws relinquished

⁴ William B. Morrison, "The Choctaw Mission of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. IV, No. 2 (June 1926), pp. 166-83; Cushman, History of the Choctaw, pp. 140, 144; Jedidiah Morse, A Report to the Secretary of War of the United States on Indian Affairs, Summer of 1820 (Washington, D. C.: Davis and Force, 1822), p. 191; Debo, Rise and Fall, p. 43; Carolyn Thomas Foreman, "The Choctaw Academy," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. VI, No. 4 (December, 1928), pp. 453-80; Niles' Register, Vol. XXI (1821), p. 159; Vol. XXIX (1925), p. 226-27.

⁵ Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Publication) 1830, pp. 166-68.

their land in the East and accepted new land west of the Mississippi.⁶ The agreement left the tribe split in deep political factions, instigated their immediate removal from the land they loved, and set the stage for the tragic Trail of Tears.

This study does not attempt to give an account of the "long sad journey" from Mississippi to the new land in the West.⁷ The main removals took place during 1831, 1832, 1833. The emigrants reached their destination in varying degrees of sickness, starvation, and shock.⁸ The following months were a struggle for survival. Yet, in the midst of this physical, material, and emotional exhaustion, once again the Choctaws turned to education as a great hope.

The Choctaws set up the first public school system in what is now Oklahoma. Within a few years after removal, mission schools, boarding schools, and neighborhood schools sprang up throughout the Choctaw Nation. Several of the more famous of these schools were located within the boundaries of present day Choctaw County. This school system flourished until its progress was interrupted by the Civil War. Eventually, the schools were re-established; however, at the close of the century again the Indians felt the pressure of the white man. The eradication of tribal authority and tribal holdings

⁶ Niles' Register, Vol. XXXVIII (1830), pp. 457-58; Charles J. Kappler, Indian Affairs, Laws and Treaties (Washington, D. C.: Government Publication) Vol. II, pp. 312-18.

⁷ Foreman, Indian Removal, Preface.

⁸ Grant Foreman, The Five Civilized Tribes (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1934), pp. 23-9.

in favor of individual land-ownership, and the advent of statehood virtually brought to an end the system of Choctaw education.⁹

From the early part of this century until recent times, problems of the Indians and Indian education were relegated to a minor place in the government's list of priorities. Apparently the opinion prevailed that, in attending the public school, the Indian would naturally be acculturated into white society. The Citizenship Act of 1924, and the Johnson-O'Malley Act of 1934, indicated that educators were beginning to question this assumption, but the trend was brought to a halt by World War II.¹⁰

When the war was over, problems of the past resurfaced. As early as 1952, failure to meet the needs of Indian children resulted in a large group of Indian dropouts from public schools. This deficiency of educational tools had contributed to substandard living conditions, unemployment, poor health, poor housing, and relief loads for the Oklahoma Indian population. The Indians and Indian children of Choctaw County shared in these problems.¹¹

The 1960's were marked by an increased awareness of the human rights of minority groups, including the rights of the Indians. By the 1970's, the more militant Indians were in a state of open revolt.

⁹ Hildegard Thompson, "Education Among American Indians: Institutional Aspects," Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science: American Indians and American Life, Vol. 311 (May, 1957), pp. 99-101; Debo, Rise and Fall, pp. 60-63; 235-431.

¹⁰ Ibid., S. Lyman Tyler, A History of Indian Policy (Washington, D. C.: United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1973), pp. 161-86; 189-215.

¹¹ Ibid.

Today, Indians are expecting, even demanding, their rights.¹²

Thus, a combination of historical events and recent events formed the background for this investigation of Choctaw education in Choctaw County.

Need for the Study

History seems to be an expression of the deeply felt need of human beings to know their collective past. For the educator, however, historical knowledge serves a more important purpose. A knowledge of past events provides a sense of significance with regard to current problems.¹³ Kerlinger deplored the fact that historical research in education has suffered a serious decline in recent years. He stated: "Without good history and good historians, a discipline can lose perspective."¹⁴ Therefore, while history is an investigation whose results remain obscure and difficult to ascertain, the historical method is considered a major approach to educational truth.

As educators became sensitive to the needs of students who were members of minority groups, the value of possessing historical knowledge was even more apparent. Information based upon the events

¹² Ibid., pp. 217-47; Frye Gaillard, Indians in Revolt, 1970 (Nashville, Tennessee: Race Relations Information Center, 1970), Preface.

¹³ Mark M. Krug, History of the Social Sciences (Waltham, Mass.: Blaisdell Publishing Co., 1967) pp. 11-12; John Dewey, "Experience and Nature," The Paul Carus Lectures (LaSalle, Ill.: Open Court, 1929) p. 154; R. Freeman Butta and Lawrence A. Cremin, A History of Education in American Culture (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1953), Preface, vii.

¹⁴ Fred N. Kerlinger, Foundations of Behavioral Research (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964), p. 700.

of the past made one aware of the many factors shaping the group's perspectives of itself as well as the values and ideals that lived on in them as traditions. Thus, teachers recognized the difference in one minority group as compared to another. Moreover, the group was appreciated for the significant contributions made to our collective culture.¹⁵

The American Indian had long been isolated in a separate society. At best, the Indian has had a blurred image which was a mixture of fact and fiction. In recent years, however, educators grew to recognize Indians as members of a unique group and the Indian students as having had unique problems. Among these problems were the high dropout rate which far exceeded the Caucasian pupils and was considerably above that of the large Negro minority; the reluctance to be absorbed into the white man's culture and the resulting conflict of living in two cultures; the language barrier; and the wall of non-acceptance which more often than not surrounded the Indian child.¹⁶

¹⁵ John E. Corbally, Jr., T. J. Jenson, and W. Frederick Staub, Educational Administration: The Secondary School (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1965), p. 37; Staten W. Webster, ed., Knowing the Disadvantaged: Part I of The Disadvantaged Learner (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Co., 1966), p. 3; There's an Indian in Your Classroom (Boise, Idaho, Statehouse: Department of Education, 1968), p. 3; Gertrude Noar, Information is Not Enough (New York: The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, 1967), p. 18.

¹⁶ Virgil J. Vogel, The Indian in American History (Chicago, Ill.: Integrated Education Associates, 1969), pp. 1-8; Ivy Coffey and Allan Cromely, The Red Man's Crisis, Reprint from a series in The Daily Oklahoman, September, 1966, p. 3; Webster, Knowing the Disadvantaged, p. 4; Joe Garrison, Bill Waltman, Leon Crowley, and Glenn R. Snider, A Survey of Equal Opportunities of the Cherokee Indian Student in the Public Schools of Adair County Oklahoma (Norman, Oklahoma: Consultative Center for Equal Educational Opportunity, 1969; Unpublished material), p. 65.

In consideration of these problems, provocative questions arose. What understandings should teachers and educators have of Indian children and youth which distinguished them from other minority groups? How did Indians perceive themselves and their culture? To what extent were Indian children and youth being given equal educational opportunity? What seemed to be the causes for school failure and the high drop-out rate? How could the needs of Indian students best be met? Who was to bear the financial responsibility for meeting these needs?

These, and other problems, made it imperative that educators understand the feelings, behavior, and motivations of the Indians and the events which shaped the culture of the group in order to deal effectively with the present. This was the need upon which this study was based.

Problem of the Study

The problem of this study was to investigate and to present a systematic description of the development of Choctaw education with special reference to Choctaw County, Oklahoma, from the establishment of the Choctaw Nation in the West to the present time.

Definitions and Description of Terms

The word history is used variously in the English language. The term may refer simply to actual historical happenings in the past or to a record of these events. Again, history may be defined as a field of study which has developed a set of methods and concepts by which historians collect evidence of past events, evaluate the evidence, and present a coherent and meaningful discussion of this

evidence. This last use of the term involves historical research.¹⁷

History may also be viewed as the story of the complex behavior of human beings in a complex society operating under varied conditions.¹⁸ To Shafer, this was the "humanistic approach," which included values, attitudes, modds, and motives.¹⁹ In this study, history was approached from this humanistic viewpoint. Therefore, history was defined as a meaningful record of man and his achievements including the study of his social norms and values.

The term Indian has no standard definition in the United States, either by legislation or court interpretation. Some Indian Bureau services require a person to be one-fourth Indian for participation; others specify one-half. Even tribal requirements vary. For all practical purposes, a person is an Indian if he classifies himself as such.²⁰ In this study, therefore, if a person called himself or herself an Indian, then he or she was an Indian. No attempt was made to verify this claim.

Choctaw County is located in the south central part of the territory which comprised the Choctaw Nation. At the time of removal, the territory in the west had been divided into three political districts. Moshulatubbee was located in the northern part extending from the Arkansas and Canadian Rivers to the ridge between these rivers

¹⁷Robert Jones Shafer, A Guide to Historical Method (Homewood, Illinois: The Dorsey Press, 1969), p. 2.

¹⁸Krug, History and Social Sciences, pp. 13, 43, 50.

¹⁹Shafer, A Guide to Historical Method, p. 8; Muzafer Sherif and Carolyn W. Shafer, Social Psychology (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), p. 141.

²⁰Coffey and Cromley, Red Man's Crisis, p. 3; "There's an Indian," p. 9.

and the Red River. Apuckshunnubbee was in the southeast, extending west to the Kiamichi River. Apushmataha extended west from the Kiamichi River and south of Moshulatubbee.²¹

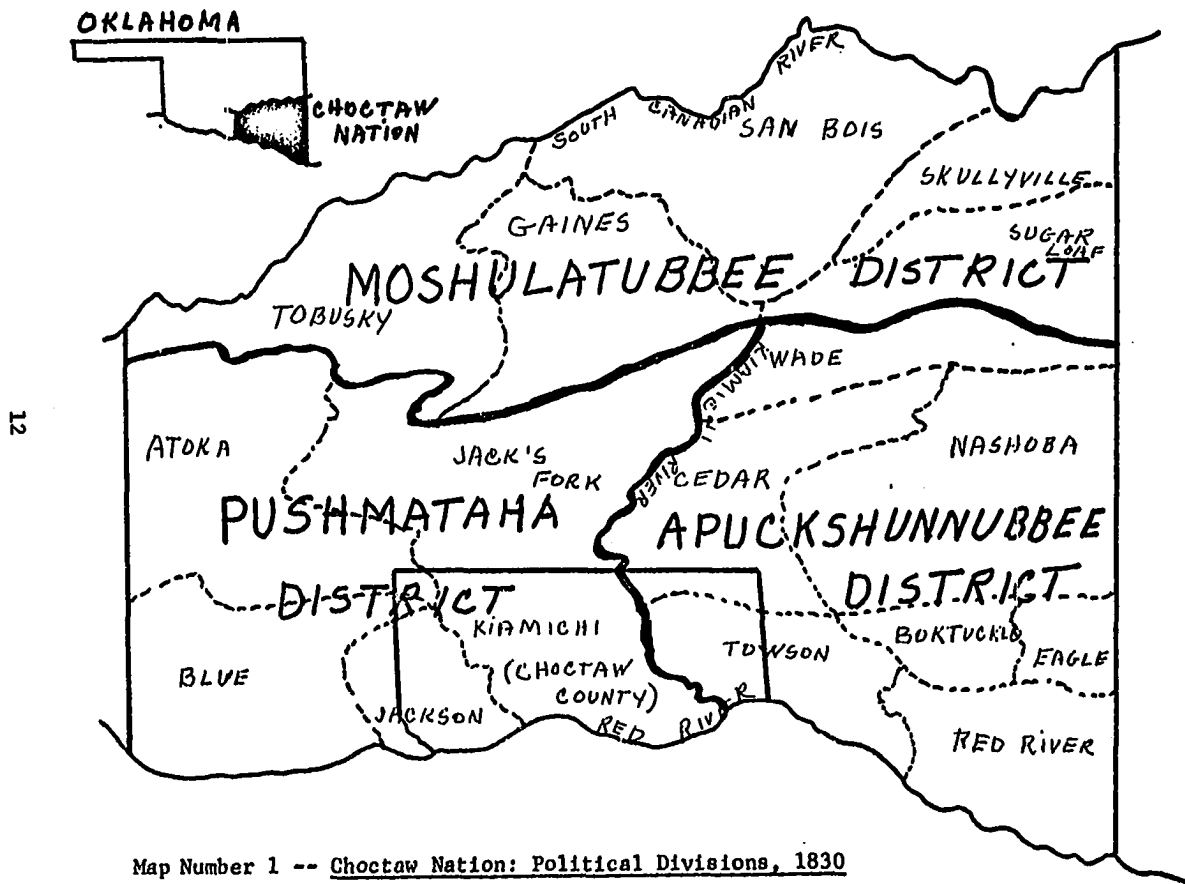
In 1850, the Choctaw Council divided the districts into counties. Apuckshunnubbee was divided into Red River, Boktucklo, Eagle, Nashoba, Wade, Cedar, and Towson Counties. Cedar and Towson were in the southwestern part of the district. Apushmataha was divided into Kiamichi, Tiger Springs, Jack's Fork, and Shappaway Counties. Kiamichi County was in the southeastern part of the district. Choctaw County included almost all of what was Kiamichi County, and parts of Towson, Cedar, Boktucklo, Jack's Fork, and Jackson.²²

Choctaw County is located in the green valley of the Red River which forms the southern boundary of Oklahoma and the Choctaw Nation. The east boundary runs north from a point on Red River about five miles below the mouth of the Kiamichi River. The north boundary is some eighteen or twenty miles north of and parallel to the Red River and the west boundary is twelve miles west of the mouth of the Boggy River. The county is beteen forty to fifty miles from east to west boundary.

To the north and east of Choctaw County lies the scenic, mountainous terrain of the Kiamichi Mountains. The northern and central portions of the county have rolling prairies, while the southern portion, traversed by the Red River, is a highly productive bottom land suitable for agriculture. The Kiamichi River drains the

²¹ Map of Choctaw Nation: Political Divisions, p. 12.

²² Ibid.



eastern half of the county. This river has now been dammed up, forming the beautiful Hugo Lake. The Muddy Boggy and Clear Boggy Rivers drain the western half of the county.²³

The fertile nature of the river bottoms, the abundance of timber and game, and the many salt licks made this section particularly adapted to the needs of the early settlers. From the time of the first migration until statehood, the area which is now Choctaw County, was the center of farming and industry among the Choctaws. Even today, agriculture is a major occupation.

Tourism and recreation have become increasingly important in Choctaw County in recent years. Completed in 1966-67, the scenic Indian Nation Turnpike terminated in Hugo, thus connecting Choctaw County with commercial and industrial areas to the north and south. This highway also provided a convenient access to visitors who wished to seek out the many historically interesting sites which abound or to enjoy the lakes, streams, and natural beauty which were available to them in Choctaw County.²⁴

Procedure

Since this investigation has been concerned with the historical approach, the historical method of research has been used. Thus, the

²³ Inventory of Lakes, Creeks, and Rivers, Potential Outdoor Recreation Developments for Choctaw County Oklahoma (Hugo: Kiamichi Soil and Water Conservation District and Choctaw County Chamber of Commerce, 1970), pp. 14-16.

²⁴ Ibid.; Refer to Map and Legend of Historical Sites in Choctaw County.

weighing of events, the validity of sources, and the thoughtful interpretation of evidence have been given prime consideration.²⁵

Use was also made of two types of interviews, both conducted by the writer of this study. The first type of interview was of an unstructured, informal nature and was concerned with identifying and verifying specific data, particularly of an historical nature of the distant past. The second type of interview, although still informal in nature, was somewhat more structured. Completed by various teachers, Choctaw parents, and Choctaw school children, this interview schedule had as its purpose to identify current problems, attitudes, and trends related to Indian education under investigation.²⁶ In addition, use was made of field trips which involved on-the-spot studies of significant historical sites.

Information and data were obtained from many other sources and repositories. This material was located at the following places: Library of University of Oklahoma, including the Phillips Collection, the Western History Collections, the Rare Books Collection, and the File of Newspapers; Consultative Center for Equal Educational Opportunity, University of Oklahoma; Oklahoma Historical Society and Museum, Oklahoma City, including the Library and Indian Archives; State Department of Education in Oklahoma; State Records Archives; Indian Bureau of Affairs for the Five Civilized Tribes, Muskogee; Museum of Five Civilized Tribes, Muskogee; Gilcrease Institute of History, Tulsa,

²⁵ William W. Brickman, Guide to Research in Educational History (New York: New York University Bookstore, 1949), pp. 92-160.

²⁶ Carter V. Good, A. S. Barr, and Douglas E. Scates, The Methodology of Educational Research (New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1936), p. 187.

Oklahoma; Library of Southeastern State University, Durant, Oklahoma; Choctaw County Courthouse, Choctaw County, Oklahoma; Choctaw Cultural Center, Hugo; Hugo Public Library; Department of Public Welfare, Choctaw County, Hugo; conferences, seminars, and meetings related to Indian education in Oklahoma; historical museums and repositories throughout the Choctaw Nation; Choctaw Nation Tribal Offices at Hugo and Durant; available records and test scores from the Office of Superintendent of Hugo Public Schools; and various meetings and gatherings of the Choctaws themselves.

In recent years, the policy of inner-library exchange of sources and the use of microcopy have greatly modernized research methods. In addition, with each passing year, valuable collections and other materials of an historical nature have found their way into museums and repositories for safekeeping. Thus, a plethora of material concerning the Choctaws was obtained. In deference to the limits of this study, however, much factual and interesting information had to be deleted, even that which related to Choctaw education if such information did not directly concern the Choctaw schools in Choctaw County. Nevertheless, the study fell logically into a well-defined pattern.

Chapter I, Introduction, included topics of a definitive and explanatory nature. Chapter II, Formation of the Schools, was concerned with the years from 1831 to 1841, when the Choctaw schools in Choctaw County were in an embryonic state. Chapter III, A Comprehensive School System Established, 1842 - 1860, dealt with the

important years before the Civil War when the Choctaws were absorbed in passing school laws and in organizing their educational institutions. Chapter IV, The Schools Re-established and Strengthened, 1861 - 1898, discussed the destruction of the schools during the Civil War, the reconstitution of the school system of which the Choctaws were so proud, and the emergence of the Choctaw schools into a more modern educational system. Chapter V, The Integration of the Choctaw Schools, was concerned with the years from 1899, which was the year the Choctaws lost control of their schools and their system was integrated with that of the white man, until the present day with its existing conditions. Chapter VI, the final chapter, presented the conclusions and analyses.

Review of the Literature and Other Sources

Federal, state, and local reports were valuable sources of information for this study. In 1832, the Office of Commissioner of Indian Affairs was created within the War Department. In 1849, the Bureau was transferred to the new Department of the Interior. The annual reports of the Bureau of Indian Affairs were a rich source of material with regard to the early schools in Choctaw County. Although tables existed in these reports, the writings of the superintendents of the individual schools were concerned with information about social, religious, and Choctaw national matters. They discussed the crops, weather conditions, problems, pertinent events, and a variety of other topics. The opinions and conclusions of the Indian Agents were also included.

These reports could not be studied in isolation, however. Many distinguished men journeyed to the Kiamichi River area, keeping journals and diaries of their observations. Among these accounts were Benson's Life Among the Choctaws (1860) Catlin's Letters and Notes (1842); Goode's Outposts of Zion (1864); Thwaites; Early Western Travels (1844); Lowrie's Manual of Missions (1854); McCoy's, History of Baptist Indian Missions (1840); and Mollhausen's Diary (1858).

Several other such writings of this early period deserved special consideration. N. Sayre Harris, Secretary and General Agent of the Protestant Episcopal Church, made a tour of Indian Territory in 1844, recording this findings in his Journal. Again, by the 1840's, the questionable transactions associated with the removals had surfaced. Allen Hitchcock, a former Major-General in the United States Army, was appointed by Congress to investigate. He returned to Washington City with a massive report and over one-hundred verified displays of suspicious dealings. His report was never made public and, in fact, soon disappeared. Only his private journal, A Traveler in Indian Territory, survived. He wrote of visiting the schools in the Kiamichi River area, including those in Choctaw County.

Another such visitor was Rev. P. P. Brown, who accompanied the Trustees on their examinations of the schools in the Choctaw County area in July, 1847. He was particularly impressed with Goodwater, a school for young Choctaw girls located southeast of Ft. Towson, and he described in detail his visit to the plantation home of Robert M. Jones which had been built near present day Hugo.

His account appeared in The Indian Advocate, a Baptist organ of that time.

The book of Horatio Bardwell Cushman, History of the Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Natchez Indians (1899), was an important source of information about the Choctaws. Cushman was born at old Mayhew east of the Mississippi and spent his childhood among the Choctaws. He continued his close friendship with them after removal, especially in his later years.

Since the schools in Choctaw County were a part of the missionary movement, reports and articles which appeared in church publications were very important. In addition, two unpublished documents were of special value: Minutes of the Choctaw Mission, (1853 - 1870) and Minutes of the Indian Presbytery, (1864 - 1873).

Important early newspapers in the area were The Choctaw Telegraph (1848 - 1849), The Choctaw Intelligencer (1850 - 1852), both published at Doaksville near Ft. Towson, and The Northern Standard (1842 - 1854), published at Clarksville, Texas, just across the Red River. Editions and copies of these papers were filled with school news, particularly news of the annual examinations conducted by the Choctaw School Trustees.

The laws of the Choctaw Nation were a special source relative to this study. Possibly, the most famed edition of these laws was that compiled by order of the Choctaw National Council in 1869, edited by Joseph P. Folsom. From that time on, systematic compilations were published. A study of these laws revealed the development of the Choctaw educational system and reflected in many ways the pride of these people in their schools. With regard to laws

and treaties, Kappler's Indian Affairs, Laws and Treaties, (1903 1929), a compilation consisting of four volumes, was an indispensable reference.

Of special interest were the many collections found in libraries, museums, and other repositories. The typewritten Grant Foreman Transcripts, located in the Indian Archives of the Oklahoma Historical Society, were compiled in 1930, long before the days of microfilm, and were laboriously copied from documents and records found in the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Washington. An indefatigable worker, Foreman also compiled several volumes of interviews with older people, long since dead. The Grant Foreman Collection in the Gilcrease Institute in Tulsa contained much valuable information and various rare pamphlets and reports. The Pitchlynn Papers at Gilcrease Institute were also a valuable collection.

The Sue McBeth Papers and Missions and Missionaries in the Indian Archives were two very important collections with regard to this study. Sue McBeth came to the Choctaw Nation and to Goodwater as a young teacher just before the Civil War. Giving specific and detailed information, she kept a diary of her experiences, the schools, and the missionaries. After leaving the Nation, she decided to write an account of her experiences for publication. Apparently, her book was never written, but she did contact the missionaries and leading Choctaws she had known, asking questions and seeking details. Their letters to her were preserved.

Another collection of great importance was the Letters of American Indian Correspondence (1844 - 1877) from the Presbyterian

Historical Society in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Concerned with the schools in the Choctaw County area, these letters were found on microfilm in the Western History Collections at the University of Oklahoma Library. To be found there also were Letters from the Office of Indian Affairs, National Archives, Washington, D. C., published in 1958. Series M - 234 dealt with correspondence concerning the schools of the Choctaw Nation. Various other series offered valuable information.

Among other collections located in the Indian Archives were the R. M. Jones Papers, the Greenwood LeFlore Files, the Choctaw Principal Chiefs, the Folsom Family File, and the Messages of the Chiefs. All of these collections were of great value for this investigation.

Maps of all kinds and of ever possible vintage were continually studied to assist in identifying and localizing specific places. This procedure was important, not only in the early period, but throughout the study. Again, the many on-the-spot field trips to the sites of the old schools and churches, the villages and communities, and the ancient graveyards were of great value in compiling authentic information.

After the Civil War, with the exceptions of Goodland Indian Orphanage and Spencer Academy, the Indian schools were separated from the mission work. Therefore, generally the church publications were no longer of special importance with regard to school information. In the same way, reports of the schools in the Report of Indian Affairs were confined, more often than not, to statistical tables for the entire Choctaw Nation. This made the task of limiting information

strictly to the Choctaw County area very difficult. On the other hand, information gleaned from the many collections, from the Choctaw laws and records, from the newspaper accounts of the time, from the addresses and letters of the chiefs, and from the many interviews by the writer -- all of these sources combined to present a reasonably authentic account of the schools after the war.

Then, once again, after about 1885, as the schools in the Nation developed into a modern system, documented evidence became overwhelming. Each school was required to keep detailed reports, and these reports were preserved in the Indian Archives of the Oklahoma Historical Society. Among many others were files of Spencer Academy (Nos. 19936 - 20000); Choctaw Neighborhood Schools (Nos. 20167 - 22246); and Students in the States (Nos. 22247 - 22521). Other important collections included: Foreman's typed manuscripts, Indian Pioneer History; Gilbert Duke's Papers; Allen Wright Collection; Records of the National Treasury; Citizenship Committee Records; Choctaw Census; and the valuable Muriel H. Wright Collection. In the library of the Oklahoma Historical Society was also a collection of Rare Pictures of Choctaws.

In the Western History Collections at the University of Oklahoma Library, collections of special value for this period were the following: Wright, Allen Collection; LeFlore (Mrs. Carrie) Collection; Cole, Coleman Collection; Fuller (Agnes) Collection; and others. At the old Choctaw National Capitol Building Museum, near Tuskahoma, Oklahoma, were a number of valuable collections, including those of Chief Jackson McCurtain and Chief Greenwood McCurtain.

After the United States took over the school system in 1899, and immediately before and after statehood, once more documents and reports of the Federal Government became an important source of information. Included, among others, are: Reports of the Commissioner to the Five Civilized Tribes (1908 - 1909), Reports on Indians Taxed (1894), Reports of the United States Indian Inspector (1899 - 1901), and Reports of the United States Bureau of the Census (various years). Important Oklahoma documents included the Biennial Reports of the Department of Education (1907 - 1915).

The Chronicles of Oklahoma, published by the Oklahoma Historical Society, preserved much valuable information, along with other such learned publications. While each article must be studied and evaluated, these writings were an important resource.

Although no modern books have been written specifically upon the education of the Choctaws, and certainly not upon the Choctaw schools in Choctaw County, nevertheless a few deserved special consideration. Baird's Peter Pitchlynn: Chief of the Choctaws (1972), gave much insight regarding the early Choctaw schools. Foreman's books, particularly The Five Civilized Tribes (1934), briefly discussed Choctaw education. Muriel H. Wright, a granddaughter of the famous Choctaw chief, Allen Wright, and herself editor for many years of The Chronicles of Oklahoma, had an excellent discussion of the Choctaws and their schools in A Guide to the Indian Tribes of Oklahoma (1951).

For a student of the Choctaws, no book surpassed in importance The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic by Angie Debo.

Published in 1934, this author, a native Oklahoman, received the John H. Dunning Prize awarded biennially by the American Historical Association for the best book submitted in the field of American History. This book stressed the great pride the Choctaws had in their educational system. Debo's And Still the Waters Run (1966) and A History of the Indians of the United States (1970) were equally as well researched and served as a great tribute to this distinguished historian.

Because of modernized methods of research and the mass of more recently accumulated source materials, dissertations written on the Choctaw schools and the Choctaw missions before the 1960's were, for the most part, obsolete. However, a few were worthy of special note. The thesis of Natalie Morrison Denison, Presbyterian Missions and Missionaries Among the Choctaws to 1907 (1938), contained useful information gleaned from personal interviews with the older missionaries of the post-Civil War years. The thesis of H. V. Posey, The Development of Education in Choctaw County (1932), was rudimentary according to current standards. Yet, Posey, who taught for many years in the schools of Choctaw County and in Hugo and who is still living today, gave much valuable information of the years immediately following statehood, most from personal knowledge.

The dissertation of James Davidson Morrison, Social History of the Choctaw, 1865 - 1907 (1951), was filled with amusing anecdotes of this period, many of them relating to the schools. The dissertation of Joe C. Jackson, The History of Education in Eastern Oklahoma from 1898 to 1915 (1950), had a good discussion of Choctaw schools

during this difficult period. The work of Ruth W. Messinger, The Goodland Presbyterian Children's Home (1964), was particularly concerned with conditions which led to the modernizing of this institution. The thesis of David Baird, Spencer Academy (1965), was a thorough, well-documented investigation. A more recent thesis, Life of Cyrus Kingsbury (1973), by Arminta Scott Spalding, emphasized the background of the mission work in Mississippi and the Trail of Tears.

As the civil rights movement gained momentum in the 1960's and the 1970's, a variety of books, pamphlets, articles, and unpublished manuscripts appeared concerning minority groups and the Indians. Many of these provided insight into current problems; however, relatively little specific information was to be found relating solely to the Choctaws, and more specifically, to Choctaw County. Therefore, a study of Indian education in Choctaw County today relied heavily upon newspaper accounts, interviews, conferences and meetings, and documents secured from local sources.

One book was of special help in understanding events centering around educational matters, especially the events of recent years. Tyler's A History of Indian Policy, traced the many changes in Indian policies on the part of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Particular emphasis was given to the years since 1930.

Obviously, no attempt has been made to discuss all of the sources used in this study. Nevertheless, this brief survey has suggested the possibilities involved in this investigation and the magnitude of the task.

Summary

Schools had already been established in the Choctaw Nation in Mississippi before removal to the West. Even at this early time, the Choctaws felt great pride in these neophyte endeavors. Thus, very soon after arriving in their new land, the Choctaws organized their schools. Although interrupted by the Civil War, these schools developed into a more modern educational system which became the most revered of all Choctaw institutions.

With statehood, the Choctaws lost control of their schools which were integrated to help form the white educational system. From then until recent times, little concern had been evidenced for the Indian school child. However, with the civil rights movement of the 1960's and 1970's, educators became increasingly sensitive to the needs of these children. This increased awareness resulted in the recognition of the value of knowing the historical past. Such knowledge helped in understanding the Indian culture, current events, and the feelings, motivations, and behaviors of the Indian school child and youth. Thus, problems were identified and solutions sought. This need provided the basis for this study.

Of necessity, such a study as this was limited to the microcosm. Therefore, this study was confined to the area known today as Choctaw County, Oklahoma. Again, although with each passing year additional historical materials from the distant past came to light, current information was more difficult to obtain. Hopefully, however, an investigation of this one small area in the Choctaw Nation has provided a window through which teachers and administra-

tors may look to understand better the Indian school children and youth, not only in Choctaw County, but in the larger section of southeastern Oklahoma.

CHAPTER II

FORMATION OF THE SCHOOLS, 1831 - 1841

Amid the gloom and horrors of the present separation, we are cheered with the hope that ere long we shall reach our destined home, and that nothing short of the basest treachery will ever be able to wrest it from us, and we may live free.¹

George W. Harkins

INTRODUCTION

For a number of years following removal, the pride of the Choctaws in the education of their children seemed in peril of disappearing. Schools established in the Choctaw Nation in the West, and within the boundaries of Choctaw County, survived only under the greatest difficulties. The people suffered from shock and exhaustion; they fought disease, starvation, and floods. In addition, the tribe was consumed with political matters and torn internally by bitter disagreements. Although dedicated Choctaw leaders were concerned for the advancement of their people, a combination of these adverse conditions left little energy for either them or the common man to be zealous for the cause of education.

¹ George W. Harkins, Niles' Register, Vol. XLI (1832), p. 480.

First Schools in Choctaw County

From the inception of schools among the Indians, including the Choctaws, religious, utilitarian, and literary instruction were inseparable. On March 3, 1819, the United States Congress appropriated \$10,000 per year to instruct the Indians. This appropriation came to be known as the "Civilization Fund." The Secretary of War, John C. Calhoun, decided the best method of attaining the desired results would be to subsidize missionary schools. Thus, the first educational institutions among the Choctaws were religiously oriented.²

Probably the first school in Choctaw County was a Sabbath School in, or near, Doaksville. Rev. Alexander Talley, physician and Methodist missionary to the Choctaws, had instructions from Chief Greenwood LeFlore to go on ahead to reorganize the churches. With a party of emigrants from the Northwestern District in the old Choctaw Nation, Talley reached the Kiamichi River area early in 1831. No known record exists of a mission station having been established by Talley. However, during the difficult months of 1831-32, religious meetings were held. More likely than not, as was customary in the Indian mission work, a Sabbath School was conducted. To say the least, from these early months on, the area near Doaksville

²Dawson A. Phelps, "The Choctaw Mission," Journal of Mississippi History, Vol. XIV, No. 1 (January, 1952), pp. 38-9; Arminta Scott Spalding, "From the Natchez Trace to Oklahoma: Development of Christian Civilization Among the Choctaws, 1800 - 1860," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XLV, No. 1 (Spring, 1967), pp. 2-24; Horatio Bardwell Cushman, History of the Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Natchez Indians (Greenville, Texas: Headlight Printing House, 1899), p. 99; Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1839 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office), p. 469; Niles' Register, Vol. SVI (1832), p. 393.

became the headquarters of Methodist efforts, with educational work centering around the Sabbath Schools.³

Talley was the first of the missionaries among the Choctaws to arrive in the West. After extreme suffering from hunger and exposure to severe winter weather, a second party led by Thomas Myers, reached the Kiamichi. When Lieutenant Stephenson of the 7th Infantry from Ft. Gibson arrived at Ft. Towson on March 7, 1831, he found an emaciated group of Choctaws occupying the decaying cabins of the old fort.⁴

Established in 1824, Ft. Towson had been abandoned in 1829. A short time later, the main buildings burned leaving only a few delapidated structures. With the arrival of Stephenson, the post was re-opened. Then, soon afterwards, Josiah S. Doakes, a trader, set up a store one mile west of the fort across Gates Creek. This settlement was named Doaksville.⁵ The first parties of Choctaws,

³ Grant Foreman, The Five Civilized Tribes (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1970), p. 37; Grant Foreman, Indian Removal (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1932), p. 39; Arthur H. DeRosier, Jr., The Removal of the Choctaw Indians (Knoxville, Tennessee Press, 1970), pp. 129-47; Angie Debo, The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1934), p. 63.

⁴ Foreman, Five Civilized Tribes, p. 37; Foreman, Indian Removal, p. 42.

⁵ Grant Foreman, ed., A Traveler in Indian Territory: The Journal of Ethan Allen Hitchcock, 1840 (Cedar Springs, Iowa: The Torch Press, 1830), pp. 13-14, 186; A. W. Neville, The Red River Valley (Paris, Texas: North Texas Publishing Co., 1948), p. 29; Muriel H. Wright, "The Removal of the Choctaws to Indian Territory, 1830 - 1833," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. VI, No. 2 (June, 1928), p. 108; W. B. Morrison, "Ft. Towson," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. VIII, No. 2 (June, 1930), pp. 226-32.

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⁴ Foreman, Five Civilized Tribes, p. 37; Foreman, Indian Removal, p. 42.

⁵ Grant Foreman, ed., A Traveler in Indian Territory: The Journal of Ethan Allen Hitchcock, 1840 (Cedar Springs, Iowa: The Torch Press, 1830), pp. 13-14, 186; A. W. Neville, The Red River Valley (Paris, Texas: North Texas Publishing Co., 1948), p. 29; Muriel H. Wright, "The Removal of the Choctaws to Indian Territory, 1830 - 1833," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. VI, No. 2 (June, 1928), p. 108; W. B. Morrison, "Ft. Towson," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. VIII, No. 2 (June, 1930), pp. 226-32.

however, found only desolation. They were forced to subsist on the scanty supply of corn Talley had purchased with his own money and had brought on pack horses from the nearest settlements in Arkansas many miles to the east. Later, Talley sought to be reimbursed by the government for his meager savings he had spent to keep the Indians from starving. After his death in 1836, Talley's claim was denied on the ground that his purchases of food had not been previously authorized by the government.⁶

On November 30, 1831, the Mississippi Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, meeting at Woodville, Mississippi, appointed Alexander Talley Superintendent of the Choctaw Mission in the West. Moses Perry and William Winans Oakchiah, Choctaw Christians, were named his associates. These two dedicated Choctaws had a great influence upon their people. Oakchiah became the first native itinerate Choctaw preacher, riding many hundreds of miles in his ministry.⁷ Thus, as teachers in the Sabbath School, Alexander Talley and his two Choctaw helpers were probably the first teachers in Choctaw County.

Talley held the position of Superintendent of the Methodist Choctaw Mission until November, 1834. When Talley asked to be relieved because of failing health, his request was granted, and the Conference

⁶ Foreman, Indian Removal, pp. 40-2.

⁷ Sidney Henry Babcock and John Y. Bryce, History of Methodism in Oklahoma (No publisher given, 1935), pp. 24-5, 47; J. Y. Bryce, "Death of Oakchiah, A Missionary," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. IV, No. 2 (June, 1926), pp. 194-99; Talley to Haley, February 12, 1835, Pitchlynn Papers, Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

praised him highly for his management of the Choctaw Mission, his service, and his sacrifice. However, conference records fail to mention that he had become the focal point of bitter dissension throughout the Choctaw Nation.⁸

During the years when the Choctaws were dealing with the United States government, pressure mounted to effect removal. Chief Greenwood LeFlore, a Methodist convert, evidently came to believe removal would serve the best interest of his people. LeFlore succeeded in getting himself elected chief of the entire Nation. Then, with the assistance of Alexander Talley, LeFlore drew up and sent to Washington a proposed removal treaty. The Senate failed to ratify the treaty, but the attempted coup threw the Choctaw Nation into an uproar, with the anger and bitterness spilling over onto other missionaries besides Talley.⁹

LeFlore's followers were largely made up of half bloods who had come under the influence of the missionaries. Chiefs Moshulatubbee and Nitakechi, whose followers were the full blood element, accused the missionaries of meddling in tribal affairs and were strongly anti-Christian and anti-education.¹⁰

When removal became inevitable, Moshulatubbee and Nitakechi wrote the government saying the schools had been a costly failure.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Missionary Herald, Vol. XXVI, 1830, p. 253; Foreman, Indian Removal, p. 39; George S. Gaines, Dancing Rabbit Creek Treaty (No publisher given, 1867); Niles' Register, Vol. XXXVIII (1830), p. 457; Senate Documents, 23 Congress, 1 Session, No. 512 (Washington, 1834-35), pp. 58-9, 216; Debo, Rise and Fall, pp. 53-4; William H. Goode, Outposts of Zion (Cincinnati: Poe and Hitchcock, 1846), p. 41.

¹⁰ Ibid.

They opposed the missionaries going to the new country and requested the government not to allow any of them to go there, or to send new ones if any at all. They abolished Sabbath observance and threatened to undo the work of the missionaries. After removal, Moshulatubbee wrote again requesting that Talley be expelled from the Nation.¹¹

Judgment against the missionaries may not have been entirely just. While Talley and other Methodist missionaries supported removal, Kingsbury and his Presbyterian Associates were very sympathetic toward the Indians and their willingness to leave the land they loved.¹² Nevertheless, because of the influence of Moshulatubbee, for many years few schools were in the Northern District of the new Choctaw Nation. After the death of the old Chief, however, the Northern District joined the rest of the Nation in a revival of interest in education.¹³

Thus, the pride of the Choctaws in their schools could not easily be obliterated. Dedicated to their church and their Sabbath Schools, that first tiny band of emigrants to arrive at Ft. Towson began, in an humble way, the rebuilding of their shattered institutions.

¹¹Miles' Register, Vol. XXXVIII (1830), pp. 467-68; Missionary Herald, Vol. XVII, (1831), p. 353.

¹²Account written by Rev. Cyrus Kingsbury, Sue McBeth Papers, Indian Archives, Oklahoma Historical Society; W. B. Morrison, "The Choctaw Mission of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. IV, No. 2 (June, 1926), p. 178.

¹³Cushman, History of the Choctaw, p. 84; George Catlin, North American Indians, Vol. II (Edinburgh, 1926), p. 140; Foreman, Indian Removal, p. 203 n.; Charles J. Kappler, Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties, Vol. IV (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1926), pp. 435-39.

Kinds of Schools

The earliest schools in Choctaw County were of two kinds -- Sabbath Schools and neighborhood schools or day schools. While most missionaries kept a limited number of Choctaw students in their homes, boarding schools were not organized for some years.¹⁴

The Sabbath School was far more comprehensive in scope than our modern "Sunday School." Interspersed by preaching services, classes were a means of adult education. Until firmly established and capable Choctaw assistants could take over, the school was taught by the missionary. Instruction was given in simple arithmetic and writing, but the primary purpose of the Sabbath School was to teach reading, especially the reading of the scriptures and moral pamphlets translated into the Choctaw language.¹⁵

Methodist work had no neighborhood schools, only Sabbath Schools. A Methodist parsonage located a few miles east of Fort Towson became the center of this activity. Located somewhere in the vicinity of present day Swink, Choctaw County, this parsonage was probably near the abode of Chief LeFlore. Rev. Gregory, one of the early Methodist missionaries, reported a large number of Choctaws to be members of this church. A report in 1842, stated that 159 Choctaw children and adults in Sabbath Schools in the area were all learning to read the Choctaw language.¹⁶

¹⁴

Foreman, Five Civilized Tribes, p. 46.

¹⁵

Missionary Herald, Vol. XXVI, 1830, pp. 3, 21; Vol. XXXVI, 1840, p. 398; Report of Indian Affairs, 1830, pp. 166-68.

¹⁶

J. Y. Bryce, "About Some of Our First Schools in the Choctaw Nation," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. VI, No. 3 (September, 1928), pp. 33, 357; Report of Indian Affairs, 1842, p. 502.

Sabbath Schools were established by other missionaries as well as the Methodist. Goodwater, Ft. Towson, and Mayhew all reported flourishing Sabbath Schools. Up the Boggy River near the home of Col. Isaac Folsom, a Sabbath School was taught by Nicholas Cochnauer. Cyrus Kingsbury and Ebenezer Hotchkin established Sabbath Schools at most of the preaching points on their wide circuit which included the area from Fort Towson to the Boggy River and as far west as the Blue River in Bryan County.¹⁷

Neighborhood schools were taught on weekdays by missionary preachers and teachers as a part of a mission station. Most of these workers were sent out by a church board; however, while recommended by a mission board, some were appointed by the United States government. These teachers were known as United States or Treaty Teachers. Although missionary in purpose and practice, Treaty Teachers maintained only an advisory relationship to their mission board.¹⁸

In most cases, the neighborhood school was first conducted in the home of the teacher until a school building could be erected. These early structures were one-room log cabins with hard-packed dirt floors, crudely furnished. The basic curricula consisted of reading, spelling, writing, and arithmetic. Generally, the school buildings served as a meeting place for the church and Sabbath Schools as well as the weekday schools.¹⁹

¹⁷ Report of Indian Affairs, 1841, pp. 203-4, 305-6; 1842, p. 499; 1844, pp. 384-86; Goode, Outposts of Zion, p. 197; Missionary Herald, Vol. XXXVII, 1841, p. 476.

¹⁸ Baptist Missionary Magazine, Vol. XVII, 1837, pp. 128-9.

¹⁹ Babcock and Bryce, History of Methodism, p. 43.

As interest in education increased, neighborhood schools increased also, many being taught by educated Choctaws.²⁰ The most important of these early neighborhood schools in Choctaw County were Clear Creek, Providence, Pine Ridge, Goodwater, and Mayhew.

Clear Creek

In 1833, a school was opened at Clear Creek by Ebenezer Hotchkin. Ration stations had been set up at Clear Creek and Horse Prairie to provide relief for exhausted emigrants. Horse Prairie was near present-day Hugo; Clear Creek Station was south of Ft. Towson, about three miles above Red River. Eventually, besides the school, a store, a log courthouse, a blacksmith shop, and a church were all located at Clear Creek. Today, remains of this settlement have disappeared.²¹

Mr. and Mrs. Hotchkin, their young son John and infant daughter Marie, were a part of that group of Presbyterian missionaries who emigrated with the Choctaws. In December, 1832, the Hotchkins reached Bethabara about the same time as the emigrant parties of Nail and Harkins arrived. Bethabara was located in present day McCurtain County. The Hotchkins remained here until the Spring of 1833, then

²⁰ Missionary Herald, Vol. XXXVII, 1841, pp. 475-6; Spalding, "From Natchez Trace," Chronicles (Spring, 1967), p. 45; Foreman, Five Civilized Tribes, p. 43; Report of Indian Affairs, 1841, pp. 303-4.

²¹ Robert Elliott Flickinger, The Choctaw Freedman (Fonda, Iowa: Journal and Rimes Press, 1914), pp. 11-12; Foreman, Indian Removal, pp. 44-49.

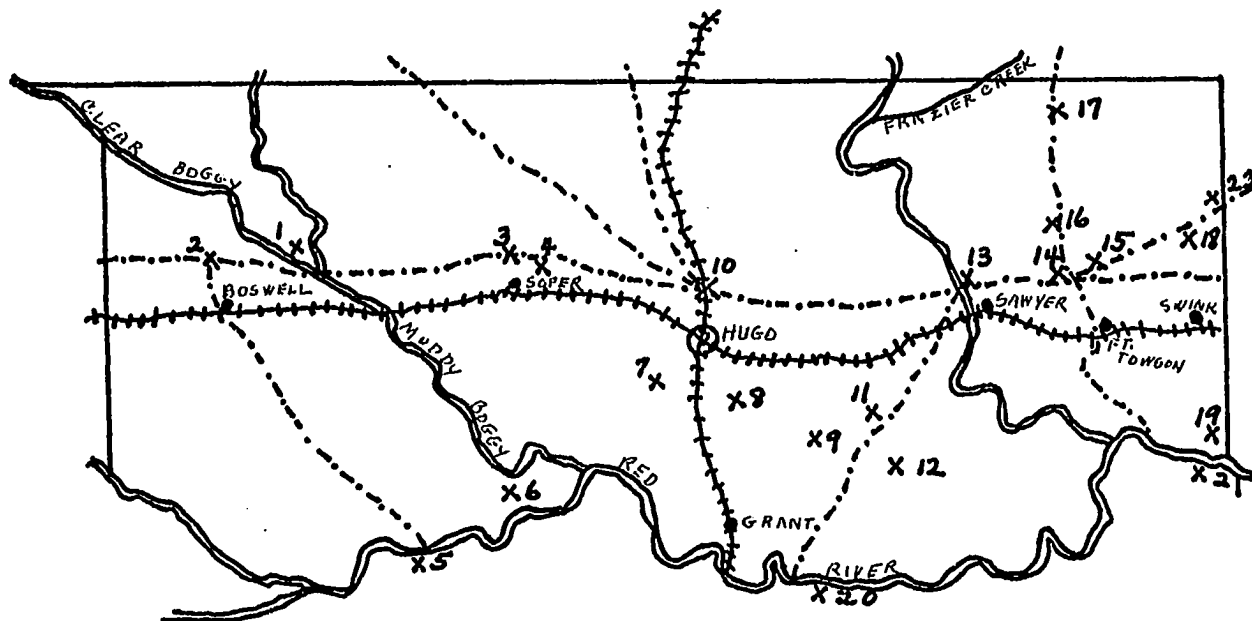
traveled to Clear Creek where Hotchkin constructed a log cabin 15 feet square and he and his wife began their work. Miss Anna Burnham, missionary-teacher, assisted them, then began a school of her own in the vicinity.²²

Often called "the school-teacher of the Choctaw Mission," Ebenezer Hotchkin was born in Richmond, Massachusetts, March 19, 1803. As a young man, he was strongly influenced by the missionary zeal pervading in Lenox at this time. In 1828, Anna Burnham returned from her missionary work in the Choctaw Country for a visit to her home in Lenox. Later that year, she went back to Yokokchaya (Living Land), accompanied by Hotchkin. Soon he had met and married Philena Thatcher, one of the earliest recruits when Kinsbury established the Mayhew Mission. Hotchkin was duly liscensed and, in 1841, ordained as an "evangelist."²³

Described as a hard worker, bold and earnest, Ebenezer Hotchkin must have found the work at Clear Creek discouraging. As one of the destination points of the emigrants, the place bore the full force of the bitterness toward the white man. By December,

²² Missionary Herald, Vol. XXIV, 1833, p. 205; Vol. XXX, 1834, pp. 7, 24-25; Mary Hotchkin to McBeth, February 14, 1972, Sue McBeth Papers, Indian Archives.

²³ Mary Hotchkin to McBeth, No date; Gleason to McBeth, June 12, 1872; Mary Hotchkin to McBeth, February 14, 1972, Sue McBeth Papers, Indian Archives; Statistical View of the Board and its Missions, Missionary Herald, Vol. XXXVI, 1840, p. 31; Vol. XXXIX, 1843, p. 13; Morrison, "The Choctaw Mission," Chronicles (June, 1926), p. 176; Ethel McMillan, "Woman Teachers in Oklahoma," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XXXVII, No. 1 (1949-50), pp. 18-19.



Legend:

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Folsom Salt Works | 9. Horse Prairie | 17. Old Spencer Academy |
| 2. Mayhew | 10. Goodland | 18. Old Chief's House |
| 3. Nelson | 11. Everidge House | 19. Clear Creek |
| 4. New Spencer Academy | 12. Goodwater Mission | 20. Slate Shoals |
| 5. Rocky Ford Crossing | 13. Rock Chimney Crossing | 21. Wright's Crossing |
| 6. Living Land | 14. Doaksville | 22. Oak Hill Academy |
| 7. Goodland Orphanage | 15. Old Ft. Towson | |
| 8. Rose Hill -- Providence Mission | 16. Pine Ridge | |

Military Roads - - - - -
 Railroads + + + + +

Map Number 2 -- Historical Sites in Choctaw County, 1832-1907

1836, Hotchkin reported only 11 pupils in his school. Thus, in 1837, he abandoned the Clear Creek Station. With the help of the Choctaws, a schoolhouse had been erected a few miles to the west by the United States government. Having received an appointment as a government teacher, Hotchkin moved to the site, opening the school there. He called the place "Goodwater."²⁴

With the Hotchkins no longer at Clear Creek, Anna Burnham went to Pine Ridge to work with Rev. Cyrus Kingsbury. However, the school at Clear Creek did not cease to exist. About the first of October, 1837, John T. Lewis was appointed by the United States as a Treaty Teacher there. Caught up in the gradual rebirth of the interest in education on the part of the Choctaws, the school began to grow. In 1841, Lewis reported 26 scholars with classes in geography, history, arithmetic, bookkeeping, reading, writing, and spelling.²⁵

From this modest beginning, for many years a neighborhood school existed at Clear Creek. Except for the unsettled Civil War period, Flickinger stated a school was on this site at least until the year 1899.²⁶

Providence

In 1835, Rev. and Mrs. Ramsey D. Potts were sent to the Choctaws by the Baptist under the Board of Domestic and Indian Missions

²⁴ Gleason to McBeth, June 12, 1872, Sue McBeth Papers, Indian Archives; Report of Indian Affairs, 1836, p. 421; 1837, p. 606; 1842, pp. 495-499; Missionary Herald, Vol. XXXI, 1835, pp. 24-25; Vol. XXXIII, 1837, p. 22; Vol. XXXVI, 1840, p. 31.

²⁵ Report of Indian Affairs, 1838, pp. 450-51; 1841, pp. 281-82, 301-02; 1842, p. 521; Missionary Herald, Vol. XXXIII, 1837, p. 22.

²⁶ Flickinger, Choctaw Freedman, p. 22.

located in Lewisville, Kentucky. Potts received an appointment as a Treaty Teacher with a salary of \$800 per annum; hence his appointment was without cost to the Board. The location chosen by Potts was a few miles southeast of Hugo. He named the station he established "Providence."²⁷

In this area, Chief Nitakechi built a cabin and continued as Chief of the Pushmataha District. Third in succession from the famed Chief Pushmataha, Nitakechi was the oldest and perhaps the most influential of the chiefs. Deeply resenting removal and strongly opposed to education, Nitakechi exerted a great influence over the full bloods settled around him. The Baptist Board expressed concern over this unfriendliness and hostility of these Choctaws. However, Potts optimistically defended the importance of his location.²⁸

On October 8, 1837, Ramsey Potts was ordained to the ministry, and on October 15, a church consisting of four members was organized at the station. This was the first Baptist church in Choctaw territory. The following Sabbath, Potts administered baptism to "two candidates (colored)." Soon, two others, one a Choctaw woman, were baptized, making a total of 8 members.²⁹

27

Isaac McCoy, History of Baptist of Indian Mission (New York: H. & S. Raunor, 1840), p. 485; "Notes and Documents," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XXX, No. 1 (Spring, 1952), p. 242.

28

Gaines, Dancing Rabbit Creek Treaty, p. 26; Report of Indian Affairs, 1837, p. 605; Baptist Mission Magazine, Vol. XVII (June, 1837), p. 129; Vol. XVIII (January, 1838 - November 1), p. 142.

29

Baptist Mission Magazine, Vol. XVIII, 1828, pp. 24-141.

Shortly after settling at Providence, Potts, assisted by his wife, opened a school. At first, the scholars were "few and irregular in attendance." The report of 1838, however, indicated an enrollment of 25 with the school in a prosperous condition. In February, 1838, Miss Lucy Taylor had arrived to establish a school for "native females." Studying Choctaw as she found opportunity, Lucy Taylor taught the girls the "common branches of an English education, as well as instruction in needlework and music."³⁰ In 1841, Potts reported 22 scholars had attended his school, 11 of whom had boarded with his family. For four he had received compensation, "the residue"³¹ he had supported himself.

Agent Armstrong praised Potts for his piety and labor; however, the school at Providence was destined to close.³² The Choctaw Council of 1842, made sweeping changes in the Choctaw schools and Providence was not included in their plans.

Pine Ridge

At Pine Ridge, Cyrus Kingsbury, "the statesman of the Choctaw Mission," operated a school, preached at the church there and at other preaching points, supervised missionary activities including the mission schools, and was often consulted as a physician. Located on a principal thoroughfare going north, Pine Ridge was about a mile

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Ibid., Vol. XVII, 1837, p. 129; Vol. XVIII, 1838, pp. 141-42; McMillan, "Woman Teachers," Chronicles (Spring, 1949), p. 27; Report of Indian Affairs, 1837, p. 605.

³¹

Report of Indian Affairs, 1841, pp. 302-02.

³²

Ibid., 1841, p. 297; 1842, p. 521.

from Doaksville, two miles from Ft. Towson, and was so named because of a stately grove of pines on the ridge. Today, this place is the home site of Mr. and Mrs. Rush Winters. The old well, still in use, is there; the pines are there; but the foundation stones of the old buildings have long since disappeared.³³

Called by the Choctaws, "Na-sho-ba-An-o-wa," meaning "limping wolf," because of a scythe cut in his youth on one foot, Kingsbury was in frail health for many years; yet he was indefatigable in his work. The first Mrs. Kingsbury died at old Mayhew, September 15, 1822, leaving two little boys, Cyrus and John. Kingsbury married his second wife, Electa Mae (May), May 10, 1824.³⁴

As the prospects of removal drew near, Christian Indians led by David Folsom, sent urgent and pathetic appeals to allow the missionaries to accompany them beyond the Great River. The Board assured them they would not abandon the people in their perilous and distressing condition. Thus, Kingsbury and a co-worker, Cyrus

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Morrison, "Choctaw Mission," Chronicles (June, 1926), p. 175; W. B. Morrison, "Diary of Rev. Cyrus Kingsbury," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. III, No. 2 (June, 1925), p. 152; Interview and Field Trip, Mr. and Mrs. Rush Winters, July 3, 1965, Ft. Towson, Oklahoma.

34

Report of Indian Affairs, 1842, p. 332; 1842, p. 498; Ainslie to McBeth, August 16, 1872, Sue McBeth Papers, Indian Archives; N. Sayre Harris, "Journal of a Tour in Indian Territory, Spring, 1844," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. X., No. 2 (June, 1932), pp. 219-56; Jedidiah Morse, A Report to the Secretary of War of the United States on Indian Affairs, Summer of 1821 (Washington, D. C.: Davis and Force, 1822), pp. 193, 372-73; Missionary Herald, Vol. XIX, 1823, p. 1; Vol. XXIII, 1827, p. 9; Cushman, History of the Choctaw, p. 87; "Outline of the Labors of the Missionaries Among the Choctaws, June, 1818-1842," Unsigned but probably by C. Kingsbury, Edwards (John) Papers, Indian Archives.

Byington, remained in Mississippi until removal was over, disposing of missionary property and closing stations. Their work completed, they made a tour of the "wild Indians" in the Kansas region. In 1834, they reached the area of Ft. Towson to plan future locations for their work. They then returned East for their families. By the time Kingsbury once again reached the Choctaw Nation, Hotchkin was at Clear Creek; Potts was at Providence; and Rev. Joel Wood had opened the mission at Pine Ridge.³⁵

With specific instructions, Wood reached Doaksville and the site of Pine Ridge in February, 1835, to prepare for Kingsbury's arrival. As was customary, as soon as possible Wood began a Sabbath School and a small day school. A report of 1836 showed Pine Ridge had a day school of 13 pupils. In January, 1836, Wood organized a church with three Indian members and a soldier from Ft. Towson. This church seems to have been south of the school and came to be identified with Doaksville.³⁶

Kingsbury arrived at Pine Ridge on February 25, 1836. In May, 1836, Wood returned to his home in Greenfield, New York, compelled to leave the Indian country because of sickness. On July 13, 1836, the Choctaw Mission was organized at a place called Bethel in McCurtain County. Composed of those ministers and leaders sent out

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Missionary Herald, Vol. XXVII, 1831, p. 284; Vol. XXXIII, 1837, p. 21; Account by Kingsbury; Byington to McBeth, 1872, Sue McBeth Papers, Indian Archives; Morrison, "Choctaw Mission," Chronicles (June, 1926), pp. 178-79.

36

Report of Indian Affairs, 1820, pp. 188; 1836, p. 421; Missionary Herald, Vol. XXXIII, 1837, p. 21; Vol. XXXII, 1836, p. 366; Harris, "Journal of a Tour," Chronicles (June, 1932), p. 224.

by the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions, Cyrus Kingsbury was chosen the presiding officer, a position he held until his death.³⁷

With the departure of Wood, Kingsbury and his wife were in dire need of help. After Hotchkin moved to Goodwater, "Good Sister" Burnham helped out at Pine Ridge for a short time, then opened a small school of her own near the Red River. This left Electa Mae Kingsbury with the sole responsibility of the school. During the 1840-41 session, she reported an eight-months session, with 18 in day school and 14 in Saturday school.³⁸

By this time, Cyrus Kingsbury, with the assistance of Ebenezer Hotchkin, was busily engaged in setting up preaching points in the west. In the many weeks when Kingsbury was absent from Pine Ridge, besides her teaching duties, Mrs. Kingsbury had the responsibility of the entire station as well as the countless household tasks. Included was the boarding of a number of children and youths. Two of these were the young men J. E. Dwight and Pliny Fisk, both studying theology with Kingsbury. Another young man who joined the household December 14, 1840, was Allen Wright. Destined to become Chief of the

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Missionary Herald, Vol. XXXIII, 1837, p. 21; Vol. XXVI, 1840; pp. 31-40; Harris, "Journal of a Tour," Chronicles (June, 1932), o. 221 n.; Goode, Outposts of Zion, p. 199; Morse, A Report on Indian Affairs, p. 188; William B. Morrison, The Red Man's Trail (Richmond, Virginia: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1932), p. 65.

38

Missionary Herald, Vol. XXXIII, 1837, p. 22; Elizabeth H. Hunt, "Two Letters from Pine Ridge Mission," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. L, No. 2 (Summer, 1972), p. 221; Report of Indian Affairs, 1841, pp. 305-06.

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Choctaws from 1866 to 1870 and to have profound influence upon Choctaw education, the young Allen Wright went to live and study with Kingsbury until Pine Ridge became a female boarding school under the Act of 1842 by the Choctaw Council.³⁹

In February, 1842, Miss Harriet Arms, of Conway, Massachusetts, reached Pine Ridge to assist the beleaguered Kingsburys. Her arrival released Mrs. Kingsbury from schoolroom duties. From this time on, for many years, Electa Mae Kingsbury supervised the kitchen as her great and necessary contribution to the work of the mission station.⁴⁰

Cyrus Kingsbury was regarded by the American Board as the head of the Choctaw Mission. Because of this position and the strategic location of the Pine Ridge station, the Kingsburys frequently entertained visitors, including distinguished guests from the States. One such dignitary was Allen Hitchcock.

In an entry in his personal journal dated February 23, 1842, Hitchcock described his journey across the beautiful prairie between the Boggy and the Kiamichi Rivers. Arriving in Doaksville, he found board and lodging with Col. David Folsom. David Folsom had originally settled some miles east of Ft. Towson, but the bustling activity of

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Missionary Herald, Vol. XIX, 1823, p. 252; Vol. XXXVI, 1840, p. 399; Vol. XXXVII, 1841, pp. 14, 474; Vol. XXIX, 1843, p. 41; Report of Indian Affairs, 1841, pp. 305-06; 1842, p. 499; A. Wright to McBeth, June 10, 1872, Sue McBeth Papers, Indian Archives.

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Report of Indian Affairs, 1843, p. 333; McMillan, "Women Teachers," Chronicles (Spring, 1949), p. 25; Hunt, "Two Letters," Chronicles (Summer, 1972), p. 221.

Doaksville and the Kiamichi River area had its appeal. Sometime in the late thirties, Folsom moved to Doaksville and opened a "house" for travelers. His establishment became renowned for its good food, its gracious host, and its beds with clean, white sheets. Hitchcock noted that a book at Col. Folsom's was entitled The Moral Instructor, which included Pope's "Essay on Man."⁴¹

On the Sabbath, Hitchcock attended preaching in Kingsbury's church at Doaksville. After a brief visit and introduction at the Garrison (Ft. Towson), Hitchcock accompanied Kingsbury home for tea, where he met Miss Arms who had just arrived. The next day, Hitchcock visited Kingsbury again, questioning him about the missionary work and the progress of the students. Hitchcock was especially impressed with the performance of a "fat, chubby eleven year old full blood Choctaw girl" who read several verses from the Bible and "did not miss a word."⁴²

At this time, after ten difficult years, the Choctaws were beginning to shake off the tragedies and shock they had suffered. Along with other missionaries, Kingsbury reported an increasing concern for education.

Already, the decision had been made by the Choctaw Council to build an academy and the buildings for the new boys' school were now under construction about ten miles north of Ft. Towson. The Nation hummed with reports that other plans for schools would soon be

⁴¹ Foreman, ed., A Traveler in Indian Territory, pp. 178-86; 190-95.

⁴² Ibid.

instigated. In a position to be aware of these matters, Kingsbury wrote to Agent Armstrong that he hoped Pine Ridge would be chosen as one of those schools under the patronage of the Choctaw Nation. "It has been suggested by some of the leading men," he wrote, "that this would be a suitable place for the location of a school for the education of females."⁴³

Goodwater

In conformity with treaty stipulations, the Federal Government had agreed to build in each of the three districts a log schoolhouse, to be used both as a school and a church, and a cabin for the teacher. Located in the Pushmataha District, these were the new buildings constructed several miles west of Clear Creek into which Ebenezer Hotchkin and his family moved. The new school was located near the homes of the Oakes and the Everidge families. Dominated by large, ancient oaks, "Goodwater" was near a stream fed by springs of clear water.⁴⁴

From the beginning, the school at Goodwater was a thriving institution. In the first year of operation, Hotchkin reported 48 students, the number divided about equally between the day school and the Sabbath School. In 1840, a number of the students were well advanced in their studies, and one of the advanced students had been

⁴³ Missionary Herald, Vol. XXXVI, 1840, p. 399; Vol. XXXVII, 1841, p. 474; Vol. XXXIX, 1843, p. 14; Report of Indian Affairs, 1842, p. 499.

⁴⁴ Mary Hotchkin to McBeth, No date, Sue McBeth Papers, Indian Archives; Report of Indian Affairs, 1842, pp. 495-99; Foreman, Five Civilized Tribes, p. 30; Missionary Herald, Vol. XXXV, 1839, p. 13; Vol. XXXVI, 1840, pp. 397-98.

appointed by the Indian Agent as a school teacher of a "public school near the Boggy." More likely than not, Hotchkin referred to Tryphena Wall.⁴⁵

With the arrival of Kingsbury, Hotchkin's missionary activities increased greatly. At first, the two men made the long trips together. Eventually, however, they worked out a regular routine. Riding horseback, alternating with Kingsbury, Hotchkin journeyed west at stated intervals, preaching at the established points and opening up new work, especially in the more populated settlements on the Boggy.⁴⁶

Like Kingsbury, Hotchkin's missionary efforts required that he be gone two or three weeks from home, leaving Mrs. Hotchkin alone with two little children. At these times, Mrs. Hotchkin taught the school and assumed responsibility for the entire station. On his tour through Indian Territory, Goode, a representative of the Methodist Church, visited Goodwater to find Rev. Hotchkin absent. He expressed great surprise that Mrs. Hotchkin had "for an extended period of time, and, in a most cheerful spirit, conducted the affairs of the station with a high level of efficiency."⁴⁷

By 1842, the missionaries had begun serious efforts for the cause of temperance. The movement was "doing wonders," Hotchkin reported. The greatest school problems were regular attendance and

⁴⁵ Report of Indian Affairs, 1838, p. 450; 1841, pp. 303-06; Missionary Herald, Vol. XXXVI, 1840, p. 398; Vol. XXXVII, 1841, p. 474.

⁴⁶ Report of Indian Affairs, 1843, p. 337; Missionary Herald, Vol. XXXVI, 1840, p. 399; Vol. XXXVII, pp. 14, 141, 474, 476.

⁴⁷ Mary Hotchkin to McBeth, No date, Sue McBeth Papers, Indian Archives; McMillan, "Woman Teachers," Chronicles (Spring, 1949), p.10.

the moving of families. "Those students who do come steadily improve as fast as children in New England," he wrote. Of special interest is the report of Hotchkin on two of his students. Elizabeth Dwight was the most advanced scholar; she had done some sums in the cube root. J. W. Everidge was "nearly there, and would have been, if he had attended school steady."⁴⁸ Elizabeth Dwight was later to teach at Pine Ridge; J. W. Everidge lived with his parents in the historic old Everidge home, still standing in Choctaw County today.

Like Kingsbury and other missionaries in the Nation, Hotchkin anxiously awaited the school plans of the Choctaw Council in 1842. By this time, however, Goodwater was firmly established, and the school was one of those chosen by the Nation to be enlarged and expanded.

Mayhew

In 1839, Miss Tryphena Wall was appointed government teacher to the school opened at Mayhew. The original site of Mayhew is about six miles north of Boswell, Choctaw County. Known for her personal beauty and lovely character, Tryphena has the most romantic story in the educational annals of Choctaw County.⁴⁹

Tryphena Wall was the first young woman along the Choctaws taught in the mission schools who was chosen to teach in the public schools. Born in Mississippi about 1824, she was the daughter of

⁴⁸ Report of Indian Affairs, 1842, pp. 495-500.

⁴⁹ McMillan, "Women Teachers," Chronicles (Spring, 1949, p. 28.

Noah and Lucy (Lucretia) Wall. Although a white man, Noah Wall was a recognized member of the Choctaw Tribe. Lucy was the daughter of Nathaniel Folsom who, along with his two brothers, founded the Folsom family among the Choctaws.⁵⁰

At the age of four, Tryphena attended school under Cyrus Kingsbury at the old Mayhew Mission in the East. Sometime after the main migration, Noah Wall brought his family to the West, reaching Eagle Town near Bethabara. Here Tryphena went to school under the "excellent Mrs. Barnes." Here also Lucy Wall died and, in 1838, Noah Wall married the missionary-teacher Eunice Clough of Lufata. After this marriage, Wall moved the family further west. He settled about five miles from the crossing place on the Boggy, a site with a good spring and the tall, ancient oak trees so typical of this virgin land. Later, the mission station established here was called "Mayhew" in memory of the mission left behind in Mississippi.⁵¹

In spite of the whiskey traders who had settled on the south bank of the Red River and the large herds of buffalo which inhabited the prairie, by 1838 a general movement had started to this area. A productive salt industry established by David and Israel Folsom on the

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Muriel H. Wright, "Tryphena," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. IX, No. 2 (June, 1931), p. 182; Archer to Foreman, Foreman (Grant) Papers, Box 1, Folder 12, Gilcrease Institute; Peter Hudson gives the birthyear of Tryphena as 1816. Byington (Cyrus) Letters, Vol. II, p. 1101.

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McMillan, "Women Teachers," Chronicles (Spring, 1949), pp. 25, 119; Missionary Herald, Vol. XXXVI, 1840, p. 399; Foreman (Grant) Papers, Box 1, Folder 12, Gilcrease Institute; Morse, A Report to the Secretary of War, pp. 188; Wright, "Tryphena," Chronicles (June, 1931), p. 183.

banks of the Boggy attracted settlers. Thomas Wall opened a house for travelers and a nearby store which proved to be profitable businesses. The settlement of the Chickawaws in the Choctaw Country, the location of Ft. Washita on the Washita River, the great number of travelers to the Republic of Texas, the fact that Mayhew was near the Boggy River crossing on the route from Ft. Smith to Beale's Ferry on Red River -- all combined to make the settlement an increasingly important place. Congressmen, army officers, and other prominent men are said to have been visitors at Mr. Wall's. Col. Hitchcock mentions stopping there. Companies of U. S. Troops, hunters and traders, exploring expeditions, and covered wagon trains frequently camped nearby.⁵²

Tryphena Wall taught the school at Mayhew until her marriage to Charles F. Stewart, May 9, 1842. Dated August, 1841, she wrote the following report to Agent Armstrong:

By boarding six, I have had, including all, twenty-four. In history, 2; English grammar, 1; arithmetic, 11; geography, 8; writing, 11; reading in the New Testament and spelling, 14; words of 2 syllables, 2; words of 3 and 4 letters, 4. I think the scholars have learned well ...⁵³

⁵² Report of Indian Affairs, 1838, p. 480; Foreman, Five Civilized Tribes, pp. 43 n., 47; Missionary Herald, Vol. XXXVII, 1841, p. 476.

⁵³ Report of Indian Affairs, 1841, pp. 303-05.

Problems and Promise

The problems affecting the opening of the first schools in Choctaw County were almost insurmountable. These schools were faced with all the trauma resulting from the tragic journey to the West and the struggles of the people to survive in an untamed wilderness.

Emigrants arrived at the stations at Clear Creek and Horse Prairie, both in Choctaw County, in a state of physical and mental exhaustion. Among those parties reaching these sites were those led by Robert M. Jones, Joel H. Nail and Robert Nail, Silas D. Fisher, George W. Harkins, and David and Israel Folsom, in addition to those of LeFlore and Nitakechi. All reported deaths of from thirty to fifty from the dreaded cholera. Morrison concluded about ten percent of those who began the journey perished before it was ended.⁵⁴ The oldest graves in Choctaw County are to be found in the cemeteries in the eastern part. Dates indicate many died soon after arrival, apparently worn out by the grueling trip. By 1833, the larger part of the tribe had been transferred, but the story of sickness and death continued for several years.

Of immediate concern were the building of cabins, clearing of land, and planting of scraps. These practical matters were greatly complicated by the fact that tools and necessities promised by the United States government and so important to the pioneer -- axes, plows, hoes, wedges, iron pots and kettles, spinning wheels and looms

⁵⁴ Niles' Register, Vol. XVI, 1832, p. 480; Senate Documents, 23 Congress, Pitchlynn to Cass, p. 396; Babcock and Bryce, History of Methodism, pp. 46-7; Missionary Herald, Vol. XXIX, 1833, -. 205; Foreman, Indian Removal, pp. 44-92; Morrison, "Choctaw Mission," Chronicles (June, 1926), p. 179.

-- were months, even years in arriving, or else never did arrive at all.⁵⁵

The emigrants settled in bottom lands where rich soil and ample timber for log houses and rail fences were to be found. The section known today as Choctaw County had an abundance of such locations. For many, however, these locations were disastrous. Rivers and creeks frequently overflowed, aggravating the flies, mosquitos, and malarial conditions. In May, 1833, rain fell for several weeks without interruption. Bottoms were flooded, washing away fields, crops, houses, stock, and even clothes. The "deadly fever" rampaged, causing untold death and suffering. Hotchkin reported that in his community of Clear Creek, every babe under one year of age died during the year 1833.⁵⁶

Besides the "deadly fever" which persisted for many years, the Choctaws were victims of other diseases. In 1837, the dreaded small-pox, carried by the migrating Chickasaw tribe, raged throughout the Nation. Also, from the beginning, even as today, the Choctaws were plagued by forest and prairie fires, ticks, tornadoes, and hail storms.⁵⁷

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Foreman, Five Civilized Tribes, pp. 26-30.

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"Letter from Arkansas Territory," June 25, 1833, Cherokee Phoenix, September 28, 1833, p. 3; Foreman, Five Civilized Tribes, pp. 22-24; Missionary Herald, Vol. XXX, 1832, p. 21. Mrs. Wright wrote from Wheelock that, from June to August, Dr. Wright had attended 332 cases of illness, and the next year there was an average of one death to a family at the same station. (Ibid.)

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R. G. Thwaites, ed., Early Western Travels, Vol. XIII (Date and publisher not given), pp. 209, 212, 224, 226; The Northern Standard, June 2, 1847.

Nor did the missionaries escape the hard life or the sickness. At one time at Clear Creek, the entire Hotchkin family became seriously ill. Hearing of their sickness, Miss Eunice Clough went to care for them only to become sick herself. The whole group was carried to Wheelock by their Choctaw friends to be nursed back to health by the Wrights. The Wrights themselves were in questionable health and burdened with ministering to the sick and dying Choctaws. In addition, the cost of medicine for all of them brought havoc with the limited missionary budget.⁵⁸

One result of these privations and hardships was a great mobility on the part of the Choctaws. Prime factors involved were the desire to find more healthful locations for permanent homes and to escape the flooding which destroyed crops. As an example, Thomas Everidge originally chose a site in the rich-soiled Red River bottom land in the community known today as Frogville. Soon recognizing his error, he moved his family a few miles to the north. Here, at the site of a good spring, he built the Everidge home -- a sturdy, double-roomed log house with two large stone chimneys and a hallway ("dog-trot") between the two rooms. This house stands intact today with the ancient barn and the old family cemetery nearby. The Oakes, who were friends and relatives, settled in the same vicinity. Later, the Goodwater School was erected near these families, and the Everidge children went to school at Goodwater, boarding during the severe winter months with Aunt Laurie Oakes.⁵⁹

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Mary Hotchkin to McBeth, February 14, 1872, Sue McBeth Papers, Indian Archives; Missionary Herald, Vol. LXXI, 1834, p. 41.

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Interview with Henry Everidge, Hugo, Oklahoma, March 2, 1969 and August 3, 1972.

The effects of these general trials and hardships upon educational work were devastating. Schools were sometimes started only to be closed shortly because the population moved away. Other schools were of limited duration because "sickness prevented all efforts." Many school reports refer to poor attendance, the indifference of both parents and students, and the thin clothing of the students during the winter months. Potts reported: "The apathy of the parents for much of the time is almost hopeless."⁶⁰ In all fairness, considering the cumulative effects of prevailing conditions, this "apathy" on the part of the Choctaws is understandable.

Other problems of the schools related to providing buildings and necessary supplies. Assisted by concerned Choctaws, some teachers erected their own log-cabin schoolhouses, but books were much harder to come by. For the Choctaw schools, Armstrong requested "slates, pencils, Smilie's arithmetic, cyphering books, copy books, Webster spelling books, Parley's geography, and 12 dozen good quills."⁶¹ From statements of missionaries and government teachers alike, however, supplies were both insufficient and long in arriving.

In addition to the common man, leaders also were absorbed in other matters. Although most of the leading men, especially those who settled in the Doaksville and Kiamichi River area, encouraged the teachers and missionaries and openly supported the schools, yet they

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Report of Indian Affairs, 1841, p. 297; Foreman, Five Civilized Tribes, pp. 45-6; Baptist Mission Magazine, Vol. XVII (June, 1837), p. 129.

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Ibid.

themselves were busily engaged in construction of their homes, and in building plantations, farms, and businesses. They were also deeply involved in the political problems of the tribe.

Soon after arrival in the West, tribal leaders began working on a new constitution. Adopted in 1834, this document was the first constitution written and adopted in Oklahoma. In 1835, leaders were busy seeking peace with the "wild tribes" on the western borders of the Choctaw Nation. In 1837, yielding to pressure from the United States Government, the Choctaws signed, at Doaksville, a treaty with the Chickasaws, giving the Chickasaws the right to settle in the Choctaw Country to the west and joining the interests of the Choctaws and the Chickasaws. Taught by bitter experience, in 1839, the Council passed a law, drafted by Robert M. Jones, prescribing the death penalty for any chief, captain, or citizen who should sign a conveyance of Choctaw land. In 1842, the tribe sought and obtained a patent from the United States guaranteeing tribal tenure to their land. This important document is preserved in the Oklahoma Historical Society.⁶²

Matters such as these so absorbed the leaders of the Choctaws that they found little time nor inclination to tackle the school problem on an encompassing scale. Hitchcock reported a visit in the home of Chief Thomas LeFlore who was living in the Chief's House built

⁶² Report of Indian Affairs, 1836, p. 391; 1838, p. 509; 1840, p. 310; 1842, p. 447; Joseph P. Folsom, Constitution and Laws of the Choctaw Nation Together with the Treaties of 1855, 1865, 1866. Chata, Tamaha, 1869 (New York City: Wm. P. Lyon & Son, 1869), pp. 69, 74; Kappler, Indian Affairs, Vol. II, pp. 435-39; Grant Foreman, Pioneer Days in the Early Southwest, (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1926), pp. 269-87; Debo, Rise and Fall, pp. 67-71; The Constitution and Laws of the Choctaw Nation (Park Hill, Cherokee Nation, 1840), pp. 29-30.

by the Government in compliance with treaty agreements. Located north of Swink, Choctaw County, this house still stands today and has been designated by the Oklahoma Historical Society as the oldest house in Oklahoma. According to Hitchcock, LeFlore spoke bitterly of the alliance with the Chickawaws and was so consumed with his resentment that "he was not interested in education."⁶³

In spite of the great burdens placed upon the tribe, however, not all was pessimism and gloom. Gradually the Choctaws surmounted the problems they faced. This rebirth was reflected in the encouraging school reports which appeared in the late thirties and early forties. In 1841, Kingsbury wrote there had been "considerable interest the past year on the subject of education."⁶⁴ Another report written two years later stated: "There has not been so much falling off as usual toward the close of the term. Doubtless it is on account of the deep interest prevailing through the Nation on the subject of education."⁶⁵

Summary

In the first years following removal, the schools throughout the Choctaw Nation and in the area known today as Choctaw County struggled to survive. The first school in Choctaw County was probably a Sabbath School in or near Doaksville, in 1831 or 1832. Teachers who

⁶³ Foreman, A Traveler in Indian Territory, pp. 190-91; Sunday Oklahoman, July 15, 1962.

⁶⁴ Report of Indian Affairs, 1841, pp. 304-05; Missionary Herald, Vol. XXXVII, 1841, pp. 474-75.

⁶⁵ Report of Indian Affairs, 1843, p. 354.

conducted this school were Rev. Alexander Talley, a Methodist missionary, and his two Christian Choctaw helpers, Moses Perry and William Winans Oakchiah. Very soon, Presbyterian missionaries - Ebenezer Hotchkin, Joel Wood, and Cyrus Kingsbury - arrived in the area and established their work. Ramsey D. Potts, a Baptist and a Treaty Teacher, also located a church and school a few miles southeast of Hugo.

Sabbath Schools were an important means of adult education, with instruction given in simple arithmetic, writing, and reading, especially the reading of the scriptures and moral pamphlets translated into Choctaw. Most churches and preaching points opened by these early missionaries included these Sabbath Schools.

Most neighborhood schools or day schools were a part of the Mission Station and taught during the week. In this period, many of the missionaries boarded a few of the students in their own homes since the boarding schools, as such, were not established at this time. Important neighborhood schools in Choctaw County during this difficult period were Clear Creek (1833), Pine Ridge (1835), Providence (1835), Goodwater (1837), and Mayhew (1830). The school at Mayhew was taught by Tryphena Wall -- the first Choctaw teacher appointed to teach in the Choctaw neighborhood schools who had been educated in the mission schools.

Problems of opening the schools were concerned with attendance, buildings, supplies, and the indifference of the people. No doubt this apathy was due to the struggle for survival which the tribe was

experiencing. As the decade drew to a close, however, signs of recovery were on every hand. This included a renewed interest in the cause of education.

CHAPTER III

ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL SYSTEM, 1842 - 1860

I am convinced that the prosperity and happiness of mankind is absolutely dependent upon schools and literary institutions and that no nation can become prosperous without them.¹

Chief Peter P. Pitchlynn

INTRODUCTION

The number of Choctaws who had emigrated to the west by 1837, was estimated to be 15,000.² As they recovered from the shock of removal, these people grew increasingly energetic and prosperous. The area comprising Choctaw County became the center of educational, political, and economic activity in the Choctaw Nation.

Two important projects by the Federal government vitally affected the Kiamichi River area -- the building of roads and the clearing of the Great Raft from Red River. Beginning in 1842, infantry stationed at Ft. Towson carried on the work of constructing roads and

¹ Address to the Choctaw General Council by Peter P. Pitchlynn, 1841, Pitchlynn Papers, From the collection of the Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

² Annual Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1837 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office), p. 641.

bridges and opening up the country.³ From these principal thoroughfares branched roads and trails leading to landings and crossings on the Red River, to the communities and settlements, and to the homes of the Choctaws hidden among the trees.⁴ Along these roads were established the churches, the Sabbath and neighborhood schools, and the boarding schools. Over these roads, seeking knowledge, travelled hundreds of Choctaw youth.

Besides the building of roads, the Federal government opened up the Red River for navigational purposes. After 1841, Red River became known as "one of the great highways to Indian Territory."⁵ Steamboats stopped at the many landings along its banks; they also navigated up the Kiamichi River to Rock Chimney Crossing. Serving both as a river crossing and an inland port, Rock Chimney was a place of great activity. Travelers of every sort passed this way including dignitaries and the missionary-teachers riding their circuits. From

³ Grant Foreman, "Report of Captain John Stuart," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. V, No. 3 (September, 1927), p. 340; James Culberson, "The Ft. Towson Road," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. V, No. 4 (December 1927), p. 414; Kenneth E. Lewis, "Archaeological Investigations at Ft. Towson, Choctaw County, Oklahoma, 1971," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. L, No. 3 (Autumn 1972), p. 276; William B. Morrison, Military Posts in Oklahoma (Oklahoma City: Harlow Publishing Co., 1936), pp. 54-55.

⁴ Report of Indian Affairs, 1842, p. 445; N. Sayre Harris, "Journal of a Tour in the Indian Territory, Spring, 1844," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. X, No. 2 (June 1932), p. 255; "Notes from the Indian Advocate," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XIX, No. 1 (March 1936), p. 69. Tony Thomas, local historian of Choctaw County, living in Hugo, Oklahoma, has traced and "walked" many of these old roads. Today remnants of these roads are clearly discernible when viewed from an airplane.

⁵ Harris, "Journal of a Tour," Chronicles (June 1932), pp. 219, n. 220.

this port, steamboats carried cotton, wheat, hides, rugs and blankets from the Choctaw looms, and salt from the kettles of Robert M. Jones and David and Israel Folsom. They brought from New Orleans supplies for Ft. Towson and goods for the trading posts and stores at Doaksville, both six miles east of this place; books and slates for the schools; furniture and supplies for the homes; and the marble slabs which, even today, mark the graves in the ancient cemeteries.⁶

Doaksville, located a mile west of Ft. Towson across Gates Creek, was the largest town in the Choctaw Nation. Besides a church, the village had a tavern kept by David Folsom; five stores, three of which were owned, in part, by Choctaws; a resident physician; a blacksmith shop; a wagon maker, and a wheelwright.⁷ Two newspapers were established in Doaksville: The Choctaw Telegraph, in 1848, edited by David Folsom, and The Choctaw Intelligencer, in 1850, edited by John Kingsbury, son of Cyrus Kingsbury, and J. R. Dwight. For a time, Doaksville was the capital of the Choctaw Nation, and many

⁶ Potential Outdoor Recreation Developments for Choctaw County (Hugo, Oklahoma: Kiamichi Soil and Water Conservation District and Choctaw County Chamber of Commerce, 1970), p. 14; Field trips by the writer with Tony Thomas and Lucien Spear, August 10, November 3 and 20, 1968, August 23, 1969. When first viewed by the writer, the remains of the chimneys on the bluff overlooking the crossing, from which it received its name, still existed. Deep wagon ruts marked the riverbank and the road going east, indicating the passage of heavily loaded wagons. Today this historic spot has been inundated by Hugo Lake.

⁷ Indian Advocate, July, 1847 (Louisville, Kentucky: American Indian Mission Association), p. 3; William H. Goods, Outposts of Zion (Cincinnati: Pope & Hitchcock, 1864), p. 187; A. W. Neville, The Red River Valley (Paris, Texas: North Texas Publishing Company, 1948), pp. 3-4.

important conventions and meetings were held here, including those relating to education.⁸

During the early difficult years, the Choctaws had been absorbed in matters of government. The General Council convened the first Monday in October each year and remained in session ten to fifteen days. Judges were nominated by the chief of the district and received compensation; trial by jury was guaranteed in all capital offenses. In 1842 and 1843, a bicameral council was created with a Senate and House of Representatives. Included in the important laws passed was the legislation of 1842, which laid the foundation for a comprehensive school system in the Choctaw Nation, and in Choctaw County.⁹

Spencer Academy

The "Act Respecting Public Schools" was passed by the Ninth Session of the General Council of the Choctaw Nation and approved November, 1842.¹⁰ Spencer Academy was one of the schools established by this bill.

Soon after their arrival in the West, Indian Agent Frances W. Armstrong, followed by his brother William Armstrong, encouraged

⁸
Angie Debo, The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic (Norman: The University of Oklahoma Press, 1934), p. 59; Grant Foreman, The Five Civilized Tribes (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1934), p. 70.

⁹
Report of Indian Affairs, 1842, p. 447; 1843, p. 410; Debo, Rise and Fall, pp. 74-75.

¹⁰
Joseph P. Folsom, Constitution and Laws of the Choctaw Nation Together with the Treaties of 1855, 1865, and 1866, Published by the authority of and direction of the General Council: Chahta Tamaha (New York City: Wm. P. Lyon & Son, 1869), pp. 78-81.

the Choctaws to construct log buildings and organize their schools provided by treaty annuities. Exhausted and caught up in domestic and governmental affairs, the Choctaws did not become interested in education until they grew dissatisfied with the Choctaw Academy in Kentucky.¹¹

The Choctaw Academy had been established in 1825. Among those who attended the celebrated school were Peter p. Pitchlynn, Robert M. Jones, George Harkins, Pierre Juzan, Forbis LeFlore, and David Folsom -- all destined to become able Choctaw leaders who would live in or near Choctaw County.¹² After removal, the great distance caused difficulties in transporting students to and from the institution. The Choctaws objected to their funds being spent so far from home; and criticism of the academy drifted back to the Nation. In 1839, Choctaw students at the academy signed a petition complaining about conditions existing in the school. Since many of the boys were sons of the chiefs and other prominent men, the General Council was disturbed over the problem.

¹¹Report of Indian Affairs, 1836, p. 421; 1846, p. 340; Arminata Scott Spalding, "From the Natchez Trace to Oklahoma: Christian Choctaw Civilization," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XLV, No. 1 (Spring, 1967), pp. 18-19; Chryl Haun Morris, "Choctaw and Chickasaw Indian Agents, 1831-1874," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. L, No. 4 (Winter, 1972-73), pp. 412, 418, 420.

¹²H. B. Cushman, History of the Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Natchez Indians (Greenville, Texas: Headlight Printing House, 1899), p. 335; Carolyn Thomas Foreman, "Choctaw Academy," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. VI, No. 4 (December, 1928), p. 453, and Vol. IX, No. 4 (December, 1931), pp. 382-411; Pitchlynn Papers, Gilcrease Institute; Goode, Outposts of Zion, p. 39.

Table 1

Students Signing Petition, Choctaw Academy, Kentucky, 1939^a

Adam Nail	Arthur Kamp
E. C. Folsom	John Wesley
James Perry	Lewis Cass
Richard Harkins	Alexander Wade
Daniel Davis	William McCann
Wm. Roebuck	George W. Hood
Wall McCann	William P. Duvall
Josiah Impson	John B. Fields
William Pitchlynn	William Smallwood
Branard Millard	William Carn
Simon Willis	Thomas Marshall
John Page	Lucious Marshall
Farlius LeFlore	Wilson Victor
William Impson	James Winchel
John E. Anderson	James Kenedy
Joseph Folsom	Osburn Purley
	George Gaines

^a Letter to Captain Armstrong from Choctaw Academy, Scott County, Kentucky, October 28, 1839, Foreman Collection, Box 22, Gilcrease Institute. Adam Nail was the instigator of this petition. Complaints were made against the poor food, no utensils with which to eat, dirty bed linen, poor classroom instruction, drunken teachers, and disinterested superintendent.

In the midst of the discussion over the academy, the Choctaws experienced an awakening as to the importance of education. At a meeting of the General Council in 1841, Peter Pitchlynn gave a rousing speech on the subject.¹⁴ Under his leadership the School Act of 1842 was passed. This act outlined the basic structure of the Choctaw educational system and became the pattern for other Indian tribes in the Territory. The district schools taught by Wilson, Potts, and Rind were discontinued; and boarding schools were established. Among these was Spencer Academy located ten miles north of Doaksville.¹⁵

Named for the Honorable John Canfield Spencer, Secretary of War, when completed, Spencer Academy became the showplace of the Choctaw Nation. The grounds were laid out in the form of a square. At the four corners were four buildings, 64' by 16', which were named

¹⁴ Pitchlynn to Armstrong, December, 1842, Pitchlynn Papers, Gilcrease Institute; Report of Indian Affairs, 1843, pp. 332, 368; Peter Hudson, "Recollections of Peter Hudson," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. X, No. 4 (December, 1932), p. 518; Missionary Herald, 1844, Vol. XL, p. 11; Address to the Choctaw General Council by Peter P. Pitchlynn, 1841, Pitchlynn Papers, Gilcrease Institute. Pitchlynn had just returned from Washington City. On the journey home he encountered the famed Charles Dickens on the steamboat between Cincinnati and Louisville. Dickens was greatly impressed by the remarkably handsome, intelligent man. (Charles Dickens, American Notes, in Favorite Works of Charles Dickens, New York: The Book League of America, 1942, pp. 456-57.

¹⁵ Report of Indian Affairs, 1842, pp. 499-501; 1843, pp. 332-36; 386-87; 1844, pp. 375-77; 386-89; 1846, p. 43; Henry C. Censon, Life Among the Choctaws (Cincinnati: L. Swormstedt & A. Poe, 1860), pp. 60-65, 99, 181, 186-87, 191-96; Niles' Register, LXVII (1844), pp. 19, 178; Goode, Outposts of Zion, pp. 130, 183-85, 255; Letters from Pitchlynn, March 2, 15, 29, 1841, Letters Received from Office of Indian Affairs, "Schools," Series M234, Microcopy, National Archives Microfilm, Published Washington, 1958, Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Library.

for four of the trustees -- Armstrong Hall, Pitchlynn Hall, Jones Hall, and McKenney Hall. Housing the male teachers and students, these dormitories were two-story frame buildings of roughly sawed boards painted white, roofed with home-made shingles, each with a large piazza, 8' wide, extending the full length of the building.¹⁶

On the west side of the square was the schoolhouse, built of logs, one-story high, divided into one large schoolroom and two small recitation rooms, the walls plastered and white-washed. On the east side was a two-story building occupied by the superintendent, the steward and family, and the female teachers. In the rear of the building was a large dining room with kitchen, bakery, wood house, and "Tom Fuller" room. On the parimeter of the grounds were other buildings -- a stable, a shed, a store room, a smoke house, the hired man's house, and cabins for the Negro help.¹⁷

16

Report of Indian Affairs, 1844, p. 389; Hudson, "Recollections," Chronicles (December, 1932), p. 518.

17

William B. Morrison, The Red Man's Trail (Richmond, Va: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1932), p. 27; Report of Indian Affairs, 1844, p. 389; 1843, p. 369; 1844, p. 389; Ramsey to Lowrie, August 13, 1946, Vol. II, Box 9, American Indian Correspondence, Presbyterian Historical Society, Microcopy, Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Library; "Notes from Indian Advocate," Chronicles (March, 1936), pp. 74-75. The "Tom Fuller" room was a storage facility for corn from which ta fula (mistakenly called by the white man "Tom Fuller") was made. The favorite food of the Choctaws, ta fula was a kind of hominy made by beating off the husks of the dry corn, then boiling it for four hours. Pishofa is a variation of this food made by adding fresh meat, either veal or pork.

Under the School Act, a Board of Trustees was chosen to govern Spencer Academy. This body contacted the Board of Foreign Missions of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, with headquarters in New York City, for assistance in operating the school. Edmund McKinney, already in Indian Territory working with the Seminoles, was appointed superintendent. With his wife and two small sons, he arrived at Spencer on December 8, 1843. William Wilson, one of the Treaty teachers, was made principal teacher of the new school and Superintendent Edmund McKinney, Reuben Wright, teacher, and Jonathan E. Dwight, Choctaw interpreter, completed the teaching staff¹⁸ for the opening of Spencer.

On February 1, 1844, the first session began with 60 boys which had been selected by the Trustees. McKinney organized the schoolwork into three departments or divisions; later a fourth department was added. William Wilson had four classes with most of his students speaking or understanding English. Studies for the two highest classes included Latin, Emerson's grammar, arithmetic, and algebra. Reuben Wright taught the second department. Only about half of his boys understood English and classes were devoted to spelling, reading, and arithmetic. In the third department under J. E. Dwight only one boy understood English. Beginning spelling, reading, and arithmetic were taught with the lessons first explained

¹⁸ Report of Indian Affairs, 1844, p. 386; W. David Bairs, Spencer Academy, Thesis, University of Oklahoma, 1955, Chapter I, pp. 5-6; McKinney to Lowrie, April 22, 1843, Vol. II, Box 9, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections; J. Y. Bryce, "About Some of our First Schools in the Choctaw Nation," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. VI, No. 3 (September, 1928), p. 358; Harris, "Journal of a Tour," Chronicles (June, 1932), p. 255.

in Choctaw, then English.¹⁹

From the first, McKinney experienced difficulties. He had little control over financial matters. Delivery of supplies were often delayed for weeks, depending upon the navigational conditions of the Red and Kiamichi Rivers. The boys chaffed under the strict regulations, and a large number of runaways continued throughout his administration. In addition, McKinney was caught up in a power struggle in the internal functioning of the school.²⁰

McKinney soon discovered he had little authority to act; he was required to first consult with the Board of Trustees and the General Council, then await their decision. To complicate matters, McKinney's desires frequently conflicted with those of Pitchlynn, who himself at one time had wanted to be superintendent of Spencer. Also, McKinney shared administrative authority with William Wilson, who had been appointed by Agent Armstrong and who received a larger salary than McKinney. In the school year of 1844-45, an outbreak of measles caused a dismissal of classes from March 19 to April 21. At last, overwhelmed by his many problems, McKinney resigned having completed two years with the Choctaws.²¹

¹⁹ Report of Indian Affairs, 1844, pp. 386-90.

²⁰ Report of Indian Affairs, 1844, pp. 388-90; 1845, p. 597; McKinney to Pitchlynn, July 24, 1845, Pitchlynn Papers, Gilcrease Institute.

²¹ McKinney to Pitchlynn, September 25, 1844; Folsom to Pitchlynn, 1845, Pitchlynn Papers, Gilcrease Institute; Report of Indian Affairs, 1844, p. 389; 1845, pp. 579-81; 1846, p. 5; Folsom, Constitution and Laws (1869), p. 81, 89-90; Baird, Peter Pitchlynn, p. 65; McKinney to Lowrie, July 18, 1844, Vol. II, Box 9, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections; Goode, Outposts of Zion, p. 183.

In his last report of September 15, 1845, McKinney offered suggestions based upon his experiences. Some method should be devised to encourage and facilitate the teaching of the English language. Special books should be prepared and studied. All branches of knowledge should be encouraged, with small rewards, such as medals, given to those who excelled. Learning by rote should be abolished and the difficult art of thinking should be exercised. Further, the institution should operate with well-qualified assistants with the superintendent having complete authority.²²

Recognizing that Spencer Academy must be established upon a firmer foundation, on October 7, 1845, the Choctaw Council and the Choctaw Board of Trustees signed a contract for control of the school with the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions.²³ Missionaries and other outsiders lauded this move as evidence the Choctaws could not manage their schools. Actually, the Choctaws did not question their ability, nor had the Council relinquished control of this or any other of their schools. Instead, they had astutely turned over the responsibility of the institution to another body while, at the same time, requiring strict accountability to the Nation. Future events revealed the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions had equally as many problems as had the Choctaws.²⁴

²² Report of Indian Affairs, 1845, pp. 580-81.

²³ Ibid., p. 352; 1849, pp. 1105-06; Folsom, Constitution and Laws (1869), pp. 78-81, 89; Agreement between the Assemblies Board and the Choctaw Nation, 1845, Pitchlynn Papers, Gilcrease Institute.

²⁴ Report of Indian Affairs, 1846, p. 352; Goode, Outposts of Zion, p. 183; Indian Advocate, July, 1847, p. 4; Benson, Life Among the Choctaws, p. ; Folsom, Constitution and Laws (1869), pp. 93-94.

At the departure of McKinney, Reuben Wright was named as acting superintendent.²⁵ In the winter of 1845-46, Rev. Anson Gleason visited the Nation. "Father" Gleason, as he was affectionately called, had been a missionary to the Choctaws in Mississippi but had not moved with the tribe to the West. He preached at Spencer in January, 1846, and many young men and pupils "came out on the Lord's side." Among these were Willis A. Folsom, who became a prominent Methodist minister; Thomas H. Benton, who became an outstanding Presbyterian minister; and Allen Wright, famous educator, Presbyterian minister, and Chief of the Choctaws.²⁶

Rev. James B. Ramsey of New York, took control of Spencer on June 1, 1846, six weeks before the close of the spring semester. As soon as Ramsey arrived, William Wilson, no doubt chagrined because he had not been chosen as acting superintendent, resigned the school and left immediately.²⁷ However, Wilson still had political connections, and in 1851, he became the Choctaw Indian Agent. During his term, education among the Choctaws flourished. He was eventually replaced by Agent Douglas H. Cooper.²⁸ The sudden departure of Wilson so near the close of the session caused considerable confusion. However,

²⁵ Report of Indian Affairs, 1845, pp. 5-6.

²⁶ Gleason to McBeth, January 12, 1872; Wright to McBeth, June 10, 1972, Sue McBeth Papers, Indian Archives.

²⁷ Report of Indian Affairs, 1846, pp. 352-53; Pitchlynn to Lowrie, December 13, 1845, Vol. II, Box 9, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections.

²⁸ Morris, "Choctaw Indian Agents," Chronicles (Winter, 1972-73), pp. 422, 425, 428; LeRoy H. Fischer, "United States Indian Agents to the Five Civilized Tribes," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. L, No. 4 (Winter, 1972-73), p. 412; Benson, Life Among the Choctaws, pp. 99-100.

Ramsey reported the examinations before the Board of Trustees went better than expected to the credit of both pupils and teachers.²⁹

As the months of Ramsey's administration went by, the financial problems which had plagued McKinney persisted. Ramsey found the difficulty of keeping expenditures within the bounds of limited funds. When in December, 1848, expenses exceeded the estimated operational cost of the institution by \$1,500, Ramsey's management came under criticism of the General Council, and Robert M. Jones visited the school to determine the state of things.³⁰

Because of inadequate finances, the fall term did not begin until the first Thursday of November, 1846. By this time, Oliver Porter Stark, educated in the schools of New York City, and later at Princeton University, had arrived and was appointed principal teacher. Soon after the term began, a lung inflammation caused the school to close for a few weeks. Ramsey believed God was punishing the school for neglecting spiritual matters. Nevertheless, while the school was inoperative, he sent Stark east for teachers. Stark returned with the McClures, who were appointed stewards, and Charles H. Gardiner, assistant teacher. Stark also brought with him his bride, twenty

²⁹ Report of Indian Affairs, 1846, p. 352.

³⁰ Ramsey to Lowrie, April 2, 1849; Expenses and Estimates, Vol. II, Box 9, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections; Report of Indian Affairs, 1846, pp. 352-53; 1849, p. 1106; Byington to Trustees, September 11, 1847, Byington Letters, Vol. II, Library, Oklahoma Historical Society, p. 56.

years of age, who was described years later by George Ainslie as a "heavenly woman."³¹

Ramsey was constantly concerned over the spiritual condition of the boys. Also, he was disturbed that most of the boys did not speak English. However, he reported teachers had paid more attention to music than formerly; speaking and composition were weekly exercises; and the boys were required to spend two-and-a-half hours daily in agricultural labor.³²

As with McKinney, Ramsey was plagued by personal problems. The coarse language and insubordination of the McClures were a constant source of irritation which resulted finally in their dismissal in September, 1847. Dr. Charles Fishback a medical missionary from Louisville, Kentucky, who had arrived soon after the departure of the McClures, was impulsive, impudent, and highly critical of his associates. The teachers united against the doctor. Stark sided with the McClures and frequently argued heatedly with Ramsey, the teachers, and Fishback. Stark was dismissed and Gardner resigned in March, 1849.³³

³¹ Ramsey to Lowrie, October 8, 1846; December 2, 1846; March 3, 1847, Vol. II, Box 9, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections; Report of Indian Affairs, 1846, p. 353; Sammy D. Hogue, The Goodland Indian Orphanage (Goodland, Oklahoma: The Goodland Indian Orphanage Press, 1940), pp. 16-17; Ethel McMillan, "Women Teachers in Oklahoma, 1820-1860," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XXVII, No. 1 (Spring, 1949), pp. 22-23.

³² Ramsey to Lowrie, June 10, 1846; January 14, 1848; April 16, 1848, Vol. II, Box 9, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections; Report of Indian Affairs, 1847, p. 940.

³³ Ramsey to Lowrie, April 16, 1848; March 16, 1849; McClure to Lowrie, July 9, 1847; Fishback to Lowrie, December 29, 1848; Stark to Lowrie, March 16, 1849, Vol. II, Box 9, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections.

In the meantime Ramsey's health declined. He resigned as superintendent of Spencer in March, 1849, saying his poor health indicated God did not consider him worthy of holding the mission post.³⁴ Before Ramsey and his family could leave, his infant son, aged seventeen months, died of whooping cough. Alexander Reid, the new superintendent, arrived at Spencer July 11, 1849; a few days later, on July 17, Ramsey's thirty-one year old wife died. Ramsey buried his wife and son in Spencer Cemetery on the hill overlooking the academy. Ramsey felt his afflictions came from God, and he left³⁵ in September, 1849, for New York, a heartsick, broken man.

During the school year 1849-50, Alexander Reid and Spencer were on trial. Born in Scotland, Reid was a graduate of Princeton University and Princeton Theological Seminary. Reid, who became known as the "Sage of Spencer," was a tailor by trade. This made a favorable impression upon the Choctaws who approved of his habit of sitting on the ground "tailor fashion" like their own Indian custom. Reid was also a practical man, and he went about at once improving conditions at Spencer which he had found to be "wretched." His efforts were rewarded. The examinations held before the Trustees and a large

³⁴ Ramsey to Lowrie, June 23, 1848; March 12, 1849, Vol. II, Box 9, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections.

³⁵ Ramsey to Lowrie, July 24, 1849; Reid to Lowrie, July 24, 1849; Fishback to Lowrie, August 14, 1849, Vol. II, Box 9, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections; Ora Eddleman Reed, "The Robe Family -- Missionaries," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XXVI, No. 3 (Autumn, 1948), p. 311.

crowd of Choctaws on July 12, 1850, proved highly successful and Reid was elated.³⁶

From the beginning, Reid worked to acquire a capable, loyal staff. He praised C. R. Gregory, who had come West with him to Spencer, and Susan Dutscher, already at Spencer when Reid came, having arrived in the fall of 1848. Rev. and Mrs. Hamilton Balentine reached Spencer about the time the fall session opened in 1850. In the meantime, Reid, a bachelor when he came to the Nation, proposed by mail to Miss Elizabeth Graham of Newark, New Jersey. This young lady was a sister of Alexander Graham, a roommate of Reid's in Princeton. Reid and Miss Graham met in Little Rock, Arkansas, and were married September 30, 1850. The Balentines and Reid and his bride arrived at Spencer at about the same time.³⁷

Spencer Academy had been built to accomodate 100 students. By the middle of October, 1850, 104 boys had enrolled. Most of these were former pupils, a good sign to Reid. Teachers during the first session were Rev. H. Balentine, Rev. Samuel McCulloch, Mr. Morris, and Reid; during the last session, Rev. Ballentine, Joseph Turner, Miss

³⁶ E. C. Scott, Ministerial Directory of the Presbyterian Church, U. S., 1861-1941 (Austin: Von Boeckman-Jones, 1942), p. 161; Reid to Lowrie, July 24, 1849; October 14, 1850; Board of Trustees to Reid, August 6, 1849, Vol. II, Box 9, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections; The Choctaw Telegraph, October 18, 1849, p. 31; Report of Indian Affairs, 1849, p. 1105.

³⁷ Reid to Lowrie, July 24, 1849; July 11, 1850; September 30, 1850; August 11, 1850, Vol. I, Box 12, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections; Carolyn Thomas Foreman, "The Balentines, Father and Son, In the Indian Territory," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XXIV, No. 4 (Winter, 1956-57), pp. 417-23.

Freelove Thompson, and Reid.³⁸ Susan Dutscher had been in ill health and was unable to assume her duties in the fall. On Wednesday morning, December 25, 1850, Susan Dutscher and Samuel Morrison, a nephew of James Ramsey, both of Spencer Academy, were married by Rev. Cyrus Kingsbury at Pine Ridge. In deference to Susan's health the couple planned to leave the Nation. Before she was strong enough to travel, however, she died unexpectedly on February 14, 1851, "after three hours of intense suffering on the roadside between Spencer Academy and Pine Ridge."³⁹

Alexander Reid spent the summer of 1851 preaching, eating, and visiting with the Choctaws. Everywhere he went he met "Spencer boys" and for the first time he realized the importance of his work. By now Reid believed Spencer was firmly established, and he felt that he and his associates must work "to make Spencer Academy more than ever what it has ever been, the pride of the Choctaw people."⁴⁰

38

Reid to Lowrie, October 14, 1850, Vol. I, Box 12, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections; Report of Indian Affairs, 1851, p. 369.

39

Reid to Lowrie, October 14, 1850; January 23, 1851, Vol. I, Box 12, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections; Report of Indian Affairs, 1851, p. 369; Reed, "The Robe Family," Chronicles (Autumn, 1948), p. 312. Apparently, both Susan Dutscher and Samuel Morrison had taught during the last year of Ramsey's administration and had stayed on under Reid. Morrison may have been the "Morris" Reid reported had left the school at the close of the fall session.

40

Reid to Lowrie, September 19, 1851, Vol. I, Box 12, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections; Report of Indian Affairs, 1851, p. 369.

When John Edwards joined the staff at the close of the spring session, 1851, Reid was relieved of his teaching duties and able to devote his full time to administration. The fall session of 1851 began October 6, with 136 boys. Reid reported the distinct school plan worked well; subjects taught were spelling, reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, grammar, philosophy, history, composition, astronomy, and vocal music.⁴¹

On April 8, 1852, Walter Lowrie, the "venerable Secretary of the Foreign Missions Board," arrived to visit Spencer. He was accompanied by George Ainslie who had been assigned to teach at Spencer. Seemingly pleased with the school, Lowrie left Spencer to travel to Wapanucka Academy, a new school for girls located twelve miles northwest of Boggy Depot. Rev. Balentine of Spencer was assigned as superintendent of the new school. He took J. G. Turner and Frelove Thompson of Spencer to teach under him.⁴²

Changes in the staff, sickness, and runaway students were recurring problems at Spencer. In 1851-52, many boys were sick with whooping cough and three boys died with "inflammation of the lungs." In 1852-53, thirty-four boys ran away. The situation was so critical, at five different times during the year one of the trustees visited the school. Mr. N. Cocharun visited in November; Captain N. Gardiner, in February; Col. P. Pitchlynn, in April; Rev. Israel Folsom, in May;

⁴¹ John Edwards, "Escape from the South," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XLIII, No. 1 (Spring, 1965), p. 59; Report of Indian Affairs, 1851, p. 369; 1852, p. 423.

⁴² Ainslie to McBeth, April 8, 1872, in Anna Lewis, "Letters Regarding Choctaw Missions and Missionaries," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XVII, No. 3 (September, 1949), p. 277; Balentine to McBeth, January 26, 1872, Sue McBeth Collection, Indian Archives.

and Captain Gardiner again at the time of the final examinations. Reid blamed this truancy on frequent changes in instructors, each new teacher having to gain the respect of his students.⁴³

In addition to these problems, Reid had to deal with the daily functioning of the institution. The cooking, cleaning and washing, making or repairing garments for the boys, supervising them when not in school, keeping an eye on farm operations, taking inventory, and purchasing necessities -- all were never-ending responsibilities requiring the constant efforts of every member of the staff, including the wives.⁴⁴

Like other missionaries, Alexander Reid used slave labor. Two slaves loaned to the school by R. B. (Butt) Willis and his wife, were Uncle Wallace and Aunt Minerva. This musical couple taught their songs to the other slaves who would gather to harmonize and sing around their cabin during the long summer evenings. Years later, in 1871, Reid taught the songs of this slave couple to the Jubilee Singers in Newark, New Jersey. These songs -- "Steal Away to Jesus," "The Angels are Comin'," "I'm a Rollin'," and "Swing Low Sweet Chariot" -- were sung around the world. Today, the old songs of Uncle Wallace

⁴³ Report of Indian Affairs, 1852, p. 423; 1853, p. 418; Reid to Lowrie, June 10, December 13, March 17, 1853; March 4, 1854, Vol. I, Box 12, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

and Aunt Minerva of the Choctaw Nation are still among the most popular spirituals.⁴⁵

Rev. Alfred Wright, Superintendent of Wheelock Female Seminary, located east of Ft. Towson, died on March 31, 1853. John Edwards was assigned to this position, assuming his duties October 1 of that same year. Then, following the birth of her first child, John, January 19, 1854, Elizabeth Reid died June 6, 1854. Convinced the burdens of Spencer had crucified his wife, Reid resolved never to marry again. However, a year later, on November 3, 1855, he brought Freeloove Thompson back to Spencer as his wife.⁴⁶

In the meantime, Spencer had come under fire. Peter Pitchlynn observed the Academy was little more than an advanced primary school; two-thirds of the boys were under twelve years of age and very few remained longer than five years. Reid rankled under this criticism. While admitting that most of the courses were elementary in content and that the students did not advance rapidly

⁴⁵ Reid to Lowrie, January 28, 1852; October 1, 1855; Reid to Edwards, in J. B. Thoburn and Muriel Wright, Oklahoma A History of the State and its People, Vol. II (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1929), Appendix, p. 826; Marker at the site of Spencer Academy, Spencerville, Choctaw County, Oklahoma; Field Trip by writer with Tony Thomas and Lucien Spear, November 3, and November 10, 1968.

⁴⁶ Report of Indian Affairs, 1854, pp. 144-45; Choctaw Mission Records, December 10, 1853; Reid to Wilson, May 18, 1854; January 28, 1852; August 17, 1853; December 19, 1854, Vol. I, Box 12, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections.

in their studies, Reid declared the boys did as well as "we ought reasonably to expect."⁴⁷

With the close of the 1855-56 session, Alexander Reid submitted his resignation. After seven years, he was exhausted. Along with his other abilities, Reid had been an astute financial administrator, and during his term of office expenses never exceeded income.⁴⁸

Gaylord L. More, a New York minister, was appointed by the Missions Board to replace Alexander Reid. He arrived at Spencer November 1, 1856. However, after only one month, More informed the Board he would resign at the close of the year. Besides having trouble with the staff, More declared he had not known his wife would be so burdened with duties.⁴⁹ When More left, the Missions Board had trouble finding a replacement; at last, leaving his wife in New Jersey, Alexander Reid was persuaded to return to the Choctaw Nation. When Reid went North to join his wife at the end of the school year in

⁴⁷ Reid to Lowrie, January 18, 1854, Vol. I, Box 12, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections; Reid to Pitchlynn, November 16, 1855, Pitchlynn Papers, Gilcrease Institute; Report of Indian Affairs, 1856, p. 168.

⁴⁸ Reid to Wilson, March 12, 1856; August 11, 1856; May 26, 1858, Vol. II, Box 10, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections.

⁴⁹ More to Wilson, September 5, 1856; December 4, 1856; Young to Wilson, July 1, 1857; Reid to Wilson, July 22, 1859, Vol. II, Box 10, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections.

1858, Spencer was again operating smoothly.⁵⁰

James Frothingham assumed the position of superintendent for the year 1858-59. Frothingham reported that, as had been customary for many years, all schools were opened daily with prayer and Bible reading. On Sunday, in Sunday Schools, two hours were devoted to moral and religious instruction; all students were required to read and commit to memory passages of scripture and the shorter Catechism. However, contrary to this optimistic report, the year had actually been unsuccessful. Both Frothingham and Sheldon Jackson, one of the teachers, had been in poor health, and the Trustees had dismissed the two higher schools in January. From then on the institution deteriorated. For the second time, Reid returned to Spencer without his wife. He was greeted joyously by the Choctaws, and soon Spencer was "in better shape than ever."⁵¹

For 1859-60, Reid reported a good year with 106 students enrolled. The harmony of Spencer was to be shattered once again, however -- this time by the drums of war. Reid had already decided to cast his lot with his beloved Choctaws in the South. Realizing the state of affairs between the North and the South were rapidly worsening, at the close of the school session in 1860, Reid hastened North for his family. He returned in September with his wife and two sons:

⁵⁰ Wentz to Wilson, January 2, 1858, Vol. II, Box 10, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections; Report of Indian Affairs, 1858, pp. 160-61.

⁵¹ Ainslie to Wilson, August 10, 1859; Reid to Wilson, January 14, 1860, Vol. II, Box 10, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections; Report of Indian Affairs, 1859, pp. 198-99, 204-05.

John, seven years of age; and Sandy, about seventeen months, born in the North on May 23, 1859.⁵²

In the following months, as emotions reached fever pitch, Alexander Reid was forced to convince the Rebels of his sincerity. On Tuesday, May 14, 1861, a vigilante committee, made up of whites and some half-breeds and armed with a rope, accosted Reid at Spencer. They accused him of protecting W. H. Wentz, a former teacher at Spencer, who was suspected of being a strong Abolitionist. Reid informed them Wentz had been at Spencer a few days before but had already left. The white men were inclined to doubt him; but Simpson Folsom, a Choctaw, said to them, "Gentlemen, you must not doubt Mr. Reid's word."⁵³

The armed mob which had surrounded Spencer visited other missionaries. Realizing their lives were in danger, plans were made to leave the Nation immediately. As best they could, they disposed of their personal effects, made hurried arrangements regarding the school property, and gathered together the minimum amount of personal belongings for travel. On June 12, 1861, a company congregated on the grounds at Spencer, and, at last, they began the long journey to the North.⁵⁴

⁵² Report of Indian Affairs, 1860, pp. 146-48; Anna Lewis, "Diary of a Missionary," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XXI, No. 4 (December, 1939), p. 194.

⁵³ Edwards, "Escape," Chronicles (Spring, 1965), pp. 61-63; James D. Morrison, "Notes on Abolition in the Choctaw Nation," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XXXVIII, No. 1 (Spring, 1960), pp. 78-84.

⁵⁴ Lewis, "Diary of a Missionary," Chronicles (December, 1939), p. 445; Reid to Lowrie, June 12, 1861, Vol. I, Box 10, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections.

Reid and his family stayed at Spencer. "I intend to remain here as long as I can do so undisturbed," he wrote.⁵⁵ Thus ended an era in the history of Spencer Academy. Under McKinney the school had suffered from many discouragements. The administration of Ramsey had ended with heartache. Under Reid, the school had become the greatest civilizing force of the Choctaw Nation, and unlike some of the other boarding schools, after the conflict of war was over, Spencer Academy was to become again the pride of the Choctaws.

Chuahla Female Seminary

As a part of the School Act of 1842, plans were made for the establishment of schools for girls as well as boys. Pine Ridge was included as one of the institutions to receive an apportionment from the Choctaw Council. In the middle of January, 1844, a seminary was officially located at this place and the name was changed to Chuahla Female Seminary. Although never quite so impressive as the school at Wheelock, nor as ambitious as the school at Goodwater, Chuahla was regarded with great esteem by the Choctaws.⁵⁶

On March 1, 1844, the seminary was opened with a final enrollment of thirty-five. The following summer and fall a dormitory was constructed. This building was 40 x 20 feet, two stories high, with a piazza on each side. Because of his many added responsibilities during this period, in his report of August, 1844, Kingsbury deplored

⁵⁵ Reid to Lowrie, June 12, 1861, Vol. I, Box 10, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections.

⁵⁶ Folsom, Constitution and Laws (1869), pp. 78-81; Report of Indian Affairs, 1842, pp. 499-501, 521; 1843, pp. 332-26, 386-87; 1844, pp. 375-77, 386-89; Goode, Outposts of Zion, p. 199.

the fact that he had not had time to visit the mission points to the West which had been established by himself and Ebenezer Hotchkin. Mrs. Kingsbury, who had charge of the domestic affairs, and Miss Harriet Arms, the only teacher, also felt the stress of increased duties.⁵⁷

Help was on its way for the overworked staff. Under Kingsbury's instructions, Hotchkin had gone North for recruits. He returned with a number of workers who were distributed among the schools. At Chuahla, Mary Dickinson arrived in the fall of 1844, to instruct the girls in sewing and handwork. Lewis Bissel, teacher and farmer, and Mrs. Bissel, who assisted Mrs. Kingsbury in the kitchen and dining room, reached the school in 1845. Miss Harriet Goulding, from Ware, Massachusetts, came late in 1845, taking charge of the classroom about January 1, 1846, after the departure of Miss Arms.⁵⁸

In spite of the difficulties, the school year of 1844-45, the first full year of operation for Chuahla, was most successful. Kingsbury reported approved text books had been used; all were able to read in the Testament; and all were required to recite daily a verse or part of a verse from memory. Singing was an important part of instruction; all scholars attended Sunday School. When not in the

⁵⁷ Report of Indian Affairs, 1844, pp. 384-86; Bryce, "About our First Schools," Chronicles (September, 1928), p. 357; Missionary Herald, Vol. XLI, 1845, p. 11; Elizabeth H. Hunt, "Two Letters from Pine Ridge Mission," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. I, No. 2 (Summer, 1922), pp. 223-24.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 223; Missionary Herald, Vol. XLI, 1845, p. 11; Vol. XLII, 1846, p. 14; Report of Indian Affairs, 1846, p. 349.

classroom, pupils were required to labor in the dining room and kitchen. In addition, they were instructed in making clothes, in fancy work, in knitting and netting. Kingsbury also reported he had preached regularly at Ft. Towson and Doaksville and had resumed ministering to the churches on the western circuit.⁵⁹

In 1844-45, a commodious framed schoolhouse, 36 x 24 feet, with a piazza on each side, a good height, well-lighted, was built.⁶⁰ In 1846-47, Chuahla had 44 scholars; 33 boarders, 11 day students; 24 supported by the Nation; the remainder by friends or their own labor. The American Board of Foreign Missions paid salaries and contributed to keeping the institution operating. Miss Goulding continued her dedicated instruction in the classroom; Miss Mary Dickinson had left the school, however, and Juliet Slate of Pennsylvania took her place. Under her direction, the girls made dresses for themselves, pantaloons, and other garments for men, and a large amount of knitting and netting.⁶¹

On the night of March 19, 1848, the mission station was struck by a terrific and destructive tornado. The schoolhouse was entirely unroofed and otherwise greatly damaged. The dormitory, occupied by the pupils and ladies who had charge of them out of school, was entirely demolished. Most of the outbuildings were destroyed or badly damaged. Kingsbury could not understand why God had allowed

⁵⁹ Report of Indian Affairs, 1845, pp. 583-85; Missionary Herald, Vol. XLI, 1845, p. 358.

⁶⁰ Report of Indian Affairs, 1846, pp. 350-51.

⁶¹ Ibid., 1847, pp. 939, 941.

this terrible event; yet he marveled that, with the exception of the small bone of one ankle, not a bone was broken, and no one was seriously injured.⁶²

The Nation, the Board of Foreign Missions, and friends of Chuahla all rallied to the needs of the stricken school and repairs were begun at once. Although suspended for eight months, classes were resumed on the last day of November with 35 students. Kingsbury reported expenditures for a new house for teachers and pupils and repairs on other buildings amounted to \$4,300. The school had received from the Choctaw Nation for the last three quarters of 1848, \$1,200; extra grant by the Council, \$900; from Goodwater Station, \$500; from the Missionary Board, \$604; due the station for the first half of 1849, \$800; total, \$4,004.⁶³

Always operating with limited funds, due to increased financial burdens imposed by the tornado, 1849-50 was a period of even greater husbandry. No outside help was employed; under supervision, the girls themselves did all the chores. Kingsbury defended this policy by stating: "We consider habits of industry and a correct moral deportment two of the most important branches of a good education; without these, mere intellectual culture will be of little value."⁶⁴ The Choctaws highly approved of this practical approach.

⁶² Report of Indian Affairs, 1848, pp. 507-09; 498-99.

⁶³ Ibid., 1849, pp. 1105-08.

⁶⁴ Ibid., pp. 1107-09; 1851, p. 379; "Notes from the Indian Advocate, Chronicles (March, 1936), p. 73.

As did the other missionaries, in his yearly reports Kingsbury included accounts of the condition of the people and the crops, of activities related to the cause of temperance, and of his missionary work. He preached at Doaksville (also called the Pine Ridge Church), Goodland, Bennington, and Mayhew. All of these churches had thriving Sunday Schools.⁶⁵ However, his reports do not reveal the full scope of his activities. In a small diary kept in the year 1853, Kingsbury records preaching at the plantation home of Robert M. Jones and at other points. He ministered to the slaves, preaching to them and conducting funeral services. As Superintendent of the Mission, he attended the annual examinations of the schools as one of his duties and consulted with the Chiefs and the Council regarding school affairs.⁶⁶

By 1858, Kingsbury had been relieved of his responsibilities to the mission points on the western circuit. His duties relating to the Choctaw Mission, however, had never been greater. In the spring of 1855, the conflict with the American Board over the issue of slavery had surfaced, and the difficulties with this body were ever present. With the prospective closing of the school at Wapahanucka, personnel

⁶⁵ Report of Indian Affairs, 1852, pp. 420-21; 1853, pp. 412-13.

⁶⁶ W. B. Morrison, "Diary of Rev. Cyrus Kingsbury," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. III, No. 2 (June, 1925), pp. 152-57. In 1925, this diary, a small black memorandum book, was in the possession of Rev. Ebenezer Hotchkin, of Durant, a descendent of the associate of Kingsbury, Ebenezer Hotchkin.

problems at the various mission stations were more astute; and consultations with the leading men of the Nation became more frequent.⁶⁷

Relations with the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions were finally severed in 1859. All funds from this body were cut off and the school at Pine Ridge was placed at the disposal of the General Council. On October 22, 1859, the Choctaw Council authorized School Superintendent Robert W. Nail and Trustee Joseph Dukes, of Apuckahanubbi District, to contract with Superintendent Kingsbury for the continuance of Chuahla for four years. In the meantime, the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, under which Spencer Academy operated, was contacted and agreed to take over the work.⁶⁸

Other problems pressed in upon Pine Ridge and the Nation. The drought, which had persisted in varying degrees for several years, became more critical. In 1859-60-61, the Choctaws were near starvation. Kingsbury, and the other missionaries, met the situation as best he could. "At Pine Ridge," he wrote, "we feed all who come to us hungry. And if they will work, we employ them to chop wood, to cut bushes, or to pull weeds and, in payment, give them some provisions to carry home."⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Report of Indian Affairs, 1858, p. 164; Morrison, "Notes on Abolitionism," Chronicles (Spring, 1960), pp. 83-4.

⁶⁸ Report of Indian Affairs, 1859, p. 202; 1860, p. 136; Morrison, "Notes on Abolitionism," Chronicles (Spring, 1960), pp. 83-4.

⁶⁹ Lewis, "Diary of a Missionary," Chronicles (December, 1939), p. 440; Kingsbury to Wilson, October 23, 1860, Vol. I, Box 10, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections.

In the fall of 1859, tragedy again struck Pine Ridge. "A severe and fatal sickness" swept the school. In spite of the employment of the best physicians from Doaksville, in the last week of October and the first week of November, three scholars died; one lingered until January, making four deaths in all. Kingsbury stated that during all the preceding years only one death had occurred.⁷⁰

During the year 1859-60, several workers, formerly of Wapanucka, arrived at Pine Ridge. Among these were Miss Orland Lee, of Pennsylvania, teacher; Miss Clara W. Eddy, of Troy, New York, teacher; and Miss Clara Stanislaus, of Pennsylvania, originally from Canada, teacher.⁷¹ In December, 1860, Miss Stanislaus announced to Father Kingsbury that she expected to marry Mr. Joseph Folsom, Choctaw. Mrs. Clara Stanislaus Folsom was destined to die in childbirth in February, 1862.⁷²

The excitement and fervor generated by the approaching conflict at last enveloped the mission work. Dr. and Mrs. Kingsbury chose to remain at Pine Ridge. Miss Eddy, Miss Lee, and other workers from the North joined the group of missionaries who gathered at Spencer Academy to leave the Nation. Sue McBeth wrote from Spencer: "Dear old Father Kingsbury rode over from Pine Ridge today to bid us a

⁷⁰ Report of Indian Affairs, 1860, pp. 135-36.

⁷¹ Ibid., 1858, p. 170; McMillan, "Woman Teachers," Chronicles (Spring, 1949), p. 22.

⁷² Jones to McBeth, March 13, 1872, Sue McBeth Papers, Indian Archives.

sorrowful good-bye."⁷³ Thus, along with other schools of the Nation, at the end of the 1860-61 session, Chuchla Female Seminary closed.

Koonsha Female Seminary

The site at Goodwater, where a school was already operating under Ebenezer Hotchkin, was chosen as the location of another girl's school in the Choctaw Nation. Called Koonsha Female Seminary after the old Kunsha Clan in Mississippi, Koonsha opened on May 1, 1844, with 15 boarders. Before leaving for New England to recruit teachers, Hotchkin contracted with John P. Meloon to construct the necessary buildings. When Hotchkin returned, Miss L. S. Downer and Miss C. M. Belden were assigned to Koonsha.⁷⁴

Mrs. Hotchkin looked after the domestic activities, supervised the girls out of school, and taught a small day school for boys. Miss L. E. Tilton had charge of the needle work, knitting, and sewing. Chuahla and Koonsha did not have the discipline problems of Spencer. The girls were described as "kind and gentle toward their teachers, manifesting love, respect, and obedience." Miss Downer, who had had long experience teaching in New England, said, "These scholars are as easily managed and as apt to learn as others."⁷⁵

⁷³ Lewis, "Diary of a Missionary," Chronicles (December, 1939), p. 445.

⁷⁴ Frances Imon, "Here Lies a Missionary," May 30, 1971, Tulsa World, Files of Frances Imon; Foreman, "The Balentines," Chronicles 336-37; 1844, pp. 376-77; 1845, pp. 381-83.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 1845, p. 582.

Hotchkin was jubilant over the year's work. At the examinations on July 22, 1845, the visiting trustees -- Pitchlynn, Harkins, and Jones -- together with parents and friends, expressed gratification in the knowledge of books, behavior, and work. They also expressed satisfaction with the buildings constructed. Hotchkin wrote: "We may look forward to a school that will not be inferior to the same kind in New England or any other England."⁷⁶

The Mission House at Koonsha was described as a low tin-roofed frame building with a rear projection, or ell, for kitchen, dining room, and pantry. Under this was a large cellar with brick walls. This building had a large veranda in front; a hall through the middle opened onto the veranda; and on each side of the hall was a large room, one a reception room and the other the home of the superintendent. Over these and under the tin roof were sleeping rooms, mostly used for visitors. To the south of the Mission House was a log building. The lower part was divided into two rooms: one a teacher's room and the other a girl's sitting room. The attic was used for sleeping quarters for scholars.⁷⁷

The Seminary, a two-story frame building, stood further south. The first floor contained two large school rooms. The second floor was divided into three rooms: a teacher's room, a workroom for scholars, and the large rear room, a dormitory. Behind the building was another log building containing two rooms for teachers. With

⁷⁶
Ibid.

⁷⁷Report of Indian Affairs, 1846, p. 349; Ainslie to McBeth, April 9, 1872, Sue McBeth Papers, Indian Archives.

ample wooded play ground, the whole place was enclosed with a strong picket fence. To the north were a garden and an orchard of apples, peaches, plums, pears, and apricots. To the west, on a gentle rise of ground, stood the church, a plain frame structure, not plastered, but nicely lined with whitewash.⁷⁸

Hotchkin and the Choctaws were proud of this establishment. In July, 1847, Rev. P. P. Brown, a Baptist dignitary, accompanied Trustees Robert M. Jones, G. W. Harkins, Forbis LeFlore, and Silas Fisher on their tour of the schools. Brown was impressed with Koonsha. He wrote a detailed account of his visit to the school and also of his visit to Rose Hill, the beautiful plantation home of Robert M. Jones.⁷⁹

Robert M. Jones was one of the most influential and affluent men in the Nation. He was born October 1, 1808. Upon graduating from the Choctaw Academy in Kentucky, he received a special commendation. A signer of the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek, Robert Jones migrated with the tribe in 1832. Once in the new land, he worked diligently for the recovery of his people. As a member of the Council, he was involved in the formulation of the Constitution, laws, and treaties of the period. He was a delegate to Washington in 1838, and was a champion for the cause of education. Having assisted in the planning which culminated in the School Act of 1842, Jones was a trustee on the first board. To the historian, Robert M. Jones is remembered as a staunch supporter of the Confederacy during the Civil War. To

⁷⁸

Ibid.

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Report of Indian Affairs, 1852, p. 582; Indian Advocate, September, 1847, p. 3; "Notes from the Indian Advocate," Chronicles (March, 1936), pp. 67-83.

the Choctaws, however, between 1840 and 1860, his name was identified with the education of the Choctaw children.⁸⁰

Hotchkiss reported a good year for 1847-48, with the full number of 44 boarders, plus 15 day scholars. However, the scholars had lost more than a month from studies because of inflammation of the eyes.⁸¹ Then, in 1848-49, the station suffered greatly. Miss C. M. Belden died November 5, 1848; Miss L. S. Downer, one month and ten days later, December 15, 1848. They were buried side by side in the cemetery near the church. Their markers have the same inscription: "Here Lies a Missionary." Bearing the earliest dates in the cemetery, the thin, weathered monuments may be seen today.⁸²

In addition to these tragedies, during the school year, pupils were victims of scarlet fever, whooping cough, and mumps, although none died. Miss Judith (Juliet) Slate transferred from Pine Ridge on November 16; and in May, 1849, Miss Angelina Hosmer of Holyoke

⁸⁰ Certificate; Letter of J. H. Randall, September 27, 1927, Robert M. Jones Papers, Indian Archives; W. B. Morrison, "Rose Hill Mansion," Jones, Robert M., Choctaw, Vertical Files, Library, Oklahoma Historical Society; Pitchlynn to Porter, August 1, 1828, Pitchlynn Papers, Gilcrease Institute; Missionary Herald, Vol. XXVI, 1830, p. 11, 34; Report of Indian Affairs, 1852, p. 302; Charles J. Kappler, Indian Laws and Treaties, Vol. II (Washington Printing Office, 1904), pp. 310-19; Grant Foreman, Indian Removal (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1932; 1972 edition), p. 57; Interview with Frank B. Wuaker, Hugo, Indian Pioneer History, Vol. II, p. 32, Foreman Collection, Indian Archives.

⁸¹ Report of Indian Affairs, 1848, pp. 500, 513-15.

⁸² Report of Indian Affairs, 1849, p. 1111; McMillan, "Women Teachers," Chronicles (Spring, 1949), pp. 25-6; Imon, "Here Lies a Missionary," Files of Frances Imon; Interview and Field Trip by writer with Edna and Henry Montgomery, April 27, 1969.

Seminary, Massachusetts, arrived to fill the vacancies left by the teachers who had died.⁸³

The next two years were much better for Goodwater. Until this time, Koonsha had been merely a small boarding school for girls. The reports from 1850 on, however, reveal Hotchkin's growing ambition for the institution. Under Miss Hosmer, the curriculum was greatly expanded and upgraded, and Hotchkin's dreams soared. "The standard of female education in this Nation should be raised," he wrote. With the permission of "the chiefs and the head men," Hotchkin therefore went North to secure teachers qualified to teach at the "Young Ladies Seminary" level.⁸⁴

On August 22, 1853, Hotchkin reported Miss Backus had charge of the primary department teaching the more elementary subjects. Miss Curtis had charge of the advanced students teaching defining, advanced Geography, Wall's On the Mind; and Wayland's Moral Science. The scholars of both schools had done plain and fancy needlework, and some of Miss Curtis' pupils had "attended to drawing and painting." Not a day of regular study has been lost," Hotchkin wrote. "The fidelity of and zeal of the teachers, both in and out of school, is above any commendation that I could bestow."⁸⁵ Then, abruptly, the Trustees and the National Council suspended operations at Koonsha and the school did not open in the fall of 1853.

⁸³ Report of Indian Affairs, 1849, pp. 1111-12.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 1851, pp. 376-77; 1852, pp. 427-18; Ainslie to McBeth, December 30, 1871, Sue McBeth Papers, Indian Archives.

⁸⁵ Report of Indian Affairs, 1853, pp. 419-20.

Causes for this action seem to have been varied and subtle. Hotchkin may have been overly zealous. To say the least, he seems to have lost sight of one of the purposes for which the boarding schools had been established -- that is, the teaching of "mechanical and domestic arts." A comparison with the curriculum and activities of Pine Ridge and Wheelock, both schools for girls, indicate how far removed Hotchkin's ambitions had carried him from the practical accomplishments the Choctaws admired and considered so necessary for their children. For the session 1852-53, the Trustees had difficulty filling the quota for the school, and Hotchkin admitted that, academically, the pupils were not ready for the advanced studies.⁸⁶

Again, obviously Hotchkin did not have the support of the leading Choctaws as he had assumed. He does not identify the "chiefs" he consulted with regard to his plans. Only Pitchlynn attended the examinations in 1853. Robert Jones, at this time Acting Superintendent of the Schools of the Choctaw Nation, refused to have anything to do with the controversy over Goodwater.⁸⁷

In fairness to Hotchkin, however, forces were at work over which he had no control. Although nothing came of the charges, Pitchlynn was under fire for his handling of school funds. Again, at this time the Choctaws were not interested in expanding the boarding schools; their principal concern was for the neighborhood schools. Hoping to get additional monies for educational purposes, the Council

⁸⁶
Ibid., 1853, pp. 419-20.

⁸⁷
Ibid., 1852, p. 418; 1854, p. 139; Jones to Pitchlynn, February 13, 1855, Pitchlynn Papers, Gilcrease Institute.

was deeply involved with the Federal government in an attempt to settle all claims. Moreover, the Choctaws were soon to break with the Chickasaws and to face a constitutional crises. Most of all, the issue of slavery had become increasingly emotionally charged.⁸⁸

Early in 1854, the Choctaw National Council passed a law requiring all abolitionists to leave the Nation. The missionaries remained silent on the controversial issue. Hotchkin himself seems never to have been questioned regarding his views. He was even praised by Agent Cooper for repudiating the doctrine of "northern religious fanatics." Many Choctaws, however, including Robert M. Jones, had little use for the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions under which Koonsha operated. All of these political arenas created power struggles of varying degrees. Goodwater and Hotchkin may have been caught in the cross-currents. At least, when displeasure with the school developed, Choctaw leaders were in no mood to reconcile problems; instead, they took decisive action.⁸⁹

Whatever the reasons for suspension, two things emerge. First, the Choctaw Council and the Choctaw people had charge of their school system. Second, while perhaps allowing his dreams to outrun his common sense, Ebenezer Hotchkin was a dedicated schoolmaster. He said of himself that he had labored for 25 years, the best part of

⁸⁸ Ibid.; Baird, Peter Pitchlynn, pp. 81-83, 95-108..

⁸⁹ Report of Indian Affairs, 1854, p. 139; 59, pp. 190-91; Reid to Lowrie, January 6, 1854, Vol. 1, Box 12, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections; Baird, Spencer Academy, Thesis, Chapter II, p. 33; Morrison, "Diary of Kingsbury," Chronicles (June, 1925), p. 156.

his life, among the Choctaws, and for the last ten years "given the best energies of soul and body for this particular school."⁹⁰

As news of the closing of Koonsha spread throughout the Nation, speculations can riot. A special meeting of the Choctaw Mission was held on November 11, 1853, at Pine Ridge to consider these public rumors. Hotchkin was exonerated by his co-workers; nevertheless, the consensus was he should resign the superintendency of the Seminary at Goodwater.⁹¹ By the spring of 1855, the National Council was making plans to re-open Koonsha. No doubt the entire episode had been a bitter experience for Ebenezer Hotchkin. He departed from Goodwater in June, 1855. Hotchkin chose to open a station to the west, at a place he called "Living Land."⁹²

Unhappy over the connection with the American Board in Boston, for several months the Trustees and Robert M. Jones wrestled with the problem of Goodwater. At last, at the suggestion of Alexander Reid, they contacted the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions with headquarters in New York, signing a contract with this body.⁹³ Thus, Rev. Edward Eells reached Goodwater on June 18, 1855, and the school opened in the fall on the first Wednesday in October. Teachers under Eells were Miss Harriet Mitchell, Miss Jeannie Hollings-

⁹⁰ Report of Indian Affairs, 1854, p. 139.

⁹¹ Choctaw Mission Records, November 11, 12, 1853; May 4, 5, 1854.

⁹² Ibid., April 25, 26, 1855.

⁹³ Jones to Pitchlynn, February 13, 1855; Wilson to Jones, January 15, 1855, Pitchlynn Papers, Gilcrease Institute.

worth, Miss Clara Stanislaus, and Miss M. E. Denny. Miss Stanislaus
soon transferred to Wapanucka.⁹⁴

Eells was not to last long at Goodwater. Reportedly, Eells, whose wife was pregnant, took advantage of every opportunity to touch physically his teachers, especially Miss Hollingsworth. In the fall of 1855, he was dismissed abruptly, and Miss Hamilton Balentine received an urgent request from the Presbyterian Board to report to Goodwater to take charge of the school there.⁹⁵

Because of serious illness in his family, Balentine had left Wapanucka for Philadelphia in the spring of 1855. He reached Koonsha to take over his duties on December 25, 1855. Wisely, the first move was to get in touch with Peter Pitchlynn, who had by this time been made the Superintendent of Public Schools of the Choctaw Nation. Under Balentine, within a short period of time Koonsha Female Seminary was operating efficiently.⁹⁶

In 1856, Balentine reported 38 boarding scholars; 4 day scholars; total, 44 pupils. Activities were equally divided between the schoolroom and practical duties. The next two years under Balentine were uneventful. In the spring of 1857, Miss Mitchell left the school. She wrote in her diary on February 9, 1857: "I am about

⁹⁴ Report of Indian Affairs, 1855, p. 162.

⁹⁵ Reid to Wilson, September 6, 22, 1855; March 4, 7, 1856; Vol. 1, Box 12, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections.

⁹⁶ Balentine to Pitchlynn, December 28, 1855, Pitchlynn Papers, Gilcrease Institute; Report of Indian Affairs, 1856, pp. 156-60.

closing my duties at Goodwater. It makes me sad to think of parting with my scholars, but I feel that Providence has laid out for me another path of duty. I expect in two or three days to be united to one who is as dear to me as my own life." Rev. C. C. Copeland married Allen Wright and Harriet Newell Mitchell on February 11, 1857. They then left for their new home at Mt. Pleasant station.⁹⁷

Hamilton Balentine and his family left Koonsha Female Seminary on May 11, 1858. He was followed by George Ainslie. After departing from Spencer Academy because of his health, Ainslie had gone north to enter Princeton Seminary. He studied there for two years, leaving to take charge of Koonsha in the Choctaw Nation. Ainslie and his family reached Goodwater on August 30, 1858. Ainslie reported a prosperous year ending June 28, 1859. Enrollment was the largest in the history of the school with 45 boarding students; 27 day students; total, 72 students. Teachers were Misses Diamant, Morehead, Hitchcock, and Hancock, who left in March, 1859, to assist at Spencer. Expenditures for the year were \$3,532.70: \$3,000 received from the Choctaw government; \$500 from the Presbyterian Board.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Natalie Morrison Denison, "Missions and Missionaries of the Presbyterian Church, U. S.; Among the Choctaws -- 1866-1907, Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XXIV, No. 4 (Winter, 1946-47), p. 439; McMillan, "Women Teachers," Chronicles (Spring, 1959), p. 25.

⁹⁸ Report of Indian Affairs, 1856, pp. 159-60; 1858, p. 163; 1859, p. 203; Foreman, "The Balentines," Chronicles (Winter, 1956-57), p. 422; Ainslie to McBeth, April 9, 1872, in Lewis, "Letters Regarding Choctaw Missions," Chronicles (September, 1939), pp. 277-78.

When the fall session opened in 1859, Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Jones reported to Goodwater. Theodore Jones served as gardner; his wife, as a teacher. Then, in the spring of 1860, Miss Sue McBeth reached Goodwater. Coming from Fairfield, Iowa, where she had been teaching, in her diary Sue McBeth gives a graphic description of life at the school and her own difficulty of accepting the wilderness conditions. On the other hand, her writings reveal her strength of character, her ability to adjust, her dedication to her work, her love for the Choctaw people, and especially her joy in teaching the Choctaw girls.⁹⁹

Soon after her arrival, Sue McBeth wrote of the death and burial on April 30, 1860, of little Bella Ainslie, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Ainslie. The child was buried in the church graveyard beside the two missionaries, Miss Belden and Miss Downer. Following this heartache, Mrs. Ainslie's health failed rapidly. Ainslee felt she could not receive the medical attention she required; therefore, accompanied by Miss Mary Semple who had been teaching at Bennington, Mrs. Ainslie and her small son returned to the North. Later that year, Miss Mary Jo Semple came back to the Nation as the bride of Henry Hotchkin, son of Ebenezer Hotchkin. Mary Semple was

Table 2

Students of Sue McBeth, 1860-1861^a

Josephine Dukes, Doaksville, Ch. N.
Lucy A. Hotema, Goodland, Ch. N.
Charlotte Pain, Doaksville, Ch. N.
Sally Wesley, Doaksville, Ch. N.
Seline Yale, Goodland
Lizzie Bacon, Doaksville
Ameila Speaker, Goodland
Mary Thomas, Doaksville
Eliza McCann, Doaksville
Lybbie Washington, Bennington, Ch. N.
Lucretia Robuck, Goodland
Julia Garland, Armstrong
Adaline McCoy, Doaksville
Clara Folsom, Bennington-Armstrong
Cassy Durant, Bennington-Armstrong
Sally Folsom
Lybbie Jefferson, Goodland
Jeannie C. Williams
Betsy Yale, Goodland
Agnes Turnbull, Boggy Depot
Elizabeth Williams
Nancy James, Mayhew
Melena Jones, Mayhew
Sistie Buttiste, Doaksville
Elsie Thomason
Meline Austin, Doaksville
Susan Peters, Doaksville
Sarah Belvin
Neiseri Foster
Harriet Hunter, Sulphyr Springs, Blue County
Emily Holmes, Fort Washita (Armstrong) Blue County
Lizzie Ann McFarland, Doaksville
Agnes Grey, Doaksville
Martha Collins, Doaksville, Goodland
Anna Homme, Doaksville
Lizzie Oaks, Doaksville
Lida Bond, Black River, Towson Co.

^a Letter to Sue McBeth from George Ainslie, December 5, 1864.
In Missions and Missionaries, Indian Archives, Oklahoma Historical
Society.

to rear a large family of her own as well as a number of orphan
100
children.

As the summer went by, Sue McBeth was appalled at the terrible drought, the starvation of the Choctaws, and the oppressing heat. In August, Ainslie received word his wife's health had worsened and he left for the North soon afterwards, hoping to return to Goodwater shortly. Misses Diamant and Hitchcock had gone North in the summer to escape the heat; they had not returned as expected. Thus, the sudden departure of Ainslie left responsibility for the school on the shoulders of Sue McBeth and Mrs. Theodore Jones. ¹⁰¹

Wilson, the Executive Secretary of the Foreign Missions Board, wrote reassuringly to Sue McBeth: "I have no doubt this month of October will be a memorable one in all your life." To which Sue McBeth replied in her diary: "Memorable as a time of great pressure and responsibility!" ¹⁰² By November, the unwelcome news reached Goodwater that Mrs. Ainslie was no better. However, two more workers

¹⁰⁰ Imon, "Here Lies A Missionary," Files of Frances Imon; Missionary Herald, Vol. XXI, 1860, p. 193; Anna Lewis, "Notes and Documents: The Diary of Sue McBeth," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XXI, No. 2 (June, 1943), p. 193; Lewis, "Diary of a Missionary," Chronicles (December, 1939), p. 445; Copeland to Wilson, November 5, 1860, Vol. I, Box 10, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections; Hogue, The Goodland Indian Orphanage, p. 20.

¹⁰¹ Lewis, "Diary of a Missionary," Chronicles (December, 1939), pp. 430, 440-1; Wilson to Kingsbury, October 23, 1860, Vol. II, Box 10, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections.

¹⁰² Lewis, "Diary of a Missionary," Chronicles (December, 1939), p. 430.

had arrived, including the capable Miss Clara Eddy. With her help, Miss McBeth soon had the school organized and running smoothly.¹⁰³

On December 28, 1860, Miss McBeth received a letter from George Ainslie stating his wife was still failing. The greater part of his letter, however, was filled with the news of the political storm raging in the States and the fears it would break upon the Mission. As Ainslie had predicted, the school was to last only a few more weeks. On February 1, 1861, seven states seceded to form the Confederate States of America. His wife Jannice having died February 14, 1861, George Ainslie set out for Goodwater on March 5, 1861, the day after the inauguration of Abraham Lincoln. He arrived at Goodwater four weeks later. On April 12, Confederate troops fired on Ft. Sumter. War had begun.¹⁰⁴

As the war had drawn closer, the missionaries grew increasingly apprehensive. They feared violence, even death. For many years they had fought the whiskey sellers across the Red River. The missionaries believed these men hated them, along with many half breeds who resented the education of the full bloods. Their fears were not without grounds. Vigilante committees, made up of Texas ruffians and disgruntled Choctaws, were soon organized.¹⁰⁵ On May

¹⁰³ Lewis, "Diary of a Missionary," Chronicles (December, 1939), p. 431.

¹⁰⁴ Lewis, "Notes and Documents," Chronicles (June, 1943), p. 194; Ainslie to McBeth, April 1, 1872, Sue McBeth Papers, Indian Archives; Lewis, "Letters Regarding Choctaw Missions," Chronicles (September, 1939), p. 277.

¹⁰⁵ Lewis, "Notes and Documents," Chronicles (June, 1943), p. 195.

16, 1861, Rev. John Edwards at Wheelock was warned by a Choctaw friend. He had only time to saddle his horse and start for the mountains. In less than half an hour, a vigilante committee was there to hang him. George Ainslie had a visit from the same committee and received orders to leave. Bowing to the inevitable, the missionaries made hurried plans to return North.¹⁰⁶

At Goodwater, Mr. and Mrs. Jones volunteered to stay behind to look after the buildings and, if possible, to keep the school open as a day school. On June 11, 1861, the missionary staff left Koonsha. Sue McBeth wrote in her diary: "We bade good-bye to Mr. and Mrs. Jones, our dear Indian girls, and our mission home, most probably forever."¹⁰⁷ Thus, Koonsha Female Seminary was closed.

Yakni Achukma

In 1840, Cyrus Kingsbury and Ebenezer Hotchkin began their itinerant work west of Ft. Towson. One of the points established was Yakni Achukma, meaning "Good Land." So called because of the numerous springs, abundant timber, and fertile soil, the site was about four miles northwest of where the Boggy empties into Red River and three miles south of present Hugo. Nearby was a beautiful natural lake, named Good Land Lake, but known today as Lake Roebuck, in honor of the distinguished Choctaw Roebuck family living in the area.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., Edwards, "Escape from the South," Chronicles (Spring, 1965), pp. 58-89.

¹⁰⁷ Lewis, "Diary of a Missionary," Chronicles (December, 1939), p. 445.

¹⁰⁸ Missionary Herald, Vol. XXXVII, 1841, p. 474; Hogue, Good-land Indian Orphanage, pp. 13-15.

In the spring of 1848, William Fields, a Choctaw living near Good Land, petitioned the Presbety for a preacher and teacher. Although no ordained minister was available, Mr. and Mrs. John Lathrop established a mission station and a neighborhood school at the site. However, Lathrop soon wished to go to another place. Since his clash with Ramsey at Spencer Academy, O. P. Stark had been seeking a permanent station. Temporarily, he had assisted at Pine Ridge. Then, in September, 1850, Stark and his wife were assigned to take over the neglected Good Land.¹⁰⁹

The Starks moved into the log cabin built by Lathrop, and Mrs. Stark met her school in a small room, called a "lean-to," attached to the side of the building. Miss Norris arrived in 1851, to assist Mrs. Stark, but was forced to leave after only a few months because of poor health.¹¹⁰

In 1852, Stark completed a log church house and a church was organized. Mrs. Stark moved the school into this building; for fifty-two years, this building served both as a schoolhouse and as a place of worship. In the fall of this same year, Miss Harriet Arms, formerly of Pine Ridge, arrived to teach the school.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ Choctaw Mission Records, passim, 1848; McMillan, "Women Teachers," Chronicles (Spring, 1949), pp. 22-3; Program: Dedication of the Oliver Porter Stark Memorial Chapel, 1965, Files of Frances Imon.

¹¹⁰ Hogue, Goodland Indian Orphanage, p. 19.

¹¹¹ Ibid., pp. 18, 28; Report of Indian Affairs, 1853, p. 20; 1854, p. 136; Ainslie to McBeth, Sue McBeth Papers, Indian Archives.

Reporting for the school year 1853-54, Stark gave the average attendance as 20; the whole number enrolled as 21. Lessons were taught in the Testament, arithmetic, geography, writing, and all read the Westminster Shorter Catechism. Discouragements were peculiar to irregularity in attendance, ignorance of the English language, and the "want of books."¹¹²

On September 15, 1854, Mrs. Stark died in childbirth. She left four children, including an infant daughter who died fifteen days later. As other missionaries had done, the heartbroken Stark buried his wife and daughter near the church and school.¹¹³

In 1855, Stark determined to build a respectable home for his family. The house was made of hewn timbers; one and one-half stories; with seven rooms, two big porches, and two stone fireplaces; plastered inside; and weather-boarded on the outside with a roof of hand-made shingles. This house stood for fifty years, being torn down in 1905. In the meantime, Miss Arms had left the school because of health and Miss Harriet McCormick had been transferred to Goodland from Bok Chito. In 1856, only a few months after coming to Goodland, she married O. P. Stark. She was a devoted mother to her step-children and reared eight sons and daughters of her own. She died October 3,

¹¹²

Choctaw Mission Records, December 10, 1853; Report of Indian Affairs, 1853, p. 420; 1854, p. 137.

¹¹³

Report of Indian Affairs, 1854, p. 136; McMillan, "Women Teachers," Chronicles (Spring, 1949), pp. 22-3.

1910, in Paris, Texas, at the home of a daughter, Mrs. Kate Stark Skinner.¹¹⁴

By July, 1856, Stark had settled his children and his new wife in the house he had built and was absorbed in his work. Originally, the Goodland Church had covered the neighborhoods of Baiya Hikia, Lukchuck Homma, Bok Chito, and Yoshu. In 1855, the members of the church at Baiya Hikia and Yakni Okehaya, with 64 members, had been formed into a separate congregation under Hotchkin. The Goodland Church embraced the remaining three churches with 201 members. In all these neighborhoods were Saturday and Sabbath schools. Neighborhood schools were at Goodland, taught by Mrs. Stark, and at Bok Chito, taught by Jonathan E. Dwight, an educated Choctaw. Miss Mary Ann Greenlee, from Fredricktown, Ohio, arrived to begin her work in the fall of 1857, at Goodland.¹¹⁵

Under Miss Greenlee, the school year of 1858-59 was a prosperous one for Yakni Achukma with 42 scholars. However, as elsewhere in the Nation, the turmoil and disturbance had increased. Goodland was particularly vulnerable to these forces because the neighborhood bordered directly on Red River and the proximity of the grog shops in Texas. In addition, dry weather had again ruined the crops promising a year of scarcity ahead. Stark wrote a gloomy letter to his co-missionary at Goodwater, George Ainslie, talking seriously

¹¹⁴ Ibid., Hogue, Goodland Indian Orphanage, pp. 18-9.

¹¹⁵ Report of Indian Affairs, 1856, pp. 163-64; 157, p. 237; 1858, pp. 158-59; Choctaw Mission Records, September 14, 1857.

of going back to the States rather than staying in the Nation to witness the distress of hunger he could not alleviate.¹¹⁶

In a final decision, however, in the spring of 1861, as the battle lines were drawn and the Civil War began, Rev. and Mrs. Stark chose to remain at Goodland. Miss Greenlee left the station to join the caravan going North. This, then, was the humble beginning of Goodland which is still in operation today as the oldest church and the oldest mission school in continuous existence in the state of Oklahoma, and is even now, a source of pride for the Choctaws.¹¹⁷

Yakni Okehaya

In June or the first of July, 1855, Ebenezer and Philena Hotchkin left Goodwater School. The Choctaw Mission had given Hotchkin the privilege of choosing a location for his new work. He decided on a preaching point established by himself and Kingsbury fifteen years before. This place was located on the Red River, six miles above the Boggy. Originally called Lukchuk Homma, "Red Mud," the name was changed by Hotchkin to Yakni Okehaya, "Living Land," in memory of the old station east of the Mississippi.¹¹⁸ Today, the

¹¹⁶ Report of Indian Affairs, 1859, pp. 195-96; 1860, pp. 130-31; Lewis, "Diary of a Missionary," Chronicles (December, 1939), p. 440.

¹¹⁷ Lewis, "Notes and Documents," Chronicles (June, 1943), p. 192; Hogue, Goodland Indian Orphanage, pp. 14, 21.

¹¹⁸ Choctaw Mission Records, April 26, 1855; Report of Indian Affairs, 1856, p. 158; Hogue, Goodland Indian Orphanage, p. 29.

neglected spot is a few miles south of Boswell, Choctaw County,
Oklahoma.¹¹⁹

Dated May 10, 1856, the first report from Yakni Okehaya stated the Living Land Church met in an unfinished building 40 x 28 feet and comprised 68 members. A small schoolhouse had been finished in time for the first session to begin December 1, 1855, with 26 scholars enrolled. Hotchkin's report was restrained and subdued, entirely lacking in the enthusiasm which for so long had characterized his writings. While the tone of his subsequent reports indicate he had somewhat recovered, the schoolmaster was never again to reach such heights as at Goodwater.¹²⁰

In the following two years, Hotchkin reported little change in the school. Together, Hotchkin and his wife received from the Foreign Missions Board, \$400 yearly; except for \$300 appropriated by the National Council in October, 1859, the school itself had received no operating funds. As for the growing hysteria over slavery, Hotchkin wrote:

We have looked upon our rulers "as the powers that be, are ordained of God;" and have respected them for this reason. "Whoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God." (Romans XIII, 2). This has been our rule of action during the political excitement. We believe that the Bible is the best guide for us to follow. Our best citizens are those who are most influenced by Bible truth.¹²¹

The Southern Choctaws approved of Hotchkin and his sensible views on slavery. If the vigilantes visited Living Land, apparently

¹¹⁹ Field Trip by writer with Tony Thomas and Lucien Spear, August 23, 1969.

¹²⁰ Report of Indian Affairs, 1856, pp. 158-63.

¹²¹ Report of Indian Affairs, 1859, 193-95; Folsom, Constitution and Laws (1869), p. 216.

Hotchkin appeased their hostility. In any case, when other missionaries fled the Nation in fear, Ebenezer and Philena Hotchkin remained at their small station. Then, on April 29, 1861, the Choctaw Mission granted Ebenezer Hotchkin and O. P. Stark permission "to go North on family business." Thus, Hotchkin and Stark left the Nation about the same time as the other workers; however, they returned in the fall of 1861. Their journey had a double purpose: if they attended to family matters, they also had undertaken a covert assignment in behalf of the Choctaw Nation.¹²²

Other Schools

Established by the treaty teacher, Ramsey D. Potts, under the School Act of 1842, Providence School was to be closed. Potts hoped to superintend an academy to be opened by the Chickasaws. While waiting for definite plans to materialize, Potts continued to operate his school.¹²³

For the school year ending August 31, 1843, Potts reported 39 scholars; 23 lived with the Potts family, 9 of whom he boarded gratuitously and "clothed partly." For the "residue," he received \$4 a month to be paid in any kind of produce their parents could spare. Potts also mentioned four outstanding students: Colbert Carter, Wyatt Coyle, Rosanna Coyle, and Patsy Going.¹²⁴

¹²² Choctaw Mission Records, April 29, 1861; Baird, Peter Pitchlynn, p. 128.

¹²³ Report of Indian Affairs, 1842, pp. 525, 498; 1843, pp. 367-68.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 1843, pp. 338-39.

Armstrong Academy was officially established near Bok Chito, located in present Bryan County, a few miles west of the Choctaw County line. Potts was appointed its first superintendent. Potts sent his final report of the school to Peter Pitchlynn. This original document has been preserved and is of special interest because many of the descendants of these pupils are the school children of Choctaw County today.

Report of Providence Station a
Under the Superintendence of Ramsey D. Potts, 1844

Names	ages	when entered	when left	Studies
<u>Females</u>				
Patsy Going	13	4/14 1839		Grammar/Geography/Philosophy
Amalia Train	15	2/5 1843	5/1 1843	Reading/Writing
Susan Walker	8	4/16 1843		Spelling
Lucy Homer	20	6/1 1843		Spelling/Writing
Mary Worcester	9	4/16 1843		Spelling/Writing
Phebe Going	7	2/1 1843		Spelling/Writing

125 Report of Indian Affairs, 1845, p. 578; Thoburn and Wright, Oklahoma, Vol. II, p. 214; Niles' Register, Vol. LXVII (1844), p. 178.

Table 3 (cont'd)

Names	ages	when entered	when left	Studies
<u>Males</u>				
Thomas Bond	15	9/7 1841		Geography/Writing/Arithmetic
Morgan Perry	23	1/4 1843	5/1 1844	Reading/Geography/Writing
William Walker	10	4/16 1843		Reading/Geography/Writing
Jeffe Train	11	2/5 1843		Reading/Geography/Writing
Pierre Train	10	2/5 1843		Reading/Geography/Writing
William Train	8	2/5 1843		Reading/Geography/Writing
Charles Garry	7	3/1 1843		Spelling
William Fry	7	6/1 1844		Alphabet
Lewis Fry	11	6/1 1840		Reading/Writing/Etc.
Wm. Armstrong	15	2/28 1843		Reading/Writing/Etc.
Enos Look	9	1/5 1843		Spelling
Westley Collins	20	4/11 1844		History/Geometry/Arithmetic
Newton Perry	15	4/11 1844		Reading/Writing/Etc.
Wm. Turnbull	11	4/11 1844		Spelling

Table 3 (cont'd)

Names	ages	when entered	when left	Studies
Darius Worcester	7	4/11 1844		Spelling
Clark Impson	9	5/1 1844		Spelling
William Betts	5	5/1 1844		Spelling

^aNames of Pupils of Providence Station," 1844, Pitchlynn Papers, Gilcrease Institute.

Of necessity, Potts left the site as soon as possible. Susan Colbert Jones, wife of Robert M. Jones, had chosen the location for a plantation home and plans were already underway for the construction of Rose Hill. While the buildings at Armstrong were being completed, Potts made his headquarters at Mayhew, staying no doubt, at Mr. Wall's "house for travelers."¹²⁶ On January 13, 1860, Susan Colbert Jones, the second wife of Robert M. Jones, died. On January 18, 1861, Col. Jones married Miss Elizabeth Earle, a missionary teacher at Armstrong Academy. As for Ramsey D. Potts, he served at Armstrong until his resignation on March 12, 1854. He died within a few weeks after giving up his post.¹²⁷

¹²⁶
Ibid.

¹²⁷
Dilliam to Randall, September 16, 1927, Robert M. Jones Papers, Indian Archives; Morrison, "Rose Hill," p. 3; Jones, Robert M. Vertical Files, Library, Oklahoma Historical Society; "Potts," Grant Foreman Papers, Box 13, Folder 2, Indian Archives; Choctaw Mission Records, September 18 and 19, 1854.

Besides the school at Providence, Mayhew seems to have operated as a neighborhood school intermittently. Rind, one of the treaty teachers, went to Mayhew a short time after the marriage and resignation of Tryphena Wall Stewart. In 1859, George Folsom, trustee, reported a school at this place; Hotchkin also reported a school at Mayhew. After the Civil War, the site of Mayhew was moved west of the original site. A post office, courthouse, and school were constructed. In 1967, the old building serving as a store and post office was still standing.¹²⁸

As for Tryphena Wall Stewart, seven years after her marriage, her husband took her to Doaksville to be near a physician. She died June 27, 1849, leaving four small children. Father Cyrus Kingsbury, her old friend and counselor, wrote her obituary and conducted her funeral services. The simple inscription "Tryphena's Grave" on a marble stone in historic old Ft. Towson cemetery testifies today to the grief of Charles F. Stewart and serves as a memorial to one of the first Choctaw teachers in the Choctaw Nation.¹²⁹

A number of other neighborhood schools were taught within the boundaries of Choctaw County. In 1843, John P. Kingsbury taught a day school near Pine Ridge. After his father moved to Living Land, John J. Hotchkin opened a school at Wilmington, eight miles from Living Land. In 1859, a neighborhood school at Clear Creek was taught

¹²⁸Harris, "Journal of a Tour," Chronicles (June, 1932), p. 255; Report of Indian Affairs, 1859, pp. 194-207; Interview and Field Trip by writer with Cap Duncan, Tony Thomas, and Lucien Spear, August 6, 1967.

¹²⁹Muriel H. Wright, "Tryphena," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. IX, No. 2 (June, 1931), pp. 183-92.

by Miss Lewis. A neighborhood school was near Spencer Academy and another near Goodwater.¹³⁰ Without doubt there were others whose locations and teachers are not specifically mentioned in the reports of that day.

In addition to the neighborhood schools, Saturday and Sabbath Schools grew in number and importance as interest in education increased.¹³¹ While the boarding schools of Spencer Academy, Pine Ridge, and Goodwater were the most impressive educational institutions in Choctaw County, the neighborhood schools and the Sabbath and Saturday Schools made an important contribution to the education of the Choctaw people.

Problems of the Period

For the first ten years after removal, school problems were of a somewhat rudimentary nature. With the arousal of interest in education and the establishment of an organized school system, problems became more varied and complicated.

One problem area centered around the subjects to be taught and methods to be employed in teaching them. McKinney and Ramsey at Spencer aspired to give the boys a classical education; Hotchkin at Goodwater had offered advanced courses for young ladies. However, the Choctaws wanted their children to be taught practical subjects. They deplored the fact that the boys were not being taught mechanical

¹³⁰ Report of Indian Affairs, 1843, p. 339; 1847, p. 246; 1849, p. 205; 1855, p. 164; Harris, "Journal of a Tour," Chronicles (June, 1932), p. 225; Folsom, Constitution and Laws (1869), pp. 215-16.

¹³¹ Report of Indian Affairs, 1843, pp. 351-52; 1851, p. 379; 1857, p. 246; 1855, pp. 156-57.

arts because of the lack of money to equip workshops; they desired their girls to be taught cooking and sewing instead of spending too much time at painting and drawing.¹³²

Interestingly, the Choctaws approved the teaching of music, at least to a limited degree. Jared Olmsted, at Norwalk, a small school for boys just across the boundary line in McCurtain County, was convinced music should be taught in every school. Olmsted died September 19, 1843, but his school became noted for its boy singers trained under Mr. Pitkin. Largely through the influence of Norwalk, vocal music became an important part of the curriculum of the schools of the Nation, and vocal presentations were included in the examination exercises.¹³³

Besides the subjects to be offered, exactly how the subjects were to be presented was another concern. General agreement conceded the children should be taught "to think," and teaching by "rote recitation" was viewed with disapproval. In spite of arguments against it, however, the procedure generally employed was teaching by memorization.¹³⁴ At the heart of the problem was the language difficulty.

¹³² Ibid., 1844, pp. 386-89; 1847, 140, 153, 419-20; 1852, p. 423; 1849, p. 1106; 1852, p. 132; 1851, pp. 378-79; 1854, p. 139.

¹³³ Report of Indian Affairs, 1843, pp. 24-7; 1849, p. 1141; Keith L. Bryant, Jr., "The Choctaw Nation in 1843: A Missionary's View," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XLIV, No. 3 (Autumn, 1866), pp. 319-21; "Notes from the Indian Advocate," Chronicles (March, 1936), pp. 72-3; Lewis, "Notes and Documents," Chronicles (June, 1943), p. 192; Missionary Herald, Vol. XLII, 1846, p. 213; Lewis, "Diary of a Missionary," Chronicles (December, 1939), pp. 432-39.

¹³⁴ Report of Indian Affairs, 1843, pp. 34-7; 1845, p. 580; 1853, pp. 412-13.

The language problem constantly confronted both teachers and pupils, and school reports are filled with references to the language barrier. Upon entering a boarding school, a child was confronted immediately with the task of learning to speak and read English. As a necessary tool, therefore, every student carried his Choctaw Definer. Mixed blood pupils had the advantage in that English was sometimes spoken at home, but the full blood child had great difficulty. The procedure for teaching English was to begin with the alphabet, advance to the spelling of two letter words, of three letter words, into reading a primer, then the English Bible. This proved to be a tedious, discouraging route, and many teachers felt the need of a more effective method of teaching the English language.¹³⁵

Not all who worked with the Choctaws were in total agreement with the "boarding school philosophy" that "education would do little good unless the boys and girls are taught to speak the English language."¹³⁶ The neighborhood schools employed a dual approach -- that is, they taught subjects both in English and Choctaw. On the other hand, the Saturday and Sabbath schools used the Choctaw language almost exclusively. Reading, writing, and arithmetic were all taught in the vernacular.¹³⁷ The missionary ministers believed if a strong

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Report of Indian Affairs, 1842, p. 495; 1845, p. 48; 1857, pp. 242-43; Lewis, "Notes and Documents," Chronicles (June, 1943), p. 192; Lewis, "Diary of a Missionary," Chronicles (December, 1939), p. 435; Ben Watkins, Choctaw Definer (Van Buren, Arkansas: J. W. Baldwin, 1872); Republished 1972 by Southwestern Indian Antiquities Survey, Inc., Box 12392, Nashville, Tennessee, 37212. Original printed on newsprint.

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Report of Indian Affairs, 1845, p. 582.

¹³⁷

Ibid., 1844, p. 383; 1851, p. 374; 1858, pp. 158-59.

native church were to be built, the Bible and other books must be available to the Choctaw in his own language. Therefore, a number of missionaries devoted their time to translating. Two of the most outstanding of these were Cyrus Byington of Stockbridge and Alfred Wright of Wheelock. Cyrus Byington worked for many years on Grammar of the Choctaw Language. This book remains, even today, the final authority on the Choctaw language.

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With the opening of the boarding schools came a critical need for supplies and books; however, this problem was soon somewhat alleviated and these schools took pride in building up their libraries. The common and Sabbath schools did not fare so well. To a large extent supported by local neighborhoods, these schools suffered a constant shortage of books and other financial help. The Saturday and Sabbath schools had even fewer books than did the day schools. Kingsbury resorted to channeling funds raised by his students with their handwork into buying text books for the Sabbath schools; and hymn books and Testaments were in constant demand.

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138 Report of Indian Affairs, 1848, p. 514; 1856, p. 154; Missionary Herald, 1840, p. 398; William L. Heimstra, "Presbyterian Missionaries and Mission Churches Among the Choctaw and Chickasaw Indians, 1832-1865," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XXVI, No. 4 (Winter, 1948-49), p. 464; Angie Debo, A History of the Indians of the United States (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1970), p. 114; Albert D. Richardson, Beyond the Mississippi (Hartford, Connecticut: Connecticut Publishing Co., 1869), p. 222; Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin No. 46 (Washington, 1915), pp. vii-viii; Cushman, History of the Choctaw, pp. 140-44; Cyrus Byington, Grammar of the Choctaw Language (Philadelphia: McCalla & Stanley, 1870).

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Report of Indian Affairs, 1843, p. 351; 1849, pp. 1100-1103; 1854, pp. 136-37, 584; Choctaw Mission Records, May, 1854; September, 1856.

Financial problems were a constant concern of the Choctaw schools. One of the most exacting duties of the superintendents of the boarding schools was to keep an accurate account of expenditures and to budget frugally. Since Choctaw funds originated from interest on their monies invested by the United States Government, the amount available was fairly static. An example of the paucity of funds relates to the building of the mechanic shops in the schools for boys. In an effort to find money for this project, in 1849, the Council passed an act requiring parents to clothe their children attending boarding schools. However, although the mechanical arts were taught as best they could be, the operating expenses of the boarding schools were such that the expensive shops were never installed.¹⁴⁰

Recognizing the need for additional school funds and especially the financial means of supporting stronger neighborhood schools, by 1848, the Council began exploring possible sources of revenue. In 1851, the Council requested the Federal Government to give them the residue of the funds granted under the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek in order that the amount might be apportioned for the day schools. In 1852, Thompson McKinney and Forbis LeFlore returned from Washington with a report of a large amount of money due the Choctaws. This led to the Act of 1853, which created a delegation "to settle all unsettled business with the United States." Members of the delegation were P. P. Pitchlynn, Israel Folsom, Dixon W. Lewis, and Samuel Garland. This money came to be called the "Net Proceeds." In the same year,

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Report of Indian Affairs, 1844, p. 390; 1846, pp. 352-53; 1849, p. 1106; 1857, pp. 242-43; Ramsey to Lowrie, April 2, 1849, Vol. II, Box 12, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections; Morrison, "Diary of Kingsbury," Chronicles (June, 1925), p. 156.

the office of the Superintendent of Schools of the Choctaw Nation was officially created. Peter Pitchlynn was chosen to fill this post; however, since official business kept him in Washington so much of the time, Robert M. Jones served as Acting Superintendent for several months.¹⁴¹

Another problem area of the schools centered around personnel. Cyrus Kingsbury dealt with most of these matters. As Superintendent of the Choctaw Mission, he forwarded his suggestions to the American Board. Changes in the teaching staff were frequent with qualified teachers difficult to attain. Then, once in the Nation, many missionaries, or members of their families, could not long endure the loneliness, the pioneer living conditions, nor the hot, southern climate. Reports are replete with accounts of sickness and death.¹⁴²

Most unmarried teachers remained spinsters, but occasionally a teacher relinquished her position because of marriage. A few women teachers married Choctaws; some married missionaries whose wives had died, in which case they usually continued their teaching responsi-

¹⁴¹ Folsom, Constitution and Laws (1869), pp. 101, 119, 121, 123-24, 130.

¹⁴² Report of Indian Affairs, 1844, p. 377; 1856, pp. 141-56; 1849, p. 1107; 1856, pp. 151-52; 1845, p. 136; Goode, Outposts of Zion, p. 199; Ramsey to Lowrie, March 3, 1847; Reid to Lowrie, July 24, 1849, Vol. II, Box 9; Reid to Wilson, May 18, 1854, Vol. I, Box 12, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections; Choctaw Mission Records, *passim*, 1853-61; Lewis, "Notes and Documents," Chronicles (June, 1943), p. 103.

bilities.¹⁴³ Among the men teachers at Spencer, struggle for power, internal rifts, and unhappiness with a mere teaching position sometimes disturbed the routine of the school.¹⁴⁴

Salaries of the missionaries remained comparatively low. Under the American Board, east of the Mississippi the workers had received no compensation beyond board and clothing. After coming West, they still had no private property, but, instead of receiving clothing from the public fund, they were paid a small salary, board and room, and travel expenses to and from the Nation. Superintendents and men teachers usually received \$400 per year; their wives, \$100. Unmarried teachers were sometimes paid as much as \$350; more often they only received \$100 per year. Kingsbury paid himself only \$150 per year, applying the remainder of his salary to school expenses. Under the Presbyterian Board, salaries were slightly higher. Alexander

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Reid to Lowrie, June 23, 1851; November 12, 1855, Vol. I, Box 12, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections; Lewis, "Diary of a Missionary," Chronicles (December, 1939), p. 445; Report of Indian Affairs, 1851, p. 369; Dilliam to Randall, September 16, 1927, Robert M. Jones Papers, Indian Archives; Denison, "Missions and Missionaries," Chronicles (Winter, 1946-47), p. 439; Choctaw Mission Records, December 10, 1853; Lewis, "Letters Regarding Choctaw Missions," Chronicles (September, 1937), p. 282; Hogue, Goodland Indian Orphanage, p. 19; McMillan, "Women Teachers," Chronicles (Spring, 1949), p. 21.

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Report of Indian Affairs, 1845, pp. 579-81; 1846, p. 352; Stark to Lowrie, March 2, 1849; Ramsey to Lowrie, February 19, 1849; December 13, 1845; Vol. II, Box 9; Reid to Lowrie, August 17, 1850; January 28, 1852; Edwards to Lowrie, December 26, 1851, Vol. I, Box 12, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections.

Reid reduced his allowable salary of \$600 to \$200 per year.¹⁴⁵

Table 4

Estimated Expenses of Choctaw Mission, 1854^a

From July 1, 1853 to June 30, 1854 -- \$11,668.78

Estimated expenses of 1855:

Stockbridge	\$400.00	Lennox - Dr. Hobbs	\$600.00
Iyanubi Seminary	266.67	Native helper	50.00
Yazoo Bok	600.00	Good Land	600.00
Mrs. H. B. Wright	200.00	Bennington	600.00
Mrs. J. Edwards	653.33	Mt. Pleasant	600.00
H. K. Copeland	133.33	Native helper	100.00
Mt. Zion - P. Fisk	350.00	J. E. Dwight	300.00
Pine Ridge	266.67	Wm. Field	100.00
Good Water	500.00	J. Dukes	100.00
		Printing Hymn Books	400.00
		Total Estimated Expenses	\$6,820.00

^a Choctaw Mission Records, Good Water, September 18, 19, 1854.

In the neighborhood schools, a small fee was charged by the teachers for services but fees were difficult to collect. If taught under a missionary teacher, the school was often maintained by dipping into the missionary's meager funds. Otherwise, only those schools in rather affluent, thickly populated areas could survive for

¹⁴⁵ Kingsbury to McBeth, Sue McBeth Papers, Indian Archives; McMillan, "Women Teachers," Chronicles (Spring, 1949), p. 11; Report of Indian Affairs, 1857, p. 243; Reid to Lowrie, January 28, 1852, Vol. I, Box 12, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections.

any length of time. Increasingly, both day schools and Sabbath schools depended upon the Choctaws as teachers. By 1860, a number of neighborhood schools were taught by well-qualified Choctaws. In addition, Pliny Fiske, Allen Wright, William Field, Joseph Dukes, J. E. Dwight, and T. H. Benton were among the Choctaw minister-teachers working in the churches and the schools.¹⁴⁶

Administrative responsibilities and problems of the boarding schools were much more complex than those of the day and neighborhood schools. If a superintendent served acceptably, he was required to be an agricultural-mechanical-home economist and a building engineer, as well as an educator and an ordained minister. While most of the buildings at the stations were constructed of heavy square logs, during this period more and more "frame" structures were built. These were a source of great pride both to the missionaries and the Choctaws; and more often than not, the missionary drew up the plans and supervised the construction.¹⁴⁷

Providing clothing and food for the "boarding house family" required vigilant planning. Although by 1847, most parents withstood the expense, girls in the female schools made their own clothes. At times, the girls at Pine Ridge also made garments for the boys at

¹⁴⁶ Report of Indian Affairs, 1843, pp. 338-39; 1859, p. 245; 1860, p. 137; Choctaw Mission Records, September 16, 1858; September 21, 1860.

¹⁴⁷ Report of Indian Affairs, 1846, pp. 350-51; 1849, p. 1108; 1854, p. 143; Hudson, "Recollections," Chronicles (December, 1932), p. 518; "Notes from Indian Advocate," Chronicles (March, 1936), p. 71.

Spencer. Cloth for these projects was purchased by the bolt.¹⁴⁸

Gardens and orchards, under the supervision of a gardner or farmer, furnished the schools with gardenstuffs which required harvesting, preparation, and storage for the winter months. Other foodstuffs had to be purchased at favorable market prices. At Spencer, farming was a major activity, providing not only food but serving as a curriculum project to teach the boys the science of agriculture and the value of work. At the girls' schools, working in the kitchen and at other household tasks was considered a part of the curriculum; on the other hand, at Spencer domestic chores were performed by hired help or slaves.¹⁴⁹

Most supplies were ordered from the North. The service was not always satisfactory. Orders were placed for such a variety of commodities as cloth, sewing needles, sheet music for the melodean, and umbrellas. Requirements, including school supplies of books, slates, maps, and stationery, were shipped up the Arkansas and Red Rivers. Low water, especially during the winter, sometimes held up shipment for months.¹⁵⁰ In 1855, importation up the rivers was delayed for so long that the Indian agent wrote this state of affairs

¹⁴⁸ Report of Indian Affairs, 1851, p. 379; 1852, p. 421; 1855, pp. 160-61; 1856, pp. 151, 159-60; 1860, pp. 137-38; Lewis, "Diary of a Missionary," Chronicles (December, 1939), p. 431; "Notes from the Indian Advocate," Chronicles (March, 1936), p. 71.

¹⁴⁹ Report of Indian Affairs, 1848, p. 499; 1849, pp. 1107-08; 1851, p. 379; 1855, pp. 160-61; 1856, p. 151; 1859, p. 200; Reid to Lowrie, January 23, 1852, Vol. I, Box 12, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections.

¹⁵⁰ Hiemstra, "Presbyterian Missionaries and Mission Churches," Chronicles (Winter, 1948-49), p. 466; Ainslee to Lowrie, Vol. I, Box 12, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections.

"should turn their (the Choctaws) attention to the need for rail-roads."¹⁵¹

A knowledge of medicine was indispensable to the superintendent of a mission school. Usually he was the only physician for the mission family, the church congregation, and the school children. The less educated and older members of the Choctaw tribe continued the old traditions and beliefs with regard to sickness. The traditional Indian doctor, called the alikhchi in Choctaw, employed the supernatural with herbal remedies and special treatments. Actually, many of his practices were no more primitive than those of the contemporary white physicians or the missionaries. They, as had the alikhchi, had learned to administer a few drugs and herbs, set broken limbs, and sew up wounds; but they were ineffective against contagious disease and the "chills and fever" which frequently attacked the schools and the missionaries. Yet the missionaries ministered as best they could to the sick. At one time or another, all of the schools were victims of severe epidemics of measles, eye infections, whooping cough, and "inflammation of the lungs." Only on rare occasions were the doctors at Ft. Towson or Doaksville called to the schools.¹⁵²

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p. 151. Report of Indian Affairs, 1844, p. 388; 1845, p. 579; 1855,

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Lewis, "Diary of a Missionary," Chronicles (December, 1939), p. 433; Virginia R. Allen, "Medical Practices and Health in the Choctaw Nation, 1831-1885," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XLVIII, No. 1 (Spring, 1970), p. 62; Heimstra, "Presbyterian Missionaries and Mission Churches," Chronicles (Winter, 1948-49), p. 446.

Outside the classroom the missionaries had little time to themselves and were almost never free from duties. Hotchkin, Stark, and Kingsbury all assumed heavy ministerial responsibilities other than those associated with their immediate schools. As for the classroom teachers, missionaries were required to supervise students outside the class hours; in addition, they were expected to attend all religious services and assist in the Saturday and Sabbath schools. Besides the regular services, periodically weekend meetings were held. Called by the Choctaws the "Big Meetin'," these gatherings frequently combined communion, a funeral "cry," lectures on agriculture and the state of the crops, preaching services, Bible classes, and a temperance meeting.

Missionaries championed a lofty code of conduct among the Choctaws. "Whiskey drinking, ball playing, dancing, and frolicking" were frowned upon. Of utmost concern was the battle against drunkenness. The crusade against alcohol was an added duty to the already burdened missionaries, with the temperance meeting as their chief weapon. Because of their strict ethics, the missionaries were sometimes ridiculed. However, they were not alone in their anxiety over the whiskey problem. Indian agents and the Choctaw Council joined them in the fight "to save our Indian population from the ruinous

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Indian Advocate, August, 1854, Grant Foreman Papers, Box 13, Folder 2, Indian Archives; Lewis, "Diary of a Missionary," Chronicles (December, 1939), p. 433-34.

effects of the use of intoxicating liquors."¹⁵⁴

Thus, for the two decades before the Civil War, problems of the schools in the Choctaw Nation related to the areas of curriculum, finances, personnel, and a variety of administrative matters. In rare instances, the missionary-teachers could not conceal their discouragement and exhaustion. Perhaps Byington summed up the situation when he wrote: "I have a full share of labor for my strength and health; to provide for a family, to act the part of a good neighbor, preacher, physician, in this sickly land, is as much as I am able to do."¹⁵⁵ Generally, however, both the Choctaws and the missionary-teachers recognized school problems and dealt with them as best they could. Yet, the most difficult problem of all was beyond control -- the problem of political turmoil and war.

Political Turmoil

As has been indicated, most of the early schools among the Choctaws, and in Choctaw County, operated under the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions with headquarters in Boston. The Choctaw Mission West was organized under this body. In 1836, one of the first communications refers to the employment of slave labor.

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Report of Indian Affairs, 1846, p. 358; 1847, p. 358; 1855, 163-64; Hiemstra, "Presbyterian Missions and Missionaries," Chronicles (Winter, 1948-49), p. 463; Lewis, "Letters Regarding Choctaw Missions," Chronicles (September, 1939), p. 278; S. C. Bartlett, Sketches of the Missions of the American Board (Boston: Published by the Board, 33 Pemberton Square, 1872), p. 181; Sermon by Cyrus Byington, 1864, Missions and Missionaries, Indian Archives.

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Ibid.

From this time on, slavery was a recurring subject of discussion between the missionaries and the Board.¹⁵⁶

The missionaries soon learned to go about their labors without interfering with social or political institutions. No doubt this policy was brought about, in part, by the Alexander Talley affair and the strict admonition of Agent Armstrong for the missionary-teachers to keep out of Choctaw politics.¹⁵⁷ The missionaries also realized if they were to influence the leading men of the Nation, they must not exert too much pressure against such issues as slavery.¹⁵⁸ Furthermore, as the schools grew, superintendents were forced to employ black people. The Choctaws could rarely be employed for menial tasks. The policy, therefore, was to use slaves loaned by their owners, paying the Negroes a small sum for their labors.¹⁵⁹

From the beginning, the Choctaw Mission stated its position clearly to the American Board, and, for a time, there seemed to be an agreement between the two. However, the policies of the missionaries

¹⁵⁶ W. B. Morrison, "The Choctaw Mission of the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. IV, No. 2 (June, 1926), pp. 166-83.

¹⁵⁷ Senate Documents, 23 Congress, 1 Session (1834-35), p. 216 Missionary Herald, Vol. XVII, 1831, p. 353; Report of Indian Affairs, 1833, pp. 187-90.

¹⁵⁸ Morrison, "Choctaw Mission," Chronicles (June, 1926), pp. 180-81.

¹⁵⁹ Reid to Lowrie, January 28, 1852; Reid to Lowrie, October 1, 1855, Vol. I, Box 12, American Indian Correspondence, Western History Collections.

grew increasingly unacceptable. In 1848, the Board instructed all workers "to pursue a course as shall deliver the Choctaw churches from all connection with slavery." The missionaries remonstrated; but from this time on, the two groups often corresponded at cross-
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purposes.

By the summer of 1850, the entire United States was in an uproar. In March, Daniel Webster had delivered a fiery speech in the Congressional debate over the Compromise of 1850; and the Nashville Convention had just concluded its June session, threatening to secede if Southern rights were not recognized. In the midst of the furor, The Northern Standard, a paper in Clarksville, Texas, just across the Red River, published a diatribe accusing the "Reverend Northern Gentlemen" among the Choctaw "of harboring and encouraging run-away negroes." John P. Kingsbury, one of the editors of The Choctaw Intelligencer published at Doaksville, resented the blanket charge of abolitionism. He replied with a signed editorial. These exchanges continued for several issues, causing heated debate in the Choctaw Nation, especially in the Kiamichi River area.
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As the months went by, relations between the missionaries and the American Board became so strained that George W. Wood, Corresponding Secretary of the Board, visited the Nation hoping to resolve

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Morrison, "Choctaw Mission," Chronicles (June, 1926), p. 181; Sermon by Cyrus Byington, 1864, Missions and Missionaries, Indian Archives; Kingsbury to Pitchlynn, November 15, 1855, Pitchlynn Papers, Gilcrease Institute; Choctaw Mission Records, April 15, 1856.

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Morrison, "Notes on Abolitionism," Chronicles (Spring, 1960), p. 78; The Northern Standard, June 15, 1850; June 20, 1850; The Choctaw Intelligencer, June 27, 1850; Lewis, "Diary of a Missionary," Chronicles (December, 1939), p. 440; Missionary Herald, Vol. XLII, 1846, p. 213; Report of Indian Affairs, 1849, p. 1141.

the differences. On April 25 and 26, 1855, an important meeting was held at Goodwater. The Choctaw Mission Records gave a detailed account of this event which was watched with great interest by the Choctaws. As a result of the open discussion, a preamble and thirteen resolutions were drawn up and adopted. In part, the 8th Resolution stated: "A missionary has nothing to do with political questions and obligations;" and the 9th Resolution, "While slavery is always sinful we cannot esteem everyone who is legally a slaveholder a wrong doer by sustaining the legal relation while it is made unavoidable by the laws of the land."¹⁶²

The meeting adjourned on a high note, and the missionaries believed an understanding had been reached. However, peace was not to last and exchanges expressing totally diverse views began again. The final break came on December 24, 1859.¹⁶³ Anticipating the severance with the American Board, the Choctaw Mission had been in touch with the Old School Presbyterian Church, to which most of the Kiamichi River area missionaries belonged. Spencer Academy and Koonsha Female Seminary were already operating under the Foreign Missions Board of this church, and this body agreed to take over the rest of¹⁶⁴ the work.

¹⁶² Choctaw Mission Records, April 6, 15, 25, 26, 1855; Report of Indian Affairs, 1860, p. 147.

¹⁶³ Morrison, "Choctaw Mission," Chronicles (June, 1926), p. 182; Choctaw Mission Records, December 24, 1859.

¹⁶⁴ Choctaw Mission Records, November 30, December 1, 1859; February 15, 1860; Annie Heloise Abel, The American Indian As Slaveholder and Secessionist, Vol. I (Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1915), p. 40.

The Choctaws were pleased with this decision. A committee made up of Cyrus Kingsbury and J. E. Dwight met with the Choctaw Council in 1860, informing them of the change.¹⁶⁵ The Choctaw Council immediately entered into individual contracts with the superintendents of the respective schools; also, overtures and contracts were made with the Presbyterian Board. While all these negotiations were in process, the schools apparently functioned at a high level of efficiency, with both trustees and superintendents reporting unusually good years.¹⁶⁶ Yet, the private letters and accounts reveal an atmosphere of perturbation and fears of an approaching conflict.

On February 7, 1861, the Choctaw General Council adopted resolutions declaring their support of the South. In mid-June, Principal Chief George Hudson called a special session of the Council to meet at Doaksville. Under the influence of Pitchlynn, Hudson had prepared a speech recommending neutrality.¹⁶⁷ Before the Council met, however, Pitchlynn had been visited by the same vigilante committee that had harassed the missionaries. He was threatened with dire consequences if he did not change his views. At the Council, white

¹⁶⁵ Choctaw Mission Records, September 12, 1859; February 15, 1860; Report of Indian Affairs, 1859, pp. 190-91; 1860; p. 129; Goode, Outposts of Zion, p. 201.

¹⁶⁶ Report of Indian Affairs, 1860, p. 147.

¹⁶⁷ Morris, "Choctaw and Chickasaw," Chronicles (Winter, 1972-73), p. 431; Edwards, "Account of my Escape," Chronicles (Spring, 1955), p. 71; Baird, Peter Pitchlynn, p. 120; Speech Draft, Folder 321, Pitchlynn Papers, Gilcrease Institute; Muriel H. Wright, "General Douglas H. Cooper, CSA," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XXXII, No. 2 (Summer, 1954), p. 161.

men from Texas and Arkansas descended upon the meeting and lobbied for Confederate alliance. Before Hudson could speak, Robert M. Jones delivered a fiery address declaring that anyone who opposed slavery should be hanged. Bowing to pressure, Hudson threw away his Pitchlynn-prepared speech and recommended the Choctaws join the South.¹⁶⁸ The recommendation passed on a wave of delirious excitement. The Council passed laws assuming jurisdiction over all males 15-55 years of age, requiring them to join the militia, and over 55 to join the home guard. Delegates to the Confederate States were appointed, with Robert M. Jones heading the delegation.¹⁶⁹

Resolutions concerning the public schools of the Nation were also passed in June, 1861. Superintendents of schools were required to make out an inventory of all property in their possession and sell all surplus provisions. The proceeds were to be turned over to the Trustees, the monies used to pay debts of the respective institutions. The Trustees were authorized to take charge of all property and to hire persons suitable to keep such school property in custodial care for safe keeping until such time as the schools should be reopened.¹⁷⁰ Thus, overwhelmed by the problems of the times, the Choctaws closed their schools.

¹⁶⁸ Abel, The Indian as Slaveholder, Vol. I, pp. 75-79; Speech of Hudson, Doaksville, Folder 64-1, Pitchlynn Papers, Gilcrease Institute; Edwards to Lowrie, October 8, 1861, John Edwards Collection, Library, Oklahoma Historical Society.

¹⁶⁹ Edwards, "Account of my Escape," Chronicles (Spring, 1955), p. 72; Sermon by Byington, June, 1864, Missions and Missionaries, Indian Archives.

¹⁷⁰ Folsom, Constitution and Laws (1869), p. 353.

Summary

In spite of drought and occasional crop failures, the era between 1842 and 1861, was a prosperous one for the Choctaws. Homes, roads, and farms were built; commerce and businesses thrived. Under capable, educated leaders, the Choctaws established and strengthened their institutions. With a constitutional form of government, elections were held, committees and delegations appointed, and laws were modified and refined. Churches were organized throughout the Nation; and, most of all, in 1842, a comprehensive school system under a Board of Trustees and a Superintendent of Schools, was established and operated with reasonable efficiency.

The schools in Choctaw County were a vital part of this school system. Three of the boarding schools included in the Choctaw School Act of 1842 were within the boundaries of present Choctaw County: Spencer Academy; Chuahla Female Seminary, also called Pine Ridge; and Koonsha Female Seminary, also called Goodwater. These boarding schools began operations in 1844. In addition, important neighborhood schools in the area were Providence, closed in 1844; Yakni Achukma, known as Goodland, established in 1848; and Yakni Okehaya, or Living Land, opened in 1855. Other neighborhood schools and Saturday and Sabbath schools were scattered throughout the area. These schools were under the superintendency of Cyrus Kingsbury, Alexander Reid, Ebenezer Hotchkin, O. P. Stark, George Ainslie, Hamilton Balentine, Ramsay D. Potts, and others, all assisted by the missionary-teachers. Native Choctaw ministers and teachers also made a great contribution to the school system, particularly in the

Saturday and Sabbath schools.

Problems of the schools centered around curriculum, finances, personnel, and a wide range of administrative matters. Problems of the boarding schools were much more complex and varied than those in the common, or public schools, as the neighborhood schools came to be called. Throughout the school system, the language barrier had to be dealt with continually. At times, the missionary-teachers were almost overwhelmed by the never-ending responsibilities of their work which included both in-school and out-of-school activities.

In spite of the many difficulties, however, the Choctaw schools flourished. They were overcome, at last, by the issue of slavery. In conflict over abolitionism, in 1858, the missionaries severed relations with the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions and turned to the Presbyterian Board for Foreign Missions. However, as the threat of war became a reality, most of the Northern born missionaries fled the Nation in fear, leaving behind only a few of the oldest missionaries. As a final school act of the period, in June, 1961, the Choctaw Council ordered all school property to be inventoried, surplus supplies sold, and the property placed in the custodial hands of reliable persons.

Thus, the period closed with the Choctaws welded into a solid people possessed with a strong sense of nationality, at the heart of which was a deep and lasting pride in the schools of their Nation.

CHAPTER IV

THE WAR YEARS AND THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT AND STRENGTHENING OF THE SCHOOLS, 1861-1898

Let us educate, or we will be a lost people!
Let our rising generation be prepared to meet
the great change that in the course of time
will take place with the United States
government. At the present, we are in no
condition for that change¹

Chief Coleman Cole

Introduction

In the early summer of 1861, Albert Pike, the Confederate Commissioner, negotiated and signed a treaty with the Choctaw Nation. Almost unanimously the Choctaws sided with the Confederacy. Although their troupes did little fighting, together with the Chickasaws they organized three regiments. Officers from the Choctaw Nation bore such famous surnames as Folsom, McCurtain, Walker, and others.²

¹
Star Vindicator, June 12, 1875.

²
War of Rebellion, First Series, Vol. III, pp. 594-94; Vol. XXX, p. 694; Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1862, pp. 140-41; Muriel H. Wright, "Confederate States of America," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XXII, No. 2 (Summer, 1954), p. 161; Annie Heloise Abel, The American Indian as Participant in the Civil War (Cleveland: The Arthur Clark Company, 1919), pp. 152, 312; Angie Debo, The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1934), p. 82.

Choctaw regiments were stationed in camps around the Kiamichi, Boggy, and Blue Rivers. Troops were also quartered in or near schools. Men drilled on the grounds at Goodland; soldiers bivouacked in the buildings at Goodwater. Spencer served as a hospital, as did Armstrong in the western part of the Nation. In addition, thousands of destitute civilians poured into the area, setting up camps and aggravating the desperate food shortage.³

The site of Armstrong Academy, designated as Chata Tamaha, Choctaw City, served as the Confederate capitol of Indian Territory and the capitol of the Choctaw Nation until 1883. On June 15, 1865, the Confederate Creeks and Seminoles held a Council at this place; on September 1, 1865, Peter Pitchlynn called a general meeting of all the tribes at Chata Tamaha. This activity so near the western boundary of Choctaw County served to increase the importance of this area during the war.⁴

After the war, as throughout the South, the Choctaws were in a state of destitution. Unlike the deep South, however, the Choctaws were able to recoup their resources rather quickly. In 1867,

³ James Davidson Morrison, "Social History of the Choctaws, 1865-1907," Thesis, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma, 1951, for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, pp. 40-41; Angie Debo, "Southern Refugees of the Cherokee Nation," Southwestern Historical Quarterly, Vol. XXXV, No. 2 (April, 1932), pp. 255-56; Jones to McBeth, no date, Missions and Missionaries, Indian Archives, Oklahoma Historical Society; Acts of the Choctaw Council, October, 1864, Choctaw Nation-National Council, Indian Archives, Oklahoma Historical Society; Interview with Bill Grant by the writer, Hugo, Oklahoma, August 15, 1973.

⁴ Muriel H. Wright and LeRoy H. Fischer, "Civil War Sites in Oklahoma," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XXXIV, pp. 160-62.

the Indian Agent reported the Choctaws were gradually recovering, and in 1872, Chief Allen Wright stated the people had been restored to their former condition. Wright may have been overly optimistic; nevertheless, in the reconstruction years, order was re-established, the schools reopened, and public finances stabilized.⁵ As for missionary activity, war and its consequences had all but destroyed three decades of missionary work. While a few missionaries remained in the Nation, in 1865, only a seriously weakened mission survived.⁶

The War Years

Although generally conceded the schools were closed during the war, in Choctaw County a few schools operated on a limited basis. Cyrus Kingsbury, at Pine Ridge, and Alexander Reid, at Spencer, remained at their posts even though their schools were apparently not open. At Goodwater, however, Mrs. Jones taught a day school throughout the war; the neighborhood school at Goodland was in operation; and the school at Living Land existed, at least intermittently.⁷

⁵ Report of Indian Affairs, 1865, pp. 34-35; 1867, p. 318; Hobbs to McBeth, January 9, 1873; Reid to McBeth, February 17, 1872, Wright to McBeth, July 3, 1872, in Missions and Missionaries; Debo, Rise and Fall, p. 109.

⁶ William L. Hiemstra, "Presbyterian Missionaries and Mission Churches Among the Choctaw and Chickasaw Indians, 1832-1865," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XXVI, No. 4 (Winter, 1948-49), pp. 446-47.

⁷ Sidney H. Babcock and John Y. Bryce, History of Methodism in Oklahoma (No publisher or date, c. 1937), Vol. I, pp. 146-47; Choctaw Mission Records, September 23, 1865; Jones to McBeth, January 17, 1872, in Missions and Missionaries; Baxter Taylor, "An Early Day Missionary," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. IV, No. 3 (September, 1925), p. 296.

Accused of "believing in the right and final success of the Rebel Cause," Father Kingsbury was the leader of those who remained in the Nation.⁸ Although feeling the effects of age, he ministered as best he could to the destitute Choctaws and the refugees. He kept up a limited preaching circuit; and he sought to provide meager funds for the struggling schools, to maintain the churches, and to hold together the deteriorating Choctaw Mission.⁹

In 1861, the Choctaw Mission was taken over by the Southern Presbyterian Church. After the sad exodus of most of the missionary-teachers, the next meeting of the Choctaw Mission was held at Spencer, April 11, 1862. Those present were E. Hotchkin, A. Reid, C. C. Copeland, O. P. Stark, and C. Byington. Meetings of the Mission were held annually throughout the years of the war.¹⁰

Electa Mae Kingsbury died April 30, 1864. She lies buried in an unmarked grave in the historic cemetery near the site of Doaksville. Both John and Cyrus, sons of Kingsbury, whose own mother had died when they were too young to remember her, were present for the memorial service. John made his home in the Nation; but Cyrus lived

⁸ W. B. Morrison, "Diary of Rev. Cyrus Kingsbury," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. III, No. 2 (June, 1925), p. 153.

⁹ Report of Indian Affairs, 1858, p. 164; 1859, p. 200; 1860, p. 136; Jones to McBeth, April 13, 1872, in Sue McBeth Collection, Indian Archives, Oklahoma Historical Society; Choctaw Mission Records, 1862; 1863; 1864; 1865.

¹⁰ Morrison, "Diary of Kingsbury," Chronicles (June, 1925), p. 154; Wright to McBeth, December 20, 1872, in Missions and Missionaries; Reid to Lowrie, June 12, 1861, American Indian Correspondence, Box 12, Vol. I, Presbyterian Historical Society, Microcopy in Western History Collection, University of Oklahoma Library; Choctaw Mission Records, April 11, 1862; September 23, 1865.

in Iowa and his sentiments were with the North. To attend the service, Cyrus and his family had been required to cross Confederate lines.¹¹

Worn out by years of service, the hardships of the war, the appalling conditions on every hand, and his own personal grief, at the 1865 meeting of the Choctaw Mission, Kingsbury resigned as Treasurer. Shortly afterwards, he moved to Boggy Depot to be near his son John, who had a store at this place. No doubt Kingsbury experienced feelings of sadness at leaving Pine Ridge; yet at Boggy Depot a pleasant surprise awaited him. There he found Miss Pricilla G. Child, one of his former teachers. Kingsbury and Miss Child were married in October, 1867. Then, after a lingering illness, the son, John Kingsbury, died on December 12, 1867. Almost two years later, on August 17, 1869, Pricilla Child Kingsbury -- the third Mrs. Kingsbury -- died.¹²

Cyrus Kingsbury died on June 17, 1870, at the age of eight-four years. The Choctaws and the Indian Presbytery praised him for his self-denying labors among them for forty-two years.¹³ Chief Allen Wright wrote soon after his death:

¹¹ Funeral Sermon of Electa Mae Kingsbury, in Missions and Missionaries; Horatio Bardwell Cushman, History of the Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Natchez Indians (Greenville, Texas: Highlight Printing House, 1899), pp. 84-85.

¹² Choctaw Mission Records, September 23, 1865; Balentine to McBeth, June 26, 1872; H. Kingsbury to McBeth, January 9, 1872, Missions and Missionaries; Field Trip by writer to Boggy Depot, February 5-6, 1977.

¹³ William B. Morrison, The Red Man's Trail (Richmond, Va.: Presbyterian Committee of Publications, 1932), pp. 47-74; Cushman, History of the Choctaw, pp. 85-86; Records of the Indian Presbytery, September 17 and 18, 1870, p. 101-03.

All the civilization, social improvement, and progress in education and religion, of which the Choctaws can boast, is intimately associated with his name.¹⁴

Pine Ridge was occupied in 1871, by Rev. J. H. Colton, of Fayetteville, Arkansas, assigned to the preaching circuit formerly served by Cyrus Kingsbury.¹⁵ In 1872, the buildings were again vacant; later a day school was organized at this place. In 1888, the school at Pine Ridge reported 21 enrolled, 17 in attendance.¹⁶ Scattering reports of a neighborhood school in this vicinity with the name of Pine Ridge are to be found long after statehood. However, as time, decay, and fire took their toll, the buildings of the old school ceased to be used and eventually disappeared.

At Goodwater, Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Jones agreed to remain at the school until the war was over and peace declared. Jones was responsible for the general manual work; Mrs. Jones, for teaching the school. Mrs. Jones began a day school in the fall of 1861, and, under great difficulties, she kept the school operating during the entire war except for occasional vacations, sickness in her own family, or the presence of contagious diseases among the Choctaws.¹⁷

In letters to Sue McBeth, Mrs. Jones describes her ordeals. In February, 1862, her two-year-old son Charles was severely burned

¹⁴ The Missionary, Vol. Iv (Richmond, Virginia, 1871), pp. 4-6.

¹⁵ Natalie M. Denison, "Missions and Missionaries of the Presbyterian Church, U. S., Among the Choctaws, 1866-1907," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XXIV, No. 4 (Winter, 1946), p. 443.

¹⁶ Wright to McBeth, July 3, 1872, Missions and Missionaries; Report of Indian Affairs, 1888, p. 120.

¹⁷ Jones to McBeth, January 17, 1872, Missions and Missionaries.

by a frying pan of hot lard; three weeks later her daughter Emma was born. During the next school year, epidemics of small pox, measles, whooping cough, and mumps broke out among the Choctaws. Mrs. Jones served as physician to her own family and her Choctaw neighbors. In the meantime, refugees and unprincipled gangs moved freely through the neighborhood. Soldiers often occupied the buildings, and Mr. Jones was continually harassed because he was not in the Confederate Army. Eventually he was forced to join the Confederate Regiment. Unable to shoulder the responsibilities alone, Mrs. Jones was compelled to dismiss the school.¹⁸

In January, 1865, Chief Peter Pitchlynn called a special session of the National Council to meet at Goodwater. Pitchlynn was alarmed at the social disorder, criminal activity, and conditions of near-anarchy which prevailed throughout the Nation. While little was accomplished, at least through the influence of Peter Pitchlynn and Sampson Folsom, from then on Jones was permitted to remain at home to assist his wife and the school was reopened.¹⁹

With the coming of peace, Mr. and Mrs. Jones felt they had discharged their obligation. Mrs. Jones was proud of her school, however. "I had 45 scholars," she wrote. "I was loath to leave the mission." She praised the Oakeses and the Everidges for remaining

¹⁸ Reid to McBeth, February 17, 1872; Jones to McBeth, March 9, 1872, Missions and Missionaries.

¹⁹ Proclamation of Pitchlynn, no date, Folder Un-240; Address of Chief Pitchlynn, Goodwater, January, 1865, Folder 65-30, Pitchlynn Papers, Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art, Tulsa, Oklahoma; Jones to McBeth, March 9, 1872, Missions and Missionaries.

true friends. "Through every trial they stood by us," she said. Even so, the situation remained intolerable. Thus, on September 25, 1865, in a covered wagon filled with trunks, provisions, cooking utensils, and bedding, the little family "took a hasty departure."²⁰

Sometime during the last months, the buildings of the school burned except the old double-log house and the church. In 1872, the old school was a scene of desolation. Harriet Oakes wrote to Sue McBeth: "It looks like we are forsaken. The good times we used to have is gone. Our children are growing up in ignorance."²¹

From 1884 to 1890, Rev. Joseph Parker Gibbons repaired the buildings, re-established the school, and preached at the church at Goodwater. As at Pine Ridge, a neighborhood school seems to have operated at this place for many years. In 1902, when a few small boarding schools were established throughout the Choctaw Nation, Goodwater was reopened as a boarding school. Apparently, it operated in this capacity for only a short time. Later, the site of the school was moved and became known as Shoate Springs, the land being donated by the Everidge family. In time, however, the church and the last of the buildings at the old school disappeared. Today, little remains to mark the historic spot except the desolate, uncared-for cemetery.²²

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Wright to McBeth, March 22, 1872; Oakes to McBeth, March 7, 1872, Missions and Missionaries.

²² Choctaw Mission Records, September 16, 1870; Denison, "Missions and Missionaries," Chronicles (Winter, 1946-47), pp. 434-35; Interviews by the writer with Henry Everidge, March 2, 1969 and August 3, 1972; Interview and Field Trip of the writer with Edna and Henry Montgomery, April 27, 1969.

By the fall of 1861, Ebenezer Hotchkin had returned from his trip North. After stopping at Doaksville, he hastened to his small mission station at Living Land. From this time on until his death, he devoted himself exclusively to preaching, while Philena Hotchkin taught the neighborhood school. Few specific details are known about Living Land during these dark days, but no doubt the work was difficult as throughout this area of the Choctaw Nation.²³

The hardships took their toll. In the fall of 1867, Ebenezer Hotchkin journeyed to his old home in Lenox, Massachusetts, hoping to regain his health. He died there October 28, 1867. When Mrs. John Kingsbury at Boggy Depot heard of her father's death, she hastened to Living Land to be with her mother. She found her mother on her death bed and stayed to see her die. Today, the memorial stone of Philena Hotchkin stands forsaken in a lonely field at the site of the mission station south of Boswell, Choctaw County, Oklahoma. Mrs. Hannah Hotchkin Kingsbury returned to Boggy Depot to spend a few days with her critically ill husband who died in December.²⁴

The Indians sadly deplored the loss of the old missionaries, declaring the number had been sorely diminished and those that were left were very feeble. The minutes of the Indian Presbytery contain the following tribute:

²³ Hotchkin to McBeth, no date, Missions and Missionaries.

²⁴ Unidentified Letter (from one of the children of Ebenezer and Philena Hotchkin), no date, Missions and Missionaries; Anna Lewis, "Letters Regarding Choctaw Missions and Missionaries," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XVII, No. 3 (September, 1939), p. 277.

The death of Mr. Hotchkin was a severe loss to the Presbytery and to the Choctaw people He was a devoted laborer in his master's vineyard. What adds to the intensity of this affliction is the death of Mrs. Hotchkin in less than one month after that of her beloved husband. In life they exemplified the excellence and beauty of a well regulated Christian family and in death they were not divided.²⁵

The descendants of Ebenezer and Philena Hotchkin continued to exert a great influence upon the Choctaws and the emerging State of Oklahoma. One son, Charles Hotchkin, born at Goodwater in 1846, married Ella Copeland, daughter of the missionary C. C. Copeland. Ordained as a minister on June 9, 1884, he preached to the Indians, becoming almost like them, until his death at Hugo in 1905. He lies buried in an unmarked grave in Goodland Cemetery.²⁶

Henry Hotchkin, another son, who had married Mary Semple, the friend of Sue McBeth, moved his family to Paris, Texas. Mary Semple Hotchkin continued her work as a teacher, later returning to Durant to help found the Presbyterian College for young women. She was the mother of Rev. Ebenezer Hotchkin, of Durant, namesake of his grandfather, and a member of the Eighteenth State Legislature of Oklahoma.²⁷

O. P. Stark, of Goodland, had returned with Ebenezer Hotchkin to the Nation in the fall of 1861. While apparently making the trip

25

Records of the Indian Presbytery, April 11, 1868, pp. 70-71.

26

Denison, "Missions and Missionaries," Chronicles (Winter, 1946-47), p. 435; Morrison, Red Man's Trail, p. 83; Reid to McBeth, February 17, 1872, Missions and Missionaries.

27

Ethel McMillan, "Women Teachers in Oklahoma, 1820-1860," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XXVII, No. 1 (Spring, 1949), p. 22; Morrison, Red Man's Trail, pp. 101-07.

North for personal reasons, they had actually cashed a \$112,000 draft for gold. Just as the South broke with the North, this check was handled to Israel and Peter Folsom and Peter Pitchlynn as partial payment for tribal claims, dubbed the Net Proceeds. In returning, the two missionaries were forced to leave \$33,000 in gold with Lehman and Company in St. Louis. They smuggled the remainder into the Nation. Headed by Robert M. Jones, a committee of the Choctaw Council awarded the entire amount to Pitchlynn and his co-delegates. Later, the gold left in St. Louis was purchased with Confederate money in an undercover deal with Samuel Garland and Peter Pitchlynn, who divided the sum between them.²⁸

The Federal Government had also given a draft for \$134,512.55 to Douglas Cooper, Indian Agent, to buy corn for the starving Choctaws. Although the Choctaws received little of the shipment, presumably Cooper used \$40,000 to buy grain, leaving \$50,000 in New York. Cooper sent William Wilson, a former missionary-teacher and agent to the Choctaws, to collect the gold. Like Hotchkin and Stark, Wilson was unable to get past St. Louis. He returned to New Hampshire where he buried the money. In 1872, the Nation recovered the money, using it

²⁸ Cochrane to Choctaw Delegates, April 12, 1861; Cochrane to Pike, April 12, 1861; Receipt of S. M. Folsom, June 12, 1861; Israel Folsom to Pitchlynn, November 13, 1861, Folder 61-73, Pitchlynn Papers, Gilcrease Institute; John Edwards, "Escape from the South, 1861," Vol. XLIII, No. 1 (Spring, 1965), p. 71; Sampson Folsom, Horse Prairie, to Sam Garland, August 10, 1863, Roll 181; R. M. Jones, Doaksville, to Choctaw Council, October 23, 1861, Roll 179, Choctaw Agency, Letters Received, Microcopy 234, Western History Collection, University of Oklahoma Library.

for attorney's fees, most of it going to Albert Pike.²⁹

After the war, the United States issued the Choctaws another draft for \$150,000 to Treasurer Allen Wright. Evidently, this amount was divided among the Choctaw Commissioners, including Pitchlynn, Agent Cooper, and three attorneys -- two being Cochrane and Latrobe. Led by David Harkins, son of George Harkins, in 1867 the Council questioned the entire Net Proceeds reports, and a bitter fight broke out. Investigations were instigated which eventually led to law suits.³⁰

In the meantime, dealings with Congress continued, and periodically, the Council appropriated expected Net Proceeds funds. The last survivor of the original delegation for the claim, Pitchlynn died in Washington on January 17, 1881. He was buried in the Congressional Cemetery in a grave near Pushmataha. Events related to the Net Proceeds persisted in being a maze of intrigue, surreptitious dealings, and rabid disagreement. A decision had been made to honor individual claims instead of depositing a lump sum to the Nation. This complicated the situation which finally reached a state of inextricable confusion.

29

Cooper, Reply to Charges, August, 1873, 1875, Folder 73-108, Pitchlynn Papers, Gilcrease Institute; W. David Baird, Peter Pitchlynn: Chief of the Choctaws (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1972), pp. 131-32. Baird has an excellent discussion of the Net Proceeds from the viewpoint of Peter Pitchlynn.

30

Inaugural Address of Chief Allen Wright, Messages of the Chiefs, Indian Archives; Report of the Committee, Chahta Tamaha, December 18, 1866, Choctaw Nation-National Council, Indian Archives; Acts of the Choctaw Nation, October 23, October 30, 1873; October 18, 1877; Debo, Rise and Fall, pp. 90-91.

At last, in 1897, the matter was settled and closed.³¹

Through the years, the Net Proceeds had been held as a cornucopia for education. In finality, from the Net Proceeds Choctaw education benefited not at all. Nevertheless, in the early months of the Civil War, Ebenezer Hotchkin, O. P. Stark, and William Wilson, all missionary-teachers associated with Choctaw education in Choctaw County, had been a vital part of the intrigue and complicated events related to the most famous case in the history of the Choctaw Nation.³²

As for Goodland, this mission suffered all the demoralizing effects of the war, but the Starks managed to keep the school operating. In the meantime, Stark was active in the Confederate cause. He served as secretary of the secessionists meetings and actively assisted in organizing the two famous Choctaw companies which mobilized³³ and drilled on the grounds of Goodland.

The first company of Choctaws was completely outfitted by Robert M. Jones who provided them with guns and horses. Among other officers, Choctaw troops were under the command of Captain Ben Smallwood, who served as Principal Chief from 1888 to 1890, and of Colonel

³¹ Acts of the Choctaw Nation, November 6, 1888; January 18, October 14, November 2, December 24, 1889; Indian Citizen, March 9, March 30, May 4, 1889; April 2, 1894; November 10, 1897.

³² For a more detailed account of the Net Proceeds case refer to Debo, Rise and Fall, pp. 203-11 and to Byrd, Peter Pitchlynn, pp. 98-104 and 146-212.

³³ Abel, Indian in the Civil War, pp. 75-79; Choctaw Mission Records, April 11, 1862.

D. H. Cooper, former agent and staunch friend of the Choctaws. Traditionally, the Choctaws carried their own flag based upon the Great Seal of the Nation.³⁴

Robert M. Jones, who had been so closely associated with the schools in the area of Choctaw County, was a large contributor to the Confederate cause. He served as delegate to the Confederate Congress in Richmond, Virginia, was President of the United Nations of Indian Territory allied with the Confederacy, and was a member of the peace treaty delegation. After the war, he maintained a home in Paris, Texas, where he was a partner in the firm of C. G. Thebo and Company. Robert Jones died of malarial fever, February 22, 1872. He was buried in the family graveyard at Rose Hill, southeast of Hugo. An imposing white monument stands at his grave in memory of the man whose life encompassed the removal, the prosperous fifties, and the destruction of the Civil War.³⁵

Because of his many years among the Choctaws and his alliance with the Confederate cause, O. P. Stark was closely associated with Cooper and Jones during the war. When peace came, however, surrounded by lawlessness and burdened by the desolation of the mission work, Stark moved with his family to Paris, Texas. There he established and was principal of the Lamar Female College which gained a reputation as "one of the best educational institutions in northeast Texas."

³⁴ Ibid., Wright and Fischer, "Civil War Sites," Chronicles (1966-67), pp. 171-73; Muriel H. Wright, "Great Seal of the Choctaw Nation," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XXXIII, No. 4 (Winter, 1955-56), pp. 430-55.

³⁵ Ibid., Robert M. Jones Papers, Indian Archives; The Standard, March 1, 1873.

He also tutored a class of young men, preparing them for college, and preached in the First Presbyterian Church when there was no regular pastor.³⁶ Yet, the work of O. P. Stark in the Choctaw Nation was not over. Several years later he returned to the Choctaws as Superintendent of Spencer Academy.

Spencer Academy was another center of troop concentration. First white soldiers, then the Indian troops were stationed there. In 1863, a hospital was established at Spencer and the classrooms and dormitories became operating rooms and wards for the sick and wounded. General Cooper ordered that Reid and his family live in the Superintendent's home undisturbed. This included sleeping and living quarters, and the school's kitchen and dining rooms. Yet, at its best life was difficult. In October, 1861, Reid's third son was born. Weakened by childbirth, Free love Reid's health grew worse until she finally died July 10, 1864.³⁷ Thus, Reid buried his second wife in the cemetery on the hill overlooking Spencer Academy.

As hundreds of refugees poured into the area, the halls and slave quarters were crowded with all kinds of people. Reid found the condition of these refugees heart rending and he ministered to the needy as best he could. Although he maintained a church at Spencer, at first he visited the churches at Lenox and Jack Fork. Eventually,

36

Sammy D. Hogue, The Goodland Indian Orphanage, (Goodland, Oklahoma: The Goodland Indian Orphanage, 1940), p. 21; Robert Elliott Flickinger, The Choctaw Freedman (Pittsburg, Pa.: Presbyterian Board of Missions for Freedmen, 1914), p. 27; Reid to McBeth, February 17, 1872, Missions and Missionaries.

37

Mrs. S. O. Lee to Mrs. Woodruff, May 20, 1867, Colonial Dames Collection, Western History Collection.

he had to discontinue these trips because he could not take his family with him; yet he was loath to leave them behind.³⁸

Reid instructed his children as best he could, but their progress was slow and he was often discouraged. At the close of the war, he wanted to open Spencer as soon as possible, but the National Council decided to re-establish the neighborhood schools first and no money was available for the academy. At last, in February, 1869, desiring to give his children the educational advantages offered in the North, Alexander Reid and his family left the Nation.³⁹ Like Stark, however, Reid's days among the Choctaws were not over. He was destined to return to work again in the Choctaw Nation.

In addition to the few missionaries, native Choctaw preachers struggled heroically to hold together the congregations. These included Willis F. Folsom, Pliny Fiske, and Allen Wright.⁴⁰ However, Saturday and Sunday Schools did not exist, and the work of these ministers was difficult and discouraging. During the war, although three day schools operated in Choctaw County on a limited basis, their efforts were hindered by the lawlessness of the times, the destitution of the Choctaws and the refugees, the lack of teachers, and the absence of financial support. Within a few years after the war, the older missionaries had died or had left the Nation. With their departure,

³⁸ Ibid., Reid to Ainslie, March 27, 1866, Missions and Missionaries.

³⁹ Reid to McBeth, February 10, 1872, Sue McBeth Papers, Indian Archives; Debo, Rise and Fall, p. 96.

⁴⁰ Wright to McBeth, June 10, 1872; July 3, 1872, Missions and Missionaries.

a more independent Choctaw educational system developed -- one almost entirely separated from the missionary effort.

Neighborhood Schools

The period beginning with 1870, was one of expansion and growth. New leaders carried on the work laid down by the old missionaries throughout the Nation, and in Choctaw County, Without exception, each and every chief supported the schools wholeheartedly and sought to provide more adequate educational opportunities for the Choctaw youth. In a speech at Goodland in 1934, before a gathering of the former students of the old Choctaw schools, Judge T. W. Hunter of Hugo stated:

The skill of this people in dealing with a demoralized school system and wrecked financial condition in so short a time speaks eloquently of the characteristic ability of the Choctaw to take care of himself under more than ordinary conditions...⁴¹

One of the first acts of the Choctaw Council meeting in 1865 was to authorize Chief Pitchlynn to investigate school conditions. However, no action was taken the following year since the Choctaws were absorbed in the peace settlement and had no national income. Included in the final peace terms were guarantees by the United States to protect the tribe against white invasion and to restore all annuities. Thus encouraged, on December 31, 1866,-- the same day the peace treaty with the United States was ratified -- an act was passed putting

⁴¹ Speech by Judge T. W. Hunter, Files of Frances Imon, Hugo, Oklahoma.

into operation the neighborhood schools.⁴² These schools opened in January, 1867, and once again, the Choctaw children, who, according to Chief Allen Wright, had been "running wild," were gathered in the⁴³ rude log schoolhouses.

Chief Wright and Superintendent Forbis LeFlore provided the leadership for the re-establishment of the school system.⁴⁴ Forbis LeFlore was a member of the famous LeFlore family so closely identified with the history of Choctaw County.⁴⁵ Other important educational leaders immediately following the war who lived in or near the area of Choctaw County were Robert Nail, Superintendent of Schools during the war; George Harkins and his son David, both active in educational matters in the Choctaw Council; and T. B. Turnbull, who was associated with Goodland Indian Orphanage and who served as a District Chief and President of the Senate.⁴⁵

⁴² Joseph P. Folsom, Constitution and Laws of the Choctaw Nation Together with the Treaties of 1855, 1865, and 1866, Published by the authority and direction of the General Council, Chahta Tamaha (New York City: Wm. P. Lyon & Son, 1869), pp. 410-13, 429; Charles J. Kappler, Indian Affairs Laws and Treaties, Vol. II (Washington Printing Office, 1904), pp. 918-31; Report of Indian Affairs, 1865, pp. 337, 345, 349.

⁴³ Message of Allen Wright, Principal Chief, 1867, Messages of the Chiefs, Indian Archives; Report of Indian Affairs, 1871, p. 572; Peter James Hudson, "A Story of Choctaw Chiefs," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XVII, No. 2 (June, 1939), pp. 192-211.

⁴⁴ Indian Champion, April 11, 1885; "Biography of Rev. Allen Wright," Atoka Independent, May 12, 1888.

⁴⁵ Morrison, "Social History," pp. 25-6; LeFlore Files, Indian Archives; LeFlore Collection, Western History Collection; Vindicator, June 14, 1876; Cushman, History of the Choctaw, pp. 287-88; 243-44; 347-48; 352-53; 391; Acts of the Choctaw Nation, October 21, 1870; Field Trip of writer with Tony Thomas and Lucien Spear, November 2, 1968.

The schools of the period were caught up in all the problems of reconstruction: funds were scarce; teachers were hard to find; buildings were in sad need of repair; supplies were few; and the children were in dire need of clothing. The Indian Agent suggested the aid of the churches. The Southern churches, however, who had taken over the Indian work, were in a state of bankruptcy themselves, and of necessity, the Choctaws turned to native teachers.⁴⁶

In the fall of 1869, Superintendent LeFlore reported 69 schools in operation, with a total of 1,847 pupils. He stated parents were pitifully eager for schools and made a strong plea for more financial aid.⁴⁷ In 1870, LeFlore reported 84 neighborhood schools, operating at a cost of \$18,886. However, the boarding schools were opened in the fall of this same year, and perhaps because less money was available, after this the number of neighborhood schools steadily decreased. In 1874-75, Superintendent Bond reported 50 neighborhood schools, with 1,118 pupils; in 1876, 54 day schools, with 50 teachers were reported.⁴⁸

In the meantime, another development which was destined to vitally affect education was taking place. As early as 1819, travelers had observed the coal beds in this region were of great thickness. With the coming of the railroad through the Nation in 1872, coal

⁴⁶ Report of Indian Affairs, 1873, p. 208; 1874, p. 8; Message of Coleman Cole, 1877, Choctaw Papers, Indian Archives.

⁴⁷ Report of Indian Affairs, 1869, pp. 404-10.

⁴⁸ Acts of the Choctaw Nation, November 2, 1870; October 30, 1869; October 23, 1876; Report of Indian Affairs, 1871, pp. 572, 618; W. Julian Fessler, "The Work of the Early Choctaw Legislature, 1869-1873," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. Vi, No. 1 (March, 1928), p. 62, Vindicator, July 3, 1875.

became of great commercial value. In the beginning, however, under Coleman Cole the mines were developed with great difficulty.⁴⁹

Coleman Cole was elected in the summer of 1874, his opponents being C. E. Nelson and Joel Everidge. Nelson, an important attorney in the Nation, had a mercantile store and stagecoach stop on the old Military Road in Choctaw County about six miles north of Soper. Joel Everidge, who later became school superintendent, was of the renowned Everidge family of Choctaw County living near the old school at Goodwater.⁵⁰

Representing the full bloods and a leader in the National Party, Cole was one of the most colorful chiefs in Choctaw history. He had little formal education but possessed much native shrewdness. Very outspoken he was constantly involved in controversy with the Indian Office, the railroads, and the Net Proceeds Delegation.⁵¹ Cole strongly supported education, and his opponents were quick to point out what mineral revenues could do for the schools. Cole agreed; but, on the other hand, he was equally as opposed to white immigration, and he recognized that developing the coal mines would

⁴⁹ Edwin James, Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains (Cleveland, 1905), Vol. IV; Paul Nesbitt, "J. J. McAlester," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XI, No. 2 (June, 1933), pp. 760-64.

⁵⁰ Frances Imon, "Nelson Was a Stagecoach Stop," Tulsa Sunday World, June 6, 1965, Files of Frances Imon; Report of Indian Affairs, 1942, pp. 495-99.

⁵¹ John Bartlett Reserve, "Chief Coleman Cole," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XIV, No. 1 (March, 1936), pp. 17-21; Messages of the Choctaw Chiefs, Coleman Cole, Choctaw Papers, Indian Archives; Cole (Coleman), Western History Collections; V. M. Locke, Jr., "Coleman Cole," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. IV, No. 3 (September, 1926), pp. 187-88.

allow the admission of more white men into the Nation.⁵²

Thus, the coal mines made little progress until Cole's term of office was over. From then on, the mines continued with increasingly larger operations. By 1887, the output of the coal mines was estimated to be over 500,000 tons. By 1907, over 100 mines operated in the Choctaw Nation, "producing the best steam and coal west of Pennsylvania" and employing over 8,000 miners.⁵³ In 1876, royalty paid to the Nation was one-fourth cent a bushel; later, a law provided one-half cent a bushel. Sporadic strikes sometimes occurred in the operation of the mines, the most serious being in 1894. Nevertheless, generally the mines provided a substantial revenue which was used to support the schools of the Nation, and of Choctaw County.⁵³

The strongest influence in the opening of the mines were the coming of the railroad. The first railroad to cross the Nation was the Union Pacific, Southern Branch -- soon to be known as the Missouri, Kansas, and Texas, or "Katy" -- in 1870. This railroad did not enter Choctaw County. On August 2, 1882, a right-of-way through the Choctaw Nation was granted to the St. Louis and San Francisco -- later called the "Frisco." Completed in 1887, this line traversed

⁵² Message of Coleman Cole, Cherokee Advocate, October 17,

⁵³ Report of Indian Affairs, 1887, p. 199; Gittinger, Formation of the State, p. 179; Nesbitt, "J. J. McAlester," Chronicles (June, 1933), p. 761; Stanley Clark, "Immigrants in the Choctaw Coal Industry," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XXXIII, No. 4 (Winter, 1955-56), pp. 440-55.

Choctaw County from north to south, entering at Hamden, then on to Speer, Goodland, Grant, and on across the Red River to Paris, Texas.⁵⁴

Although agricultural pursuits continued to be the principal occupation of the great majority of Choctaws, with the construction of the railroads came the development of other resources and the collection of royalties from them. Besides coal and asphalt, these efforts revolved around timber, hay, and the grazing of cattle.⁵⁵

As Cole predicted, with the accelerated economic activity came a great influx of white persons into the Nation. By far the majority of laws of this period dealt with problems of intruders, immigration, permits, and the entire complicated system of revenue. By necessity, a large body of Choctaw collectors, inspectors, weighers, sheriffs, and other various revenue and peace officials developed.⁵⁶

In 1885, the National Treasurer's report showed that these revenues amounted to \$54,611.52 for the fiscal year; in 1886, to \$61,350.17. In 1890, the report showed \$91,794.22; and in 1897, the last year tax collections were entirely under tribal control, total

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Kappler, Laws and Treaties, Vol. II, pp. 707-10; United States at Large of America (Boston, Washington, 1854-1907), Vol. XIV, pp. 136-39; Report of Indian Affairs, 1872, p. 76; 1883, p. XVIII; Railroads, Indian Archives.

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Debo, Rise and Fall, p. 130-31; Morrison, "Social History," pp. 165-70.

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Acts of the Choctaw Nation, November 1, 1871; October 24, 1873; November 11, 1875; October 23, 1878; November 5, 1880; November 1, 1882; November 6, 1883; November 4, 1884; October 22, 1886; November 9, 1895. These laws are only a few of those related to revenue and other internal affairs.

revenues were \$181,756.47.⁵⁷

Judge Issac Garvin, a man of superior education and unusual intellect, followed Cole as Principal Chief. He died before completing his term, and Jackson McCurtain, President of the Senate, was sworn in as Chief on February 10, 1880. Descended from a famous full blood family, besides filling the unexpired term of Garvin, Jackson McCurtain served two full terms. His administration is generally conceded to be the most outstanding in Choctaw history. During the terms of Jackson McCurtain, Edmund McCurtain, the younger brother of Jackson, served as Superintendent of Schools. Under the able leadership of these men, the foundation was laid for the establishment of neighborhood schools for the Freedmen, and the schools of the Nation made great strides.⁵⁸

In keeping with the pride of the Choctaws in their school system, the condition and number of the neighborhood schools showed marked improvement. In 1880, an appropriation of \$5000 for each district for neighborhood schools was made. By 1883, the Choctaws had a day school where ten or more scholars could be gathered together. The neighborhood built the school and the Nation furnished the teacher and books. In this year the Indian Agent reported most of the teachers

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Acts of the Choctaw Nation, October 23, 1885; October 27, 1886; Annual Message of Chief McCurtain, 1897, Messages of the Choctaw Chiefs, Choctaw Papers, Indian Archives.

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Hudson, "Story of the Chiefs," Chronicles (June, 1939), pp. 202-04; Indian Champion, October 25, 1884; H. F. O'Bierne, Leaders and Leading Men of the Indian Territory, Vol. I (Chicago, 1891), pp. 140-41.

were Indians who taught only in English.⁵⁹

The number of schools and scholars increased with each yearly report. In his retiring message in 1886, Edmund McCurtain reported the neighborhood schools had made more progress in scholarship and had more in number than ever before in the history of the Nation.⁶⁰ In 1887, the Choctaws operated 168 neighborhood schools with a total number of 3,512 in attendance, plus 13 boys and 13 girls in college. In 1891, the Choctaws contracted to build two new boarding schools at a cost of \$40,000 and increased the number of local schools. Over \$75,000 annually was spent for school purposes.⁶¹

Besides increasing the numbers of neighborhood schools and the yearly appropriations, efforts were made to raise standards. In 1884, a compulsory attendance law was enacted for children between the ages of seven and eighteen years. Later, in 1887, under John Turnbull as Superintendent, the law was modified to impose a fine of ten cents a day for failure of parents to send a child to school, unless "bad weather, high water, or sickness prevented." In this same year, an act provided that teachers in neighborhood schools were to be paid \$2.00 per scholar per month, not to exceed \$45.00 per month.⁶²

⁵⁹ Acts and Laws of the Choctaw Nation, November 5, 1880; Report of Indian Affairs, 1883, p. 90.

⁶⁰ Retiring Message of Edmund McCurtain, Indian Journal, October 21, 1886.

⁶¹ Report of Indian Affairs, 1887, pp. 106-08; 191, 250.

⁶² Acts and Laws of the Choctaw Nation, November 6, 1884; November 5, 1886; Report of Indian Affairs, 1887, p. 384; Acts and Resolutions of the Choctaw Council, November 11, 1887.

William Smallwood served as Chief from 1888 to 1890, followed in 1890, by Wilson N. Jones. Even though he was uneducated and spoke broken English, Jones was an able business man, having risen from poverty to become the wealthiest man in the Nation. He had ranching, mining, and commerical interests. Before his election as Chief, he had served as District School Trustee and as National Treasurer. In the latter part of his life, he moved to Sherman, Texas, where he donated money for a hospital which bears his name even today.⁶³

Governor Smallwood, as the Chief was now officially called, believed provision should be made for a number of small boarding schools for those children living in remote areas. At the time, the Council did not act on his proposal, but under Governor Jones three new boarding schools were opened in the fall of 1892, all administered by Choctaw educators: Jones Academy for boys, near Hartshorne, S. T. Dwight, Principal; Tuskahoma for girls, near the Capitol, Peter J. Hudson, Principal; and Tuska Lusa, "Black Warriors," for Freedmen, at Tuska Lusa, under Henry Nail, a Choctaw Freedman. In addition, on October 31, 1890, Jones signed the most comprehensive school bill ever brought before the Choctaw Council.⁶⁴

Under the School Act of 1890, the neighborhood schools in Choctaw County, and in the Nation, were modernized. Previously, textbooks had been furnished only on an erratic basis. Now, curriculum

⁶³ Hudson, "Choctaw Chiefs," Chronicles (June, 1929), p. 206; Atoka Independent, May 19, 1889; Indian Citizen, October 18, 1890; O'Bierne, Leaders and Leading Men, Vol. I, pp. 28-29.

⁶⁴ Indian Citizen, October 12, 1889; October 11, 1890; Acts of the Choctaw Nation, November 14, 1890; April 4, December 5, December 10, 1892; Laws of the Choctaw Nation, Bill LXI, October 31, 1890, pp. 41-64; Report of Indian Affairs, 1892, p. 255.

was planned and supervised, textbooks approved, and books and other teaching aids were furnished both to teachers and students. Standard printed forms were required and used for monthly reports; teachers' institutes and summer normals were held; a professional magazine, called the Choctaw School Journal, was published, and certification for teachers became much more strict.⁶⁵

Examinations for certification were held annually in each of the three districts for not more than five days, requiring a fee of \$1.50 by the applicant, the time and place advertized at least three months ahead. Applicants were examined in reading, writing, spelling, and grammar of the English language; in geography and history, particularly of the United States; and in a knowledge of the Constitutions of the United States and of the Choctaw Nation. The applicant was certified according to merit in one of three grades, "First," "Second," and "Third," the First being the highest.⁶⁶

While the neighborhood schools in the Choctaw Nation were superior to those in surrounding states, admittedly they had many of the characteristics of an agrarian, frontier people. School buildings followed the simplest form. Most were rude cabins or box houses,

⁶⁵ Acts and Resolutions of the Choctaw Nation, October 31, 1890, pp. 58-61; Vindicator, April 24, 1875; Indian Citizen, August 23, 1890; September 5, 1891; July 26, 1894; Gilbert Dukes Papers, Indian Archives. Box I contains a printed form of the Act of October 28, 1897, a complete list of adopted texts, and a requisition blank for the trustee of each school.

⁶⁶ Acts and Resolutions of the Choctaw Nation, October 31, 1890, pp. 56-57.

serving as school, church, and community house. Benches were often puncheon seats and drinking water came from the nearby spring or creek.⁶⁷

Emma Ervin Christian described the school she attended which was located in Choctaw County. The Ervin family lived on a farm south and west of Doaksville. Mr. Ervin had the post office in connection with the farm home. In Choctaw County today a rural route still exists named "Ervin Route" for the Ervin family.⁶⁸

Emma Christian said her teacher would blow a long cow's horn "to bring us to books." Studies were the three R's -- a reader, an old blue-backed spelling book, and simple arithmetic.⁶⁹ Subjects were often taught by rote. Although schools were conducted in English, teaching of the English language continued to be a problem. Discipline was strict and a rod was used to enforce the rule. A pupil stood to recite; written lessons were prepared on slates. Spelling contests and school programs were events for the entire community to attend.⁷⁰

A typical school day opened by repeating the Lord's prayer and the singing of hymns. The Choctaws considered themselves a Christian Nation. Prayer opened each House of the General Council and all other important public meetings. Sunday Schools, which had been re-opened

⁶⁷ Frank A. Balyeat, "Rural School Houses in Early Oklahoma," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XXII, No. 4 (Autumn, 1944), pp. 315-23.

⁶⁸ Emma Ervin Christian, "Memories of My Childhood Days," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. IX, No. 2 (June, 1931), pp. 155-56.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

by the churches, were still regarded as an important means of adult education. Teachers were expected to exemplify moral conduct and, in selecting teachers, preference was given to those professing Christianity. Two questions required to be answered on the yearly report of the neighborhood schools were: "Do you open school with prayer? Do you have any Sabbath School?"⁷¹

J. B. Jeter, of Choctaw County, was the Superintendent of Schools in 1892-1893. He reported 189 neighborhood schools, 3,819 enrolled; 7 boarding schools, 490 enrolled; 40 students in the States; total enrollment 4,349.⁷² In 1894, Jefferson Gardner was elected Chief with V. M. Locke as Superintendent of Schools.⁷³

In 1896, Green McCurtain was elected Principal Chief, and in 1897, J. W. Everidge became Superintendent of Schools. Under Superintendent Everidge an act was passed to expand the use of free text books for the use of the schools in the Nation.⁷⁴ A report of 1895, shows the amounts set aside for educational causes.

In such composite reports as these the exact number of neighborhood schools within the boundaries of Choctaw County is almost impossible to determine. However, in the Oklahoma Historical

⁷¹ Report of Beaver Dam School, P. O. Grant, I. T. Kiamichi County, C. N., Choctaw Neighborhood Schools, Indian Archives; Acts and Resolutions of the Choctaw Nation, October 31, 1890, October 31, 1890, pp. 53-54; Report of Indian Affairs, 1970, p. 295.

⁷² Report of Indian Affairs, 1893, p. 146.

⁷³ Indian Citizen, November 15, 1894; October 18 and 25, 1894.

⁷⁴ Acts and Resolutions of the General Council of the Choctaw Nation, October 22, 1897, p. 13.

Society are to be found more than 2,000 documents of the annual reports of the Choctaw Neighborhood Schools.⁷⁵ An examination of these records and the reports of those schools which are known to have been in Choctaw County indicates that Choctaw County had a large number of neighborhood schools.

Table 5

Choctaw Educational Expenses, 1895^a

Superintendent and Trustess of Schools	\$ 1,800.00
Students in the States	12,600.00
Neighborhood Schools	35,000.00
Seven Boarding Schools	74,950.00
Special for Spencer Academy	<u>558.00</u>
Total	\$ 125,008.00

^a Acts of the Choctaw Nation, November 12, 1895.

Between 1886 and 1898, the following common, or neighborhood, schools in Kiamichi and Towson Counties, which made up most of Choctaw County, included: Clear Springs, Clear Creek, Choctaw Academy, Doaksville, Dumpling Creek, Hebron, New Hebron, Hickory Ridge, New Hope (both Indian and Freedmen), Oakville, Pilgrim's Rest, Pleasant Grove, Pleasant Hill, Post Oak Grove, Prairie Grove, Sandy Branch, Sherron, Silom, Springs Bluff, St. Paul, Boiling Springs (both Indian and Freedmen), Ft. Towson, Beaver Dam, Cold Springs (now called Gay), Oklahoma, Goodland, Nelson, Goodwater, Grant, Honey Springs, Horse

⁷⁵ Choctaw Neighborhood Schools, 20584, 10167, 22246, Indian Archives.

Prairie, Long Creek, Mouth of the Boggy, Rock Hill, Springs Chapel, and Sugar Creek.⁷⁶

The election of 1896 was one of bitter political struggle. By this time white men had engulfed the Nation and were complaining loudly because there were no schools for their children; and the conflict with the United States over severality and the dissolution of tribal government had surfaced. Thus, before long the school system of the Choctaw Nation was doomed to become a victim of circumstances beyond control.

Schools for the Freedmen

Schools for the Freedmen became an integral part of the Choctaw educational system. In 1867, a Choctaw census showed 1,732 Choctaw Freedmen.⁷⁷ Before the war no schools existed for the slaves; yet missionaries and Christian Choctaws were not unmindful of their needs. As a result, converts were made among the slaves, some becoming leaders of the Choctaw Freedmen.⁷⁸

Charles F. Stewart, Freedman, had belonged to Charles F. (from whom he took his name) and Tryphena Wall Stewart. Tryphena taught him to read and write. After the death of Charles Stewart, in about 1860, the second Mrs. Stewart sold Charles, his wife, and other

⁷⁶ Ibid., Reports of Indian Affairs, 1886-1898; H. V. Posey, "The Development of Education in Choctaw County," Submitted to the School of Education, Master of Science Degree, 1931, Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, Stillwater, Oklahoma, pp. 37-38.

⁷⁷ Choctaw Census of 1878, 13569, Indian Archives.

⁷⁸ Annie Heloise Abel, The American Indian Under Reconstruction (Cleveland: The Arthur Clark Company, 1925), p. 228; Morrison, "Diary of Cyrus Kingsbury," Chronicles (June, 1925), pp. 152-57.

slaves to Sampson Folsom, who lived southeast of Old Goodland not far from Doaksville.⁷⁹

In 1884, when the Presbyterian Board of Freedmen, Pittsburgh, Pa., took over the work from the Southern Presbyterians, Rev. Charles W. Stewart, Doaksville, had the following churches under his care: Oak Hill, Beaver Dam, Hebron, New Hope, and St. Paul (Eagletown). These churches organized into the Kiamichi Presbytery. Stewart had a great personal influence upon many Negro young people who became leaders of education among their people in Choctaw County. Among these were Wiley Homer, Richard D. Colbert, William Butler, and Simon Folsom.⁸⁰

Another important leader was the Freedman Henry Crittenden, a former slave of Henry Crittenden. On Sunday afternoons, he attended services under Kingsbury, later organized a church in his cabin, then established Oak Hill Sunday School, and helped erect a large building which became a part of Oak Hill Academy.⁸¹

Slavery was officially abolished by the Choctaw Council October 14 and 19, 1865. As agreed in the peace treaty with the United States, the Choctaw Freedmen were to be removed to the Leased District in the West, if the Choctaws desired. Although the Choctaws expressed a desire for this action, nothing was done to effect this

⁷⁹ Grant Foreman, "Early Post Offices," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. VI, No. 3 (September, 1928), pp. 5-11; Muriel H. Wright, "Tryphena," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. IX, No. 2 (June, 1931), pp. 180-94.

⁸⁰ Flickinger, Choctaw Freedmen, pp. 18-19; 351-59.

⁸¹ Ibid., 377-78; Hudson, "Recollections," Chronicles (December, 1932), p. 516.

removal, and for years the problem was unsettled. This left the Freedmen with no official school system.⁸² At last, the Choctaws took action, granting the Freedmen the right of suffrage, limiting to forty acres the use of the public domain, and stipulating equal educational opportunities as far as the neighborhood schools were concerned.⁸³

Of Special interest is the work of Alexander Reid, formerly of Spencer Academy, among the Freedmen. Returning to the Nation in 1878, his sympathies were aroused by the helpless condition of the former slaves. In 1882, he was appointed as Superintendent of Mission Work among the Freedmen by the Southern Presbyterian Church. To be near the work established by Stewart and Crittenden, he located at Spencer. He aided in opening schools when teachers could be found and was able to send a number of promising young people to boarding schools maintained by Freedmen in other states. In 1884, because of failing health, he left the Choctaw Nation for the last time. He died July 30, 1890, at Cambridgeport, near Boston.⁸⁴

Oak Hill Industrial Academy for Freedmen was established in 1886, by the Northern Presbyterian Church, which had taken over the work of the Freedmen. Located north and west of Vallient near the eastern boundary of Choctaw County, Miss Elizabeth Hartford of Newlonsburg, Pa., was the first teacher; among others, Rev. and Mrs. Robert E. Flickinger served as missionary-teachers for many years. Continuing

⁸² Kappler, Laws and Treaties, Vol. II, pp. 918-31; Folsom, Choctaw Laws (1869), --. 594-95; Report of Indian Affairs, 1868, p. 280; 1871, pp. 570-71; 1874, p. 55; 1877, p. 11; 1873, 209.

⁸³ Acts of the Choctaw Council, November 2, 1880; May 21, 1883; Report of Indian Affairs, 1882, p. 196; 1884, pp. XLV-XLVII.

⁸⁴ Flickinger, Choctaw Freedmen, pp. 23-24.

to operate for several years after statehood, this school had a great educational influence upon the black people of this area.⁸⁵

In the fall of 1885, the Choctaw Council made an appropriation for "colored neighborhood schools," and directed they be opened immediately. During the school year 1885-86, 34 neighborhood schools were opened with an enrollment of 847 children. In 1891, under Chief W. N. Jones, an academy for Negro boys and girls, Tuska Lusa Academy at Taliuhina, with Henry Nail, Freedman, as Superintendent, was opened.⁸⁶

Reports to the Choctaw Council of the neighborhood schools of the Freedmen are included in the reports of the Choctaw Neighborhood schools. Among these reports is that of Beaver Dam School, teacher Wiley Homer, P. O. Grant, I. T., Choctaw Nation. The first report of this school is in 1887, with 19 students; the last report for the year 1896, 18 pupils.⁸⁷ Thus, the Freedmen's schools were a part of the school system of the Choctaws.

Forty Youths: College Students in the States

As a part of their educational appropriations, the Choctaws sent their most promising students -- both boys and girls -- to colleges in the States. With unusual foresight, under the Treaty of

⁸⁵ Ibid., pp. 105-113.

⁸⁶ Acts of the Choctaw Nation, November 10, 1885; October 30, 1886; October 21, 1891.

⁸⁷ Choctaw Neighborhood Schools, Indian Archives.

Dancing Rabbit Creek, the Choctaws had required that forty youths be educated in colleges in the North and East.⁸⁸ Hence, the term "Forty Youths." After the war, they were simply called "College Students in the States."

After removal, a few years passed before students were sufficiently advanced to attend schools in the North. The first graduates of Spencer entered eastern colleges in 1848. Students who were later prominent leaders were Coleman E. Nelson, Allen Wright, Jackson McCurtain, Charles S. Vinson, B. F. Smallwood, Jefferson Gardner, Simon T. Dwight, Eliphalet N. Wright, Homer David, J. P. Folsom, and S. B. James. During this period, Dartmouth College, New Hampshire, was a popular place for Indians.⁸⁹

At Wheelock, young women were trained who went to college at their own expense or at the expense of the Nation. Among these were a daughter of Israel Folsom, who became Mrs. A. M. Colbert; Carrie Gooding, who became Mrs. Basil LeFlore; and Jane Austin, who married Principal Chief Jackson McCurtain.⁹⁰

Following the war, the Choctaws stipulated money for college students even before boarding schools were opened. In 1869, \$7,600⁹¹ was apportioned for these students. As revenues increased, amounts

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Kappler, Laws and Treaties, Vol. II, pp. 312-18.

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Wright and Fischer, "Civil War Sites," Chronicles (1866-67), p. 172; J. P. Folsom to his Uncle, June 29, 1854, Pitchlynn Papers, Gilcrease Institute.

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"Wheelock," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. I, No. 2 (October, 1921), p. 119.

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Report of Indian Affairs, 1869, p. 410.

for college students increased also. The allowance for each student varied from \$225 to \$375. In 1885, \$3,450 was set aside for students in the States; in 1887, \$7,975 was designated for 13 girls and 14 boys. In 1887, the girls were: Lousinda Maytubby, Kate Moncrief, Jennie Wyatt, Florence Turnbull, Jane Thompson, Winnie Jefferson, Mary Holson, Elizabeth Hodges, Annie James, Lettit Hailey, Elsy Cravat; boys were: Simon T. Dwight, Robert C. Miller, H. C. Harrison, Abner H. Clay, Albert P. Fisk, Eli Burns, James T. Ainsworth, Joshua Bohannon, John W. Durant, Peter Hudson, Hampton Tucker, Wilburn Johnson, Levi W. Bohannon.⁹² Many of these students lived in or near Choctaw County.

These young people took courses in special fields of interests. Some became ministers and doctors; some, teachers. Any number became lawyers, and the Choctaws were never without competent legal advice and capable judges. After their training was completed, the great majority of these returned to the Nation to serve their people. Thus, with only a few exceptions, the leaders of the Choctaw people were college educated, responsible men and women.⁹³

⁹² Report of Indian Affairs, p. 106; Choctaw Students in the States, 2247-22521, Indian Archives; Grant Foreman, Superintendent of Five Civilized Tribes, Typed Manuscripts, Vol. 19, pp. 140-42, Indian Archives.

⁹³ Fred S. Clinton, "The Indian Territory Medical Association," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XXVI, No. 1 (Spring, 1948), p. 47; Oklahoma Star, March 27, 1874; Muriel H. Wright, "A Brief Review of the Life of Doctor Eliphalet Nott Wright," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. X, No. 2 (June, 1932), pp. 267-82.

The Disadvantaged

In addition to the more advanced students, the Choctaws were concerned for the schooling of the orphans among them. Before the war, a number of Choctaw laws protected the rights of these children and provision was made for the admission of orphans in the boarding schools.⁹⁴ After the war, in 1877, the National Council authorized the relocation of Spencer Academy, and, in 1881, an orphan's home was opened at Old Spencer. Rev. William B. Robe, from the Home Mission Board of the Northern Presbyterian Church, was appointed Superintendent.⁹⁵

An effort was made to repair the old buildings, but after two years, the Choctaw Council decided the structures were beyond use. At this time the capitol of the Nation was moved to the new building at Tuskahoma. In 1884, the orphan school at Spencer was abandoned. The boys were moved into the buildings of Armstrong Academy with Rev. W. J. B. Lloyd as Superintendent. The buildings at Wheelock were repaired and a school for orphan girls was established at that place with Rev. Robe assigned as Superintendent.⁹⁶

The Nation also provided for afflicted children. In 1879, Chief Garvin suggested the Council make provision for the "blind, indigent, and helpless" in the Nation. By 1888, blind children were

⁹⁴ Folsom, Constitution and Laws (1869), pp. 90, 95, 377, 82.

⁹⁵ Ora Eddleman Reed, "The Robe Family-Missionaries," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XXVI, No. 3 (Autumn, 1948), p. 301.

⁹⁶ Acts of the Choctaw Nation, November 11, 1881; November 3, 1883; October 22 and October 25, 1883; Denison, "Missions and Missionaries," Chronicles (Winter, 1946-47), p. 431; Reed, "Robe Family," Chronicles (Autumn, 1948), p. 303.

sent to the School for the Blind in Little Rock, Arkansas, and several deaf children went to a school in Illinois.⁹⁷ Thus, although most of the Choctaws were self sufficient people, the Nation did provide for the disadvantaged children among them. No example of this compassion is more profoundly expressed than in the story of Goodland Indian Orphanage.

Goodland Indian Orphanage

After the war, Choctaw elders at Goodland were determined to maintain the school and church. During these difficult years, Governor and Mrs. Basil LeFlore were strong pillars in the work. Basil (Brazil) LeFlore, cousin to Thomas LeFlore, held many important positions in the Choctaw Nation. These included: District Chief, 1834-38, 1843-50; Governor under the Skullyville Constitution, 1859-60; first postmaster at old Goodland; National Treasurer, 1866-70; National Auditor, 1876-85. After the death of his first wife, he married Caroline Gooding, daughter of George C. Gooding, the sutler of Fort Towson.⁹⁸

Carrie Gooding, whose father was a white man from Maine and whose mother was a Choctaw, was raised at the army post, having all the advantages of associating with the wives of the army officers. She attended school at Wheelock and was sent to New York to complete her education in music. The LeFlores lived near Doaksville during the

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Address to the Council by Chief Isaac Garvin, Messages of the Chiefs, Choctaw Papers, Indian Archives; Choctaw Indigents, 17728, 17729, 17730, Indian Archives.

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Hogue, Goodland Indian Orphanage, pp. 49-50; Hudson, "Choctaw Chiefs," Chronicles (June, 1939), p. 193.

war, moved into the log house at Goodwater after the departure of the Joneses, then soon to a site near Goodland Mission School. At Goodland, Carrie LeFlore took the position of principal teacher -- a position she held for fifteen years. Governor LeFlore died in 1886; Carrie LeFlore, in 1909. They lie buried side by side, just north of the Goodland Campus in the cemetery they gave to the community.⁹⁹

Besides the LeFlores, a number of other dedicated men and their wives kept the work at Goodland alive. These included: Wilson Jones, Bartwell McCann, and Wall Hayes, all Choctaw elders; also, John P. Turnbull, Solomon Hotema, Silas Leonard Bacon, Joel Spring, H. L. Gooding (brother to Carrie), Elias Jacobs, Ellis Woods, Michael Pitchlynn, and Osborne Battiest.¹⁰⁰

After 1880, with the increasing national revenue and the support of the neighborhood schools, the work became easier. The Compulsory Attendance School Acts of 1884 and 1887 strengthened the school at Goodland. In 1884, the old church built by Stark was remodeled and rebuilt. In 1888, John Turnbull and his wife gave the church the bell which may be seen today on the Goodland Campus. The arrival of Rev. Joseph Parker Gibbons in 1890 marked the end of the dark period when the mission had survived without a regular pastor and teacher.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ Hogue, Goodland Indian Orphanage, pp. 49-50; Wright and Fischer, "Civil War Sites," Chronicles (1966-67), p. 173; Reid to McBeth, February 17, 1872, Missions and Missionaries, Indian Archives.

¹⁰⁰ Hogue, Goodland Indian Orphanage, pp. 64, 46-47; Spring to LeFlore, October 4, 1889, LeFlore Collection, Indian Archives.

¹⁰¹ Hogue, Goodland Indian Orphanage, pp. 27-28, 48, 51; Acts and Laws of the Choctaw Nation, November 6, 1884; November 6, 1886; Report of Indian Affairs, 1887, p. 384.

Through the influence of his cousin, Rev. W. J. B. Lloyd, who had come to Bennington in the Choctaw Nation in 1870, Gibbons went first to the school at Goodwater in 1884. In 1890, Solomon Hotema persuaded Gibbons to move to Goodland to take charge of the school and church there. Hotema, an honor graduate of Roanoke College, Virginia, moved to Cold Springs, four miles west of Goodland, where he built a home and a mission church. He deeded his small log cabin and 160 acres at Goodland to Gibbons to use as long as he should live.¹⁰²

In 1894, Miss Elizabeth Rood was appointed missionary-teacher, the first for many years for Goodland. In 1894-95, a new one-room schoolhouse was built to accomodate fifty pupils. Funds for this building came from friends of Miss Rood who lived in St. Charles, Missouri. Later, this structure was moved, serving as a dining room and kitchen; then it was converted into a laundry with shower baths for the boys. It was torn down in 1934.¹⁰³

About this time the families near Goodland began the practice of taking orphan children into their homes. Before long, Goodland became known as an important center for the teaching and training for these destitute children. In 1895, the Home Mission Committee completed the first dormitory built on the grounds, a log house to accomodate fifteen or twenty boys. Mr. and Mrs. Jones moved in to make a home for the orphan boys. The work survived only because each week church members contributed meat, lard, flour, meal, potatoes,

¹⁰² Morrison, Red Man's Trail, pp. 81, 124-25; Hogue, Goodland Indian Orphanage, pp. 52-55.

¹⁰³ Hogue, ., pp. 62-63, 39-40, 59-60; Indian Arrow, March, 1930.

sugar, molasses, and other such staples. After a time, Mr. and Mrs. Bartwell McCann took over the responsibility of the home until Mr. McCann died of pneumonia. Mrs. and Mrs. Wall Hayes then took charge, only to have Mr. Hayes die of pneumonia in 1898.¹⁰⁴

With these deaths church members closed the dormitory at the end of the school session, 1898. For three terms, only a day school was maintained. Then once again the school opened as a boarding school for orphan children.¹⁰⁵

Spencer Academy

In the fall of 1868, the National Council authorized the restoration of Spencer Academy. Superintendent Forbis LeFlore employed Calvin Ervin to do this work. The Irvin family moved into the place and lived there for two years while repairs were being made.¹⁰⁶

On November 2, 1870, the Council designated \$6,000 for the re-establishment of Spencer as a male boarding school. An agreement with the Southern Presbyterian Church, U. S., was drawn up, and Rev. J. H. Colton, who was already residing at Pine Ridge only a few miles away, became Superintendent. In the fall of 1871, the school opened with 31 students.¹⁰⁷

From the beginning Colton had problems, and in October, 1876, the Board of Trustees requested Colton to resign. Teachers -- Miss

¹⁰⁴

Ibid., Indian Orphan, January, 1925.

¹⁰⁵

Ibid.

¹⁰⁶

Christian, "Memories," Chronicles (June, 1931), p. 167; Report of Indian Affairs, 1869, p. 410; 1870, p. 293.

¹⁰⁷

Acts of the Choctaw Nation, November 2, 1870; October 23, 1871; Hudson, "Recollections," Chronicles (December, 1932), pp. 517-18.

Elizabeth Morrison, Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Caldwell, and Mrs. H. Askill, and later T. J. Johnson -- had not arrived until the fall of 1872, causing delay in starting the work. In December, 1872, two boys died of an unknown sickness, and twelve boys were badly hurt when an upper balcony collapsed. On one occasion, Colton left the school temporarily, plunging it into confusion. In violation of the School Act of 1842, he opened a store near the Academy; he did not admit students approved by the Trustees and expelled others without consulting the authorities.¹⁰⁸

Rev. John Jeremiah Read, originally from Mississippi but directly from the First Presbyterian Church of Houston, followed Colton. With his wife and baby, he reached Spencer in December, 1876, and opened the session on January 1, 1877. Before many months, pneumonia broke out in the school. A number of boys died, including the small daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Read. Because of this experience, Read persuaded the Council to require physical examinations for all students, a policy which became law. Also, due to his urging, the Council passed a law admitting only boys between twelve and eighteen and who had completed the "Third Reader."¹⁰⁹

Read served for five years at Spencer. During his administration many Choctaw boys received instruction at the school -- among them, Peter Hudson, teacher, historian, and consultant for the Oklahoma

¹⁰⁸ Acts of the Choctaw Nation, November 1, 1872; November 11, 1875; October 22, 1876; Folsom, Constitution and Laws (1869), pp. 78-81; Vindicator, December 6, 1876; Byington to McBeth, dated 1872, Mission and Missionaries, Indian Archives.

¹⁰⁹ Morrison, Red Man's Trail, p. 78; The Missionary, May, 1877, p. 110; Acts of the Choctaw Nation, October 11, 1877; November 5, 1880; Laws of the Choctaw Nation, October 31, 1890, pp. 41-64; Report of Indian Affairs, 1878, p. 89.

Historical Society for many years, and Silas L. Bacon, the beloved Superintendent of Goodland Indian Orphanage. Read left Spencer in the summer of 1881. The contract with the Southern Presbyterian Church had expired and plans had been made to move the school to another site.¹¹⁰

With the departure of Read, the old buildings ceased to function as Spencer Academy. For two years, the Choctaw Indian Orphanage operated at this place; then, on September 8, 1885, the property was sold to Robert Stewart Frazier, an Indian preacher. Known as Spencerville, a store and post office were established nearby, and eventually Frazier sold usable lumber and building materials out of the old buildings. Today, the Family Frazier Cemetery, the remains of a storage cellar, and the old Spencer Graveyard on the hill may be seen. Little else exists of the old school of which the Choctaws were so proud.¹¹¹

The site chosen for New Spencer was at Nelson, twenty miles east of the original location. Although Allen Wright suggested a fireproof building, the Council chose to erect a wooden, two-storied structure. Mr. and Mrs. O. P. Stark were recalled to the Nation from

¹¹⁰ Morrison, Red Man's Trail, p. 80; Report of Indian Affairs, 1880, p. 96.

¹¹¹ Acts of the Choctaw Nation, October 25, 1877; November 4, 1880; Acts and Laws, April 2, 1885; Reed, "Robe Family," Chronicles (Autumn, 1948), p. 301; Christian, "Memories," Chronicles (June, 1931), p. 158. The second Mrs. W. E. Schooler of Hugo told the writer of this paper that her husband had bought the building stones of the old school and used them in constructing the fireplace of the Schooler cabin on Pine Lake north of Swink, Oklahoma. (Interview by writer with Mrs. W. E. Schooler of Hugo, Oklahoma, June 3, 1963).

Paris, Texas, Stark assuming his duties in November, 1881. In October, 1882, the school opened with 60 boys. Stark was in poor health, however, and Mrs. Stark assumed more and more authority. He died April 4, 1884, and was buried in the cemetery near the school. For a time, Mrs. Stark stayed on at Spencer, causing a conflict in management; eventually, however, she returned to Paris. She died October 3, 1910. After her death, the children of the Starks had the remains of their father removed from Nelson to rest beside their mother in a cemetery in Paris.¹¹²

The Northern Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., had assumed control of the school at its new location. One of the teachers appointed had been Harvey R. Schermerhorn, who now followed Stark as Superintendent. Like all Superintendents of Spencer, Schermerhorn faced frustrating problems, but he was an able administrator and won the support of the Choctaws. Tom Hunter, a student under him, praised Schermerhorn as a gentleman and an excellent example for young boys; and Superintendent of Schools J. P. Turnbull was Schermerhorn's staunch friend. Of special interest is that, at the suggestion of Turnbull, \$300 was spent for lightening rods. This expenditure indicates that Turnbull, like some other leaders, recognized the

¹¹²Acts of the Choctaw Nation, October 25, 1877; November 4, 1880; November 5, 1881; November 9, 1885; November 10, 1855; Imon, "Nelson," Files of Frances Imon; Report of Allen Wright, December 28, 1880, Wright (Allen) Collection, Western History Collection; Schermerhorn's Account Books, Olinger Collection, Western History Collection; Hogue, Goodland Indian Orphanage, pp. 21-22.

inflammability of the large wooden structure at Spencer.¹¹³

Schermerhorn left Spencer at the close of the spring term, 1888. R. W. Hill assumed temporary control until Alfred Docking arrived in November. Docking was a professional educator. At the close of the school year 1888-89, he reported 86 boys enrolled; four teachers; the highest classes studied Latin, Physical Geography, Algebra, and Physiology. Special methods had been used for boys beginning to learn English. Unfortunately, Docking's accounts were questioned because of an error on the part of R. W. Hill. However, Docking was exonerated, leaving the school in 1891, for personal reasons.¹¹⁴

W. A. Caldwell, also a professional educator and administrator, took Docking's place, arriving in September, 1891. He suggested insurance on the building, and his reports are filled with urgent requests for expanded facilities, including a schoolhouse. In the report of 1892-93, he wrote: "If it is impossible to give us a school building, at any rate give us amounts for mules and a steam laundry. ... This old washboard plan wears out clothes too fast."¹¹⁵

¹¹³ Acts of the Choctaw Nation, November 9, 1881; October 24, 1882; Schermerhorn to Lowrie, June 22, 1883; July 2, 1883; March 13, 1884; March 14, 1884; April 4, 1887; March 5, 1888; American Indian Correspondence, Box 12, Microcopy, Western History Collection; Report of Schermerhorn to Turnbull, 1887-88, Choctaw Schools, Spencer Academy, Indian Archives; Speech by Judge T. W. Hunter, Files of Frances Imon.

¹¹⁴ Acts of the Choctaw Nation, November 16, 1889; October 31, 1890; October 15, 1891; Hill to Schermerhorn, August 7, 1888; Docking to Turnbull, October 13, 1890, Choctaw Schools, Spencer Academy, Indian Archives.

¹¹⁵ Caldwell to Board of Education, October 1 and 7, 1892; August 31, 1893, Choctaw Schools, Spencer Academy, Indian Archives.

Caldwell operated under the School Act of 1890. While many of the policies regarding Spencer had been practiced for several years, this act redefined and emphasized procedures. The number of boys to be enrolled was 100, with 99 to be apportioned among the Choctaws and one from the Choctaws living in the Chickasaw Nation. Originally, the students were selected by the Trustees, now by the County Judge. Selection at first had been made on the basis of age; now students were chosen according to ability to learn, attendance, and proficiency in the Third Reader. A physical examination was required and the length of instruction for any student was from four to six years.¹¹⁶

With the resignation of W. A. Caldwell in June, 1894, under Principal Chief Jefferson Gardner, the Choctaw Board of Education assumed direct control of the institution. Members of the Board were S. L. Oakes, M. V. Evridge, James Uray, Richard Roebuck, and Joel Spring. J. B. Jeter, Choctaw, was appointed Superintendent of Spencer. All of these men were substantial citizens of the Choctaw County area.¹¹⁷

The Choctaws were pleased with the detailed reports submitted by Superintendent Jeter. In 1895-96, Jeter wrote that strict discipline was maintained. Daily classes were preceded by Bible reading, songs and prayers, and closed the same way. Expenditures had increased, partly because Jeter had replaced some of the farm animals. Jeter believed pupils should spend the time in study which they now gave to

¹¹⁶ Laws of the Choctaw Nation, School Law of 1890, October 31, 1890.

¹¹⁷ Jeter to Board of Education, June 29, 1894; Caldwell to Board of Education, June 3, 1894; October 8, 1894, Choctaw Schools, Spencer Academy, Indian Archives.

farm work; and teachers gave special attention to students who were learning to speak English.¹¹⁸ Before Jeter could submit this report, however, tragedy struck Spencer.

On the night of October 3, 1896, Spencer's main building and the storeroom burned to the ground. Three students, whom Jeter had disciplined the evening before, bought coal oil at the store in Nelson. After the teachers and students retired, they saturated the front and back stairs with the oil and set them on fire. The fire spread rapidly through the wooden structure. Superintendent Jeter, who slept upstairs in a room near a ward of the younger boys, roused and sounded the alarm. Most of the boys jumped to safety, landing upon a pile of mattresses thrown from the windows. Four students died that night; a fifth, two days later. Seven others were seriously burned. Buildings and supplies lost were valued at \$22,000.¹¹⁹

Many tragic and heroic stories are told concerning that terrifying night. Dr. W. N. John, later of Hugo, lived at Nelson, practiced in the community, and was the official physician for the Academy. Jeter himself had made the trip to Houston, Texas, to secure the services of this young doctor at the time of his graduation. Along with others at Nelson, Dr. and Mrs. John rushed to the scene of the fire. Dr. John ministered as best he could to the injured and to the

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Jeter to Board of Education, August 31, 1895, October 31, 1896, Choctaw Schools, Spencer Academy, Indian Archives.

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Jeter to Board of Education, October 13, 1896; September 30, 1897; Choctaw Schools, Spencer Academy, Indian Archives; Interview with Mrs. Rosa Oakes Huff, Soper, Oklahoma, April 26, 1937, in Foreman, Indian Pioneer History, Vol. V, 1937, pp. 227-31; Christian, "Memories," Chronicles, (June, 1931), pp. 155-65.

dying boys: Sam (Pat) Spring, Cotton Bacon, Edwin Clark, Alfred Brent, and Harris Fisher.¹²⁰

One of the boys, Samuel Guy (Pat) Spring, was the son of Chief Joel and Winnie Spring of Goodland. At the direction of Dr. John, Pat, as he was affectionately called, was placed in a wagon, still alive, and rushed to Paris, Texas, to the hospital there. Pat died October 6, 1896; he lives buried in the Spring Cemetery on the south edge of Hugo. An imposing stone marks his grave.¹²¹

Allen Wright had recommended a fireproof building; J. F. Turnbull had insisted that lightning rods be installed; and W. A. Caldwell had suggested insurance. The worst fear of these men -- that of fire -- had actually been realized. Now, of necessity, the school was dismissed. The Board insisted that Jeter stay on the premises. A four room house with a fire place was built for him; the farm was rented on the halves.¹²²

Jeter urged that Spencer be rebuilt. He hoped the school would be ready by January 1, 1897. Funds were not available, however, and the Academy did not accept students until the fall of 1898.

¹²⁰ Ibid., Bill sent to Spencer Academy from Dr. W. N. John, November 2, 1896, Choctaw Schools, Spencer Academy, Indian Archives; Interview by writer with Mary Margaret John, August 6, 1962, Hugo, Oklahoma.

¹²¹ Ibid., Frances Imon, "Spencer Academy," Paris News, March 21, 1967, Files of Frances Imon; Interview by writer with Winnie Spring Griffith, August 10, 1969, Hugo, Oklahoma.

¹²² Jeter to Board of Education, September 30, 1897; To Committee on Schools from Green McCurtain, Choctaw Schools, Spencer Academy, Indian Archives.

Eighty-four boys enrolled; eleven assistants were employed besides Jeter; and the cost of the operation was \$15,000.¹²³

The first term of the reconstructed Academy was the final one for the boys of the Choctaw Nation. In the spring of 1899, the Choctaws lost control of their schools.¹²⁴ To the last, the Choctaws fought for their schools, most of all for Spencer. Their educational institutions were the source of their greatest devotion and pride. By this time, however, nothing could deter the Choctaw schools from succumbing to the control of the United States.

Problems and Progress

Following the Civil War, one of the most immediate problems facing the Choctaw Nation was the re-establishment of their educational system. Once the schools had been reopened, Choctaw educators dealt with such matters as finances and administration, school attendance, improving teacher standards and procedures, and curriculum. Many of these problems have already been discussed as they related to particular schools and specific areas.

The Act of 1890, "Relating to the School System of the Choctaw Nation", represents the culmination of Choctaw educational efforts. In this act the operational details for the entire school system are presented. An official Board of Education was designated to supervise and control the schools. The Board was composed of the Principal Chief

¹²³ Annual Report of the United States Indian Inspector for the Indian Territory, 1899, p. 22.

¹²⁴ Ibid., Acts of the Choctaw Nation, October 11, 1899;
Interview by writer with Winnie Spring Griffith, August 10, 1969,
Hugo, Oklahoma.

as ex-officio member, the Superintendent of Schools, and three District Trustees. The Superintendent and District Trustees were elected by both houses of the General Council in joint session; each held office for a term of two years. The Superintendent received \$600.00 annually; each District Trustee, \$400.00. Each Superintendent and District Trustee was to give bond for the sum of \$5000. The Board was to meet at the Capitol while the Council was in session, submitting to it their accounts and reports.¹²⁵

A brief summary of the powers and duties of the Board included the following: (1) to let contracts for teachers, principals, and superintendents; designate locations for neighborhood schools; discontinue any neighborhood school should the same in their judgment be expedient; (2) to certify teachers, or revoke certifications, examine all applicants, prescribe textbooks, and the course of study; (3) to select students to be sent to the States. Special sections gave details for carrying out these duties. Among these were paragraphs relating to: Certification of Teachers, Duties of District and Local Trustees; Neighborhood Schools, Boarding Schools, College Students, and Orphan Schools.¹²⁶

Some of the regulations and practices as outlined in the School Act had existed before the Civil War; others had evolved in the two decades between 1870 and 1890. Debo suggests that, as a result of the excellent public school system of the Choctaw Nation, the quality

¹²⁵ Laws of the Choctaw Nation, Bill LXI, October 31, 1890, pp. 41-64.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

of English used by the Choctaws both in their official and private correspondence is distinctly superior to that of the white people who surrounded them.¹²⁷ To say the least, the School Act of 1890, reveals an amazing grasp of educational problems and an effort to meet these needs.

Two of the more persistent problems of this period related directly to curriculum. One of these was the debate over the teaching of classical subjects as opposed to the more practical subjects. Wherever teachers met, at teachers' institutes and summer normals, the debate raged. For professional educators such as Alfred Docking and W. A. Caldwell, of Spencer Academy, and John James, a neighborhood school teacher from Texas, all "outside" white men, the teaching of Latin and other classical subjects was a waste of time for the Choctaw Indian student. They argued the Choctaw schools were lagging behind the more progressive schools in the States which were concentrating upon the agricultural-mechanical subjects.¹²⁸ In expressing this view, the white teachers were reflecting the beginnings of the pragmatic trend in education in the States. This trend was to culminate in the Smith-Huges Act of 1917, and is, in fact, still with us today.

The Choctaws disagreed with this viewpoint. Their school system had already evolved from a period which stressed practical subjects. Now, parents declared they sent their children to school to

¹²⁷ Debo, Rise and Fall, p. 242.

¹²⁸ Docking to Turnbull, October 13, 1890; Caldwell to Board of Education, August 31, 1891, Choctaw Schools, Spencer Academy, Indian Archives; John James, My Experience with Indians (Austin, Texas: Gammel's Book Store, 1925), p. 52.

be educated; if they had wanted them to work they could have kept them at home.¹²⁹ Choctaw leaders were convinced their people must become educated -- including "college educated" -- if they were to withstand "the surrounding eagerness and pressure of their white brothers."¹³⁰ Therefore, the appropriation for college students had high priority, and schools placed increasing emphasis upon college preparatory subjects.

Another problem related to curriculum was that of the teaching of English. Although certainly not new, Choctaw educators recognized with renewed urgency this need. Some disagreed with this view -- especially those missionaries and teachers who worked in the small out-of-the-way settlements where little English was heard or spoken.¹³¹ Nevertheless, in 1870, Superintendent Forbis LeFlore required that all schools be taught in English and urged parents to learn English from their children.¹³² This policy led to the more progressive local schools hiring white teachers from Arkansas and Texas whenever possible. In one instance, a native Choctaw had taught the school for fourteen years. "Now the Choctaws wanted a teacher who could not speak Choctaw and who, in learning the Choctaw tongue, would enable the children to speak and understand the English equivalents in their native speech."¹³³

¹²⁹ Report of Indian Inspector, 1899, p. 22

¹³⁰ Report of Indian Affairs, 1869, p. 410.

¹³¹ Choctaw Mission, May 10, 1867; Hudson, "Recollections," Chronicles (December, 1932), p. 515; Report of Indian Affairs, 1888, pp. v-xxvi.

¹³² Report of Indian Affairs, 1870, pp. 294-95.

¹³³ James, My Experiences, pp. 51-52.

As the Choctaw system progressed, teachers were concerned with the most effective method for teaching English. Again, the problem of methodology was not new. Teachers had long deplored the ineffectiveness of the "present method" -- that is, the tedious teaching of the alphabet, then words of one letter, two letters, three letters, and so on.¹³⁴ By 1884, however, a different method had emerged. James described this "modern method" by saying: "I adopted the picture method for all nouns, and the action method for all verbs and adverbs, as far as possible."¹³⁵ Except for the assistance of machines, this procedure is strikingly similar to that which is employed today.

Thus, while problems persisted during this period, astounding progress was made. By 1890, the Choctaw School System had emerged into a modern institution. Yet, the most insidious problem of all was at work -- that of white intrusion. This situation brought about the abrupt cessation of the most cherished institution of the Choctaws.

End of the Choctaw School System

The first United States census of the Indian Territory taken in 1890 indicates the following legal citizens of the Choctaw Nation: Whites -- 28,345; Negroes -- 4,406; Indians -- 11,057; Total 43,808; per cent Indians -- 25.24.¹³⁶ These figures do not include the number of illegal whites who were pouring into the Nation.

¹³⁴ Report of Indian Affairs, 1842, p. 495; 1843, pp. 34-37; 1845, p. 480.

¹³⁵ James, My Experiences, p. 52.

¹³⁶ Bureau of the Census, Extra Census Bulletin, The Five Civilized Tribes of the Indian Territory (Washington, 1894), pp. 3-5.

As the non-citizen population increased, many of the proud, white independent Americans simply defied or ignored tribal regulations. They complained loudly they had no voting privileges or political rights; they cultivated farms and built homes on land they could not own; they had almost no law enforcement or legal protection; most of all, their children were growing up with almost no educational opportunities. Debo states:

These inhabitants of this fierce frontier did not even consider the fact that Indian tenure rested upon the most solemn commitments by the Federal government, and that by settling in the Indian Territory they had voluntarily subjected themselves to these conditions ...¹³⁷

The clamor of the white intruders within the Nation was joined by Federal officials in Washington and the people in the neighboring states of the Indian Territory. Many deplored the sight of extensive sections of fertile, uncultivated country; others, such as Senator Dawes, advocated private ownership of land with the fervor of a moral crusade. Once again, such views indicated no understanding of the Indian himself or any sincere investigation of the situation.¹³⁸

In spite of vigorous protests on the part of the delegates of the Five Civilized Tribes, on March 3, 1893, in Washington a bill creating the Dawes Commission was passed. This body immediately mapped out plans and began negotiations for the end of the tribal governments.¹³⁹ In the following months the Choctaw Nation was plunged

¹³⁷ Debo, Still the Waters Run, p. 19.

¹³⁸ Ibid., p. 22.

¹³⁹ Acts of the Choctaw Nation, December 11, 12, 1891; February 17, 1893; October 20, 1897; Report of Indian Affairs, 1893, pp. 512-14; Text of the Law, 1894, p. 27; Debo, Rise and Fall, pp. 246-48.

into bitter and devisive turmoil. Political conventions and protest meetings of every kind were held. This activity culminated in the close election of 1896, by which Green McCurtain was elected Chief. Convinced the Nation desperately needed a position from which to negotiate, McCurtain had run upon a platform of conciliation with the Dawes Commission. He did not foresee an immediate change in tribal government but believed the United States would grant delay in the matter.¹⁴⁰

After long, vitriolic debate, the Atoka Agreement with the United States and the Dawes Commission was finally ratified by the Choctaws on August 30, 1898. This agreement provided for allotting the land, termination of tribal government, and payment of royalty from coal and asphalt lands to be used for educational purposes, with these lands and funds under the control of the Secretary of the Interior.¹⁴¹ However, acceptance of the agreement did not mean wholehearted approval by the Choctaws. Succeeding developments showed tribal leaders had submitted to the inevitable, while the less educated and more conservative full bloods had stayed away from the polls, clinging to their institutions "with a despairing tenacity that refused to accept the logic of events."¹⁴²

¹⁴⁰ Indian Citizen, October 25 and November 8, 1894; June 27, 1895; October 22, 1896.

¹⁴¹ Report of Indian Affairs, 1898, pp. 425-48; Text of the Agreement, pp. 434-43.

¹⁴² Debo, Still the Waters Run, p. 25.

Chief McCurtain proved correct on one point; Choctaw leaders did secure some delay in the termination of tribal government. Yet, the Choctaws were unprepared for another development. The Secretary of the Interior ruled that, since the Choctaws no longer controlled their mineral royalties which were set aside for education purposes, they no longer controlled their schools. To the shock and amazement of the Choctaws, including Chief McCurtain, the Secretary made immediate plans to take charge of the Choctaw Educational System.¹⁴³

The fall session ending in January, 1898, was the last one whereby the Choctaw Nation exercised complete authority over its schools. Recoiling from the unexpected event McCurtain and the Choctaw Council closed the schools in the Nation and instructed the Board of Education to recall "all scholars now attending college, whether in the Territory or any of the States." In the meantime, the Secretary of the Interior appointed John D. Benedict of Illinois as Superintendent of Schools for Indian Territory and E. T. McArthur of Minnesota as Supervisor of the Choctaw Schools. Benedict arrived in the Nation in the spring of 1899. Immediately, he met with the Choctaw Board of Education and the Choctaw schools were officially surrendered to the United States.¹⁴⁴ Thus, April, 1899, marks the abrupt end in Choctaw County, and in the Choctaw Nation, of the most valued institution of the Choctaws -- their school system.

¹⁴³ Department of Interior, 1899, pp. 86-87.

¹⁴⁴ Report of Indian Affairs, 1899, pp. 87-89; 1900, p. 156; Letter to Secretary of Interior from W. A. Jones, January 20, 1899, Foreman, Superintendent of Five Civilized Tribes, Choctaw, Vol. 19, p. 126, Indian Archives.

Summary

In Choctaw County, during the Civil War, only three struggling day schools survived -- Goodwater, Goodland, and Living Land. After the war, with the departure from the Nation and the death of the older missionaries, the door was opened for the growth of a more independent Choctaw educational system.

From 1870 on, the Choctaw Nation and Choctaw County experienced a period of expansion and growth. Without exception, Choctaw leaders supported the schools. Many of these leaders lived within the boundaries of Choctaw County. With the coming of peace, the neighborhood schools were re-established, and later the boarding schools. However, a scarcity of funds hampered these efforts. As a possible source of school revenue, the Choctaws looked once again to the settlement of the Net Proceeds with the United States. The litigation dragged for years with the schools receiving no financial benefits from this action.

In the meantime, rich coal veins were developed in the Nation. Railroads opened up additional industrial development; skilled workers, merchants, and adventurers of every sort poured into the Choctaw Nation. While no large coal mines were in Choctaw County, the ranching, hay, and timber industries expanded. Revenues from many sources poured into the Choctaw treasury. The Choctaws gave priority to school funds and a modern educational system developed. The Compulsory School Laws of 1884 and 1887, and the School Act of 1890 attest to the advancement of the Choctaw system. The schools in Choctaw County shared in these funds and in this progress. Between 1886 and 1898, approximately thirty-nine neighborhood schools operated in this country.

In 1885, the Choctaws opened schools for the Freedmen. Provision was also made for the more able young men and women to attend colleges in the States. In addition, the Choctaws provided for the disadvantaged children among them.

Goodland Indian Orphanage, south of Hugo, is a supreme example of the compassion the Choctaws felt for the deprived children among them. Under the leadership of such faithful workers as Governor Basil LeFlore and his wife, Carrie Gooding LeFlore, and a strong band of elders and their wives, the school remained in operation in the difficult years following the war. At last, with the arrival in 1890, of Rev. and Mrs. Joseph Parker Gibbons, help came to Goodland. By 1898, this school was recognized throughout the Choctaw Nation as an important institution for the care and teaching of orphan children.

After the war, Spencer Academy was not opened until the fall of 1871. Rev. J. H. Colton was appointed superintendent, followed by Rev. John Jeremiah Read. In September, 1881, Spencer Academy opened at a new location southeast of the community of Nelson in the central part of Choctaw County. Rev. and Mrs. O. P. Stark were recalled from Paris, Texas, to superintend the school. At the death of Stark in 1884, Harvey R. Schermerhorn became the new administrator. He was followed by R. W. Hill, Alfred Docking, and W. A. Caldwell. In 1894, the Choctaws took charge of the institution, appointing J. B. Jeter, Choctaw, as administrator. On the night of October 3, 1896, tragedy struck. Spencer Academy burned, killing several boys and injuring many others. The school opened again in the fall of 1898, but this was the last session for the boys of the Choctaw Nation to attend their beloved Spencer Academy.

Problems of this period were much the same as those before the Civil War. However, after money began pouring into the Choctaw treasury from mineral royalties and other sources, the Choctaws had comparatively few financial difficulties. One of the most persistent problems centered around the best methodology for the teaching of the English language; another problem concerned the debate over the teaching of practical as opposed to classical subjects.

After 1890, pressures from the alien white population increased. Eventually, an agreement with the United States to end tribal control was ratified by the Choctaws on August 30, 1898. Called the Atoka Agreement, one provision stated the Choctaws lost supervision of their mineral rights, the money being reserved for education. Reasoning this meant the Choctaws no longer had charge of their schools, to the dismay of the Choctaws, the Secretary of the Interior took over the Choctaw school system at the end of the fall semester, January, 1899. In April, 1899, the Choctaw Educational System was officially surrendered to the United States. Thus, the Choctaw Educational System came to an abrupt end.

CHAPTER V

INTEGRATION OF THE SCHOOLS, 1899 - 1977

We must forget our bitterness. We must encourage
our children to stay in school and become educated
.....¹

Chief Harry J. W. Belvin

Introduction

The coming of the railroad was the strongest influence in destroying the isolation of the Choctaw Nation, and of Choctaw County. As had been noted, the first railroad through the Nation did not touch Choctaw County. Completed in 1887, the second railroad, the Frisco, as it came to be called, dissected the county from north to south near the center. However, the building of the Arkansas and Choctaw Railroad from east to west was the greatest agent in opening the door to the influx of white men into this area.²

The Arkansas and Choctaw Railroad from Hope, Arkansas, to Ardmore, Oklahoma, was completed in 1903; the first passenger trains

¹ Speech by Chief Jimmy Belvin to Hugo Indian Club, Thanksgiving Dinner, 1964, Hugo, Oklahoma.

² Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1889, pp. 34-35; Roy Gittinger, The Formation of the State of Oklahoma (Berkeley: University of Oklahoma, 1917), pp. 171, 178-79; A. W. Neville, The Red River Valley (Paris, Texas: North Texas Publishing Co., 1948), pp. 4-5.

ran in 1904.³ As this railroad entered the county from the east, the settlements on the old Military Trail moved from a mile to three miles south to relocate. The community near the Old Chief's House moved south to the railroad to become Swink; Doaksville moved to become Ft. Towson; Arobia, the settlement at Rock Chimney Crossing on the Kiamichi River, moved to the railroad to become Sawyer; Goodland moved south to become Hugo; Nelson became Soper; and Mayhew became Boswell. White men poured into these locations, setting up businesses; opening banks; relocating post offices, buildings depots, boarding houses, hotels, churches, and establishing subscription schools for their children.⁴

Hugo served as an example of this invasion of the white man. Founded in the latter part of 1901, the location of the town was determined by the crossing of the north and south, and the east and west railroads at this point. The Frisco constructed a brick round house, complete with turn tables, machine shop, coal chutes, and transfer platform. In 1903, the depot at Goodland was moved to Hugo and placed on the southeast corner near the railroad crossing. The name of the town was submitted by Mrs. W. H. Darrough, wife of a Hugo developer and surveyor, in honor of the French writer, Victor Hugo, whom she greatly admired.⁵

³ Ibid., Interview by writer with Tony Thomas, August 17, 1968.

⁴ Hugo Daily News, March 27, April 8, 1969; July 16, 1973; "Choctaw County Proud of the Past and Looking Ahead," Daily Oklahoman, August 26, 1962; Bertha Killian, "Choctaw County," Vertical Files, Oklahoma Historical Society; Field trip of writer with Tony Thomas and Lucien Spear, August 10, 1968.

⁵ Hugo Daily News, April 8, 1969; Interview by writer with Smith Luton, April 19, 1969.

The official survey and plat of the townsite, consisting of 415 acres, was completed in 1902. Expenses for this work were paid for by the Department of Interior. At first, the new settlement was a city of tents, but the transition to wood and brick progressed rapidly. Reportedly, Hugo grew at the rate of a thousand a year for several years. A commercial club was organized in 1902. In 1903, this enterprising organization published a booklet describing the beauty of the surrounding country and urging newcomers to settle in Hugo: "Come, not tomorrow, but today, to Hugo in the BIT ... Beautiful Indian Territory."⁷

The largest percentage of the citizens of Hugo were recently-arrived white men. Nevertheless, a number of shrewd Choctaws took advantage of the boom, set up businesses, and actively participated in civic affairs. Bailey Spring, of the renowned Choctaw family, was the actual and original townsite promoter as well as the first postmaster. J. C. Kirkpatrick, himself a white man but married to a Choctaw, had resided on the townsite for years, cultivating cotton. Bailey Spring and J. J. Terry sold the west part of town; Kirkpatrick, the east. Soon, Wood, Kirkpatrick, Hebare, and Spring additions added 250 acres to the original site. Chief Joel Spring, whose wife was Winnie R. Gooding, was Hugo's most outstanding citizen. In 1902, Chief Spring moved his store, the Goodland Trading Post, to Hugo, and he built a large rambling house whose spacious grounds covered a city

⁷ Reports Concerning Indians in Indian Territory, Department of Interior, 1902, pp. 207-209; Hugo Daily News, March 27, April 8, 1909.

block. His name appears today on the original Security First National Bank which was established in 1905.⁸

Besides in Hugo, in each of the mushrooming villages on the railroad, a number of astute Choctaws were successful business men and prominent citizens. In Ft. Towson, Willie Wilson was possibly the most distinguished civic leader. Wilson had a store at old Doaksville and also made money dealing in hay and cattle. With the coming of the railroad, he moved his business to Ft. Towson, became president of the First National Bank, and was a heavy stockholder in five other banks in Choctaw and McCurtain counties. Among other businesses, he promoted the Ft. Towson Ice Company, a cotton warehouse, and a drug-store. He was also active in Choctaw tribal affairs, serving in various educational offices and as Choctaw Treasurer.⁹

His first wife having died, in 1906, Willie Wilson married Ollie Baird of Paris, Texas. In this same year, he built for his bride, in Ft. Towson, a mansion in the ante bellum style. In recent years, Johnny and Janey Myers have restored this home, and it is today one of the showplaces of Choctaw County.¹⁰

⁸ Ibid., Interview by writer with Ed Oakes, Hugo, May 5, 1968; and Winnie Spring Griffith, August 10, 1969.

⁹ Peter Hudson, "Recollections of Peter Hudson," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. X, No. 4 (December, 1932), p. 516; Letter from Mattie Switzer to Johnny and Janey Myers, Ft. Towson, June 20, 1958.

¹⁰ Ibid., The Southwest Oklahoman, Hugo, Oklahoma, July 28, 1958; The Daily Oklahoman, August 26, 1962; Interview by writer with Johnny and Janey Myers, August 23, 1969.

If some Choctaws took advantage of the opening up of the Nation, most withdrew deeper into the wooded, remote areas, avoiding the frenzied activity of the white men's towns. On the other hand, Federal authorities in Washington praised the progress and "wonderful growth" of the new towns. Apparently, the white invaders either ignored or were totally unaware of the impact their onslaught was having upon the Choctaw Nation. Certainly, the white men were oblivious to the bitterness experienced by the Choctaws as these people fought a delaying action, then finally relinquished their school system, the source of their greatest pride, to the control of the white man.¹¹

From 1899 to Statehood

John D. Benedict took control of the Choctaw Educational System with a high-handed flourish. His scathing criticisms seemed limitless. He accused the Choctaws of total administrative and financial mismanagement, of inefficiency, of nepotism, of filth, and of woeful incompetence in teaching the English language. He asserted darkly that sometimes teachers were even guilty of conversing with children in their native tongue. He reported the school buildings were crudely constructed and ill-equipped. He saw nothing good in the boarding schools and condemned the emphasis on college preparatory subjects instead of industry. He charged journals were almost non-

¹¹ Report of Secretary of the Interior, 1902, p. 244.

existent, teachers had little training, and methodology in teaching was unknown.¹²

Armed with this moral stance, Benedict declared the Choctaws were glad to turn the schools over to his superior management. Thus, during the late spring and summer of 1899, Benedict and his assistant, E. T. McArthur, were busily engaged in conducting examinations and hiring teachers throughout the Choctaw Nation, most of whom were newcomers to the Nation, with very few of them Indians.¹³

This castigation of the Choctaw School System is difficult to evaluate. Obviously, Benedict was void of tact and totally ignorant of the intellectual and cultural accomplishments of these people. No doubt many of the Choctaw schools had the characteristics of the pioneer environment. Yet, he completely underestimated the intelligence and dignity of the Choctaws; and his actions shocked and offended a people whose educational system was "older then Benedict's state of Illinois and with an even larger proportion of college trained men and women."¹⁴

Benedict's troubles began when the Choctaw Council convened in the fall of 1899. By this time the full impact of the school situation had rolled in upon tribal leaders. Vigorous protests and

¹² Department of the Interior, Annual Report, 1899, Vol. I, pp. 87-92; Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1899, pp. 86-92; Angie Debo, The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1934), p. 285; Angie Debo, And Still the Waters Run (New York: Gordian Press, Inc., 1966), pp. 66-67.

¹³ Department of Interior, Vol. I, pp. 155-56; 1904, Vol. II, pp. 290-93; Report of Indian Affairs, 1899, pp. 88-89.

¹⁴ Debo, Still the Waters Run, p. 68.

resolutions were sent to the Secretary of the Interior demanding restitution of tribal funds expended for the illegal support of Benedict's office. The Choctaws instructed the Board of Education to ignore Benedict and administer the schools under tribal law as usual. For a time, a Federal System and the Choctaw Nation System attempted to operate concomitantly, thrusting the schools in the Nation, and in Choctaw County, into an uproar.¹⁵

While the Choctaw counter-attack proved futile, nevertheless the Choctaws succeeded in letting Congress know how they felt about the problem. George Wright, Indian Inspector, appeared before the Council in 1900. He attempted to persuade the Choctaws to accept the Federal Program, but the Choctaws were adamant. A compromise was worked out in 1901. The Department of Interior was to maintain control of the schools but the Federal Supervisor was to be assisted by an official of the tribe, nominated by the Chief and the Board of Education and appointed by the Secretary of the Interior.¹⁶

After this agreement the Federal Government moved decisively. First, the Office of District Trustee was abolished. Then, on October 8, 1903, the Superintendent of the Choctaw Schools, J. W. Everidge, resigned and the office was discontinued -- an office highly respected by the Choctaws for forty-eight years. In 1901, Calvin Ballard had replaced McArthur as the United States Supervisor,

¹⁵ Acts of the Choctaw Nation, October 11, 1899; October 24, 26, 31, 1900; October 29, 30, November 4, 1901; October 23, 1903; November 30, 1905; Department of Interior, 1900, pp. 56-57; 1901, pp. 127-28; 1903, pp. 77, 79; Report of Indian Affairs, 1900, p. 109; Speech by Judge T. W. Hunter, in The Indian Arrow, no date given, Files of Frances Imon, Hugo, Oklahoma.

¹⁶ Ibid., Report of Indian Affairs, 1901, p. 128.

and on July 10, 1901, Eli Mitchell was named the Choctaw Representative by the Choctaw Council. The Council continued to appropriate school funds from the mineral revenues, but this was merely a perfunctory exercise. If the Council had failed to act, the money would have been designated anyway by the Secretary of the Interior.¹⁷

Choctaw neighborhood schools formed the basic structure upon which the new Federal School System was established. As inadequate as Benedict regarded them, he did not hesitate to use their facilities. After 1901, expenses for operating these schools were under complete Federal control.¹⁸ At least thieteen neighborhood schools were operating in Choctaw County at this time.

Teachers of the neighborhood schools were required to keep exact records; superivsors visited the schools frequently; normals were conducted in the summer; and teachers were certified according to three levels, the First Grade being the highest.

These procedures were not new to teachers who had taught under the Choctaw School System. Also, although examinations under the Federal System were reportedly more difficult, the matter is debatable. To say the least, the certification requirements implemented by the Choctaws in 1890 compare favorably with those of the

¹⁷ Report of Indian Inspector, 1901, pp. 85-86; 1902, p. 35; Report of Indian Affairs, 1903, pp. 77-79; 1901, pp. 128-29; Choctaw Documents, No. 22178, Indian Archives, Oklahoma Historical Society.

¹⁸ Reports Concerning Indians in Indian Territory, 1901, pp. 224-25.

Table 6

Neighborhood Schools and Teachers in Choctaw County in 1901^a

School	Teacher	Location
Ellis Chapel	J. G. Garland	Southeast of Soper
Sugar Creek	W. E. Larecy	Northwest of Soper
Oaksville	Hattie Jeter	
Doaksville	Hattie Lindsay	
Grant	Frances Lyle	
Honey Springs	Ethel McClaron	South of Soper
Old Goodland	Bella McCollom (later Mrs. J. P. Gibbons)	
Goodland	Mary McArthur	North of Hugo
Rock Hill	Virgie Oakes	Northeast of Hugo
Living Land	Dan Strawn	
Springs Chapel	Callie Stalcup	
Goodwater	Bertha Whitehead	
Pine Ridge	Teacher unknown	

^aReport of Indian Inspector, 1901, p. 106; H. V. Posey, "The Development of Education in Choctaw County," 1932, Submitted to the School of Education, Master of Science Degree, Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, Stillwater, Oklahoma, pp. 37-38.

new regime.¹⁹ Again, while most of the teachers were white, some were Indians or part Indians who had successfully passed the certification requirements. Some of these taught in Choctaw County for many years after Statehood, particularly in the rural areas.²⁰

Federal Inspector Ballard and Choctaw Representative Mitchell worked harmoniously together. This helps explain why, after the initial confusion, schools in the Choctaw Nation fared better than those in some of the other Civilized tribes. However, no provision had been made for financial support for the schooling of the white children. Before 1904, the teachers were paid, in part, on a per pupil basis. Whites were charged one to two dollars for tuition, the payment being collected by the teacher. The money was then deposited with the Federal authorities, the money coming back to the teacher as a supplement to the regular salary.²¹ Each year new schools were reported.

Many of the whites in the rural areas, however, were too poor to pay tuition, either in the Indian schools or in the subscription schools which were sometimes organized. Also, in neighborhoods

¹⁹ Report of Indian Inspector, 1902, p. 78; 1901, p. 84; Benedict to Ballard, September 10, 1901; Ballard to the Teachers of the Choctaw Nation, September 18, 1901; Dawes Commission Files, Indian Archives; Report of Secretary of Interior, 1902, p. 243; House Documents, No. 5, 57th Congress, 2d Session, p. 323; Certificates of Agnes Browing Fuller, Fuller (Agnes) Collection, Western History Collections.

²⁰ Interview by writer with Eugene Nash, County Superintendent of Choctaw County, Choctaw County Courthouse, Hugo, Oklahoma, April 25, 1968; Records in Office of County Superintendent, Choctaw County Courthouse, Hugo, Oklahoma.

²¹ Report of Indian Inspector, 1902, p. 30; Report of Secretary of Interior, 1902, p. 244.

Table 7

New Schools Reported in Choctaw County from 1902-1904^a

School	Teacher	Location
<u>1902</u>		
Long Creek		North of Hugo
Ushery		Near Hugo
Hibbens		Near Frogville
<u>1903</u>		
Choate Springs	J. G. Garland	South of Fallon
Swink		
Doaksville		
Hugo		
<u>1904</u>		
Ferguson		Exact location unknown
Crowder Chapel		South of Boswell
Harkin		South of Swink

^aReport of Indian Inspector, 1903, pp. 100-01; 1902, p. 110, 1904, p. 93; Posey, "Development of Education," pp. 42-43.

predominately white, Indian children, especially full bloods, felt ill at ease and, more often than not, dropped out of school. On the other hand, in a few neighborhoods with a large Indian majority, whites were made to feel unwelcome. A large number of Indians firmly believed their Tribal monies were being used for the education of the white children. The method of paying the teacher was suspect, and Benedict himself had implied the Indians had enough money for education for all.²²

Schools for the Freedmen were in an even more pathetic condition than those of the white and Indians. While most of the towns provided for Negro schools, in the rural areas the Freedmen were desperately poor and totally without resources. Federal authorities pointed out that these children were not permitted to attend Indian schools, even by paying tuition.²³ As a part of the Atoka Agreement, the Negroes could not share in the mineral rights of the Choctaws; moreover, in the allotment plans, Freedmen received forty acres each. The Choctaws also withdrew their support of the Freedmen's schools. While in the light of the civil rights movement, which later developed, the action seems irresponsible, at that time the

²² Report of Indian Inspector, 1889, p. 19; 1900, p. 82; 1902, p. 81; 1907, p. 31. Choctaw suspicions seems to have been verified. In 1908, the United States Supreme Courts ruled against the Five Civilized Tribes, stating the Secretary of the Interior had the right to use tribal funds for sectarian schools. S. L. Lyman, A History of Indian Policy (Washington, D. C.: United States Dept. of Interior, 1973), p. 106.

²³ Report of Indian Inspector, 1900, p. 85; Report of Secretary of Interior, 1902, p. 244.

Choctaws felt they had fulfilled their obligation to these people.²⁴

In an attempt to alleviate some of these problems, in 1900, the Choctaw Council urged that a small boarding school be established in each county. Having had years of experience with this type of institution, the Choctaws were convinced these schools would provide the best educational opportunity for the Indian children from remote areas, particularly the full bloods. Federal authorities conceded, and by the fall of 1902, under federal supervision, nine small boarding schools had been established in various parts of the Nation.²⁵

Some of these schools were already operating and were permanent. Most, however, closed after only a year or two. In Choctaw County, Goodwater was reopened as a boarding school. A report of 1905 showed 29 enrolled, annual cost of \$1,239.78, with \$61.99 cost per pupil. Apparently, this school operated in this capacity for only one year. In 1906, Goodwater was reported as a neighborhood school, with 46 Indians and 15 whites enrolled, Nettie Irwin as teacher. Also, Goodland Indian Orphanage entered into contract with the Federal Government. This school had already been operating for fifty years and remains in operation today.²⁶

²⁴ Commission to the Five Civilized Tribes, 1896, pp. 100-06; Debo, Rise and Fall, p. 259; C. J. Kappler, Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties, Three Volumes (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office), Vol. I, p. 654; McCurtain to Wright, March 10, 1897, in Grant Foreman Copies of Documents Pertaining to Indian Affairs, Indian Archives.

²⁵ Choctaw Documents, Indian Archives; Report of Indian Affairs, 1902, pp. 123, 127.

²⁶ Report of Indian Inspector, 1905, p. 48; 1906, p. 38; Posey, "Development of Indian Education," pp. 44-45; Kappler, Laws and Treaties, Vol. III, p. 277; Department of Interior, 1902, p. 127; 1903, pp. 90-91, 1904, pp. 222-23.

In 1904, the Federal Government appropriated \$100,000 for the schools in Indian Territory. The amount increased each year, reaching \$300,000 in 1907. In reports of this period these appropriations are referred to as "gratuities for the Indians." Actually, the money was used for the payment of tuition for the white children and for assistance in establishing rural schools -- mixed Indians and white and separate Negro schools. The Choctaws deeply resented the implication that they benefited from this money, and this false reference added to their mistrust of the entire Federal School System.²⁷

Under these appropriations, the community was required to erect and equip a building; the government furnished a teacher. Requests poured in for newly-erected schools. Ironically, buildings were usually of rough logs with homemade furnishings and almost void of equipment -- in other words, far more woefully inadequate than the Choctaw schools Benedict has so scathingly criticized. In fact, even under the larger appropriation of 1907, the demand was so great that not half the communities requesting teachers were given assistance. Thus, at the time of statehood the majority of whites in the rural areas were still deprived of schools for their children.²⁸

Schools in the towns fared better than those in the rural areas. Parents of the children were usually more affluent, or at least had more ready cash available therefore, they were able to

²⁷ Ibid., Frank A. Balyeat, "Education of White Children in Indian Territory," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XV, No. 2 (June, 1937), p. 194.

²⁸ Report of Indian Affairs, 1902, p. 122; Department of Interior, 1902, p. 127; 1903, pp. 90-92; 1904, pp. 222-23; 273-74; 1905, pp. 113-14; 1907, pp. 349-62.

support subscription schools. In addition, towns of 1,000 or more were allowed to issue bonds for civic needs, including schoolhouses.²⁹

The Territorial Government of Oklahoma had been actively engaged in preparing for Statehood. Included in the acts passed relating to schools was the School Act of 1903, which was concerned with the establishment of high schools.³⁰

Town schools were entirely independent of Benedict and his Supervisor. These schools were controlled by a local Board of Education: Each had a superintendent who gave his own examinations, certified his own teachers, outlined his curriculum, hired the teachers, and adopted the textbooks. Yet, the town schools were remarkably alike. Also, superintendents encouraged the enrollment of Indians since the Federal Government paid two dollars per month tuition for Indian pupils.³¹

In Hugo, a subscription school was organized in January, 1902, by Professor W. D. Hoffman. This gentleman proved to be an imposter with a stolen diploma from the State Normal of Pennsylvania. When Inspector Ballard learned of his deception, this "adventurer" left town "in a hurry." The school was continued by Miss Mamie Smith, later Mrs. C. G. Shull.³²

²⁹ Report of Indian Inspector, 1905, pp. 39-40.

³⁰ Session Laws of Oklahoma, 1903, p. 260.

³¹ Benedict to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, November 20, 1902; Ballard to Benedict, November 24, 1905; August 29, 1901, Dawes Commission Files, Indian Archives.

³² Hugo Daily News, March 25, 1969; March 26, 1973.

In spite of this ignoble beginning, the school grew rapidly. By 1903, eight grades were being taught; and a 1905 report gave 6 teachers, 230 whites, 36 Indians; total enrollment 266. At a special election in 1904, the municipality voted a tax of ten mills to support the school and build a suitable building. Then, in 1906, \$15,000 worth of school bonds were issued for the construction of a large, brick building which serves even today as Hugo High School.³³

In the meantime, the affairs of the Choctaw Nation had been in a state of turmoil. With the liquidation of the Tribal estate, the enrollment of the Choctaws, assisted by a citizenship committee created by the Council, began in the spring of 1899. The work was complicated and tedious and met with strong disapproval. Allotments began in the spring of 1903. This procedure encountered even more resistance, many full bloods expressing little interest in the whole proceedings.³⁴

In the election of 1900, Chief Green McCurtain was disqualified for another term, and his backers successfully elected Gilbert W. Dukes. In the election of 1902, all the disagreement and submerged bitterness erupted. Again, McCurtain was a candidate; his opponent was Thomas W. Hunter, a judge of the Nation and a long-time resident of Choctaw County and later of Hugo. Hunter strongly opposed the Atoka and Supplementary Agreement. The campaign was turbulent; both sides claimed victory. Emotions were so explosive that Indian Agent

³³ School notice dated October 31, 1903, Hugo Daily News, March 31, 1969; March 25, 1969; Report of Indian Inspector, 1905, p. 51.

³⁴ Acts of the Choctaw Nation, March 14, 1899; Debo, Rise and Fall, pp. 272-77; Report of Secretary of Interior, 1904, pp. 41-42.

Shoenfelt was forced to request troops from Ft. Sill to maintain order. McCurtain was declared the winner, but many old-time Choctaws in Choctaw County today firmly believe Hunter was rightfully elected Chief in 1902.³⁵

Federal authorities deplored these unsettled conditions, stating the transition period had been made much more difficult -- so much so that the establishment of the proper schools had largely been prevented.³⁶ However, in retrospect, considering the trauma the Nation was experiencing, Choctaw leaders did their best to guide their people through this trying period.³⁷ On the other hand, as statehood approached, Choctaw officials also expressed great concern regarding the condition of education among their people, especially the full bloods who were still strongly in favor of tribal schools.³⁸

Thus, inadequate as they may have been, with the coming of Oklahoma Statehood in November, 1907, Choctaw County had its share of neighborhood and public schools, and of capable, dedicated teachers. As for the Choctaws, their educational system no longer existed, while in school their children were scarcely noticed in the sea of white faces.

35

Debo, Rise and Fall, pp. 263-66; Peter James Hudson, "A Story of Choctaw Chiefs," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XVII, No. 2 (June, 1939), pp. 192-211; Reports Concerning Indians in Indian Territory, 1903, pp. 173-74.

36

Report of Indian Affairs, 1902, p. 122.

37

Muriel H. Wright, A Guide to the Indian Tribes of Oklahoma, (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1951), Dedication.

38

Clipping dated March 3, 1908, in Johnson (E. B.) Collection, Western History Collections.

Table 8

Schools in Choctaw County in 1906^a

School	<u>Enrollment</u>		Teacher
	Indian	White	
Cold Springs	11	32	Elizabeth Allison
Harkin	18	28	Agnes Browning
Swink	7	90	J. W. Bales
Choate Springs	13	32	William Kerr
Choate Springs	20	25	B. M. Strother
Doaksville	9	48	Jewel Darmon
Doaksville	8	17	Mrs. Minnie Waggoner
Frazier	11	29	Marguerite Essex
Old Goodland	71	41	Bella Gibbons, Sam Jones, Olivia McCallum
Crowder Chapel	6	?	Lucy Hatcher
Mayhew	2	48	Lizzie Hatcher
Soper	15	90	F. M. Hughes
Goodwater	46	15	Nettie Irwin
Bearden Chapel	14	36	Ophelia McGraw
Ushery	9	18	Nema Ross
Long Creek	4	76	Clara Redman
Grant	17	54	Lula Wilden
Sugar Creek	29	44	Lucy Hatcher
Spring Chapel	9	17	Tommie Collins
Nelson	10	43	May Taaffee
Hugo	10	516	J. L. Clark
Sawyer	3	24	M. L. Matthews
Ellis Chapel	11	8	Clarence McCasland
Choate Springs	8	17	J. K. Leach
Boswell	?	?	?

School	<u>Negro Schools</u>		Teacher
	<u>Enrollment</u>		
Kiamichi	26		Nettie Borow
Pine Ridge	54		J. N. Sublette
Boggy Bend	20		L. S. Benton
Oberlin	90		J. H. Burnside

^a Report of Indian Inspector, p. 38; Posey, "Development of Indian Education," pp. 44-5; Oberlin was only a few feet across the line in Bryan County in the southwest corner of Choctaw County. Also, between 1899 and 1907, Oak Hill Academy, under the auspices of the Northern Presbyterian Church, continued to function.

Spencer Academy

The fate of Spencer Academy exemplified the heartache of the Choctaws over losing their schools. Along with their other schools, in the spring of 1899, the Choctaws had released the control of Spencer to Benedict. In the fall, ignoring the earlier transaction, the Choctaws instructed the Board of Education to open Spencer Academy as usual. They also appropriated \$12,000 from the coal and asphalt revenue to defray expenses for the school, petitioning the Secretary of the Interior to honor this request.³⁹

Benedict ignored this development, appointing Wallace B. Butz as Superintendent of the Academy. All applications to attend the Academy had to be in the form of written requests by the parents, addressed to the Honorable John D. Benedict, Superintendent of Schools, Indian Territory. To the credit of the Choctaw, they placed the strong desire for the education of their children above the fierce resentment they must have felt. To say the least, Butz enrolled 105 boys for the term 1899-1900.⁴⁰

Once again, on June 23, 1900, the main building of the Academy burned. From a fire used to generate steam and hot water in the laundry, an out-building, sparks drifted into an upstairs window of the principal building, set fire to the bedding, and soon destroyed

³⁹ Acts of the Choctaw Nation, November 1, 1899; Letter to Honorable Secretary of the Interior from the Choctaw National Council, January 20, 1899, in Grant Foreman, Superintendent Five Civilized Tribes, Choctaw, Vol. 19, p. 126, Indian Archives.

⁴⁰ Report of Indian Inspector, 1900, pp. 81, 95; Honorable John D. Benedict from Willis Wilson, July 18, 1899, Spencer Academy, Indian Archives; Report of Indian Affairs, 1900, p. 115.

the unplastered frame structure. While no one was injured, the building was a total loss. The school did not open the following fall, but Butz remained as custodian of the property.⁴¹

The Choctaws attempted at this time to reclaim Spencer Academy. Petition after petition was sent to the Office of Indian Affairs, to the Indian Inspector, to the Department of Interior, to Benedict, and to the members of Congress. When all efforts failed, rather than rebuild and see their beloved institution continue to be controlled by aliens, the Choctaw Council passed a resolution authorizing the sale of the site and all property. Declaring the property and articles had been furnished for this school in years past, the Council stated that the equipment and environs rightly belonged to the Choctaw people; therefore, proceeds were to go into the treasury of the Choctaw Nation. The property was advertised for sale on December 10, 1900. Butz refused to accept the notification of the sale delivered by the Sheriff of Kiamichi County. Instead, he wrote Chief G. W. Dukes that, in his judgment, such an act would have to be approved by the President of the United States.⁴²

⁴¹David Baird, "Spencer Academy, Choctaw Nation, 1842-1900," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XLV, No. 1 (Spring, 1967), p. 38; Report of Indian Inspector, 1900, pp. 81-95; Thomas Ryan to United States Inspector, December 10, 1900, in Foreman, Superintendent, Vol. 19, Indian Archives.

⁴²Acts of the Choctaw Nation, October 31, 1900; H. S. Sanguin to Honorable G. W. Dukes, Goodland, November 18, 1900, Gilbert Dukes Papers, Oklahoma Historical Society; Jones to United States Indian Inspector, December 10, 1900, Foreman, Superintendent, Vol. 19, Indian Archives, p. 113; Speech by Judge T. W. Hunter, in Files of Frances Imon.

The Choctaws remained adamant. However, Inspector W. A. Jones and Superintendent John D. Benedict recommended the disapproval of the sale. They pointed out the Choctaws had not recognized the right of the President to approve such action. They suggested that approval would recognize the authority of the Choctaw Council to control school affairs. Further, such an action would set a dangerous precedent. Following this recommendation, President William McKinely disapproved the Choctaw resolution on January 30, 1901.⁴³

The land remained in the hands of the Federal Government until it was allotted to Mrs. Howard Morris of Soper. Mr. and Mrs. Morris built a home on part of the foundations, using lumber from some of the remaining buildings. Later, this home was moved to Soper. Today, no memorial marks the location of this historic place. A dense plot of undergrowth, old foundation stones, a deep cistern, the site of a large storage cellar, a few gnarled pear trees remain as a tribute to this great school of the past.⁴⁴

Tribal and Educational Affairs
from Statehood to 1950

As finally approved by the Secretary of the Interior in 1907, the Choctaw roll included the following: Full bloods, 7,076;

⁴³Secretary of Interior from Jones and Benedict, January 11, 1900; Bill No. 47, Choctaw Nation, January 30, 1901, Foreman Transcripts, Gilcrease Institute.

⁴⁴Mrs. Rosa Oakes Huff, Interview, April 26, 1937, Indian-Pioneer Papers, Foreman Collection, Indian Archives; Mrs. Howard Morris, Interview by writer, November 12, 1963; Emma Ervin Christian, "Memories of my Childhood Dates," Vol. IX, No. 2 (June, 1931), Chronicles of Oklahoma, pp. 155-65.

Mixed bloods and Intermarried whites, 18,981; Freedmen, 5,994; Total 24,994. The first Oklahoma Census of March, 1908, gave at least 200,000 living within the area known as the Choctaw Nation.⁴⁵

Obviously, the 175,000 white people literally submerged the Indians as the Choctaw Nation passed out of existence as a separate entity.

As Statehood approached, the Choctaws experienced great apprehension. They wondered what would happen to their tribal affairs, to the few boarding schools and contract schools still supported by Choctaw mineral funds, and neighborhood schools of mixed and Indian and white children. As late as 1914, full bloods in Southeastern Oklahoma were still found to be "bewildered and dismayed."⁴⁶

The Choctaw National Government in its authoritative form did cease to function at this time. However, the Act of April 16, 1906, which provided for the final disposition of the affairs of the Five Civilized Tribes, continued the Choctaw Government until tribal affairs should be completed, providing for the principal chief to be appointed by the President of the United States. The offices of Principal Chief, National Attorney, and Mining Trustee were retained, with regular salaries paid from coal royalties. These officials represented tribal interests, and the last elected members of the Choctaw Council continued to meet at irregular intervals until about

⁴⁵ Senate Documents, 59 Congress, 2d Session, No. 257; Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1907, pp. 106-07; Commissioner to the Five Civilized Tribes, 1908, p. 195; Oklahoma State Census, 1908.

⁴⁶ "Plight of the Full Blood Indians," Overland Monthly, March, 1914, Vol. LXIII, No. 3, p. 240.

1916.⁴⁷ In fact, as events developed, the Choctaw Government was never completely dissolved, surviving in a limited form and promoting the interest of the Choctaw people. Today, Choctaw political activity is stronger than it has been for many years.

The change to statehood had little initial effect upon the schools in the Choctaw Nation. The Federal Government already had complete control of the schools, and Ballard simply instructed boarding schools and contract schools to continue as usual. At this time, Choctaw boarding schools in operation were Jones Academy, Armstrong Academy, Tuskahoma Academy, and Wheelock Academy; none of these were located in Choctaw County. Goodland Indian Orphanage operated as the only contract school in the County.⁴⁸

Rural schools were to be under an elective County Superintendent and elective local boards of three members. Using the day schools already in existence, the County Superintendent was instructed to define districts and shift or build schoolhouses. The topography, population, and existing buildings were to be considered.⁴⁹

F. M. Hughes was the first County Superintendent of Choctaw County. As instructed, he set about dividing the County into districts, assisted by H. G. Bennett, a young teacher from Arkansas. Bennett had just been elected Superintendent of the schools in

⁴⁷ Choctaw Records, Indian Archives; Muriel H. Wright, A Guide to the Indian Tribes of Oklahoma, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1951), pp. 112-13.

⁴⁸ Ballard to Benedict, March 3, 1906, Dawes Commission Files, Indian Archives.

⁴⁹ Second Biennial Report, Department of Public Instruction, (Guthrie: State of Oklahoma, 1908), p. 107.

Boswell.⁵⁰ In 1908, the County was divided into 38 Districts, with Hugo, the 39th. By 1927, the County had a total of 51 Districts.⁵¹ Reportedly, Hughes, who had taught in the Territory for a number of years, was quite tactful and efficient in performing his tasks. In each area, he held frequent meetings, consulted the people, and appointed the first school boards. He rented the old churches and Indian schools whenever possible to serve for a year or two. Sometimes two or three old buildings had to be moved, others renovated, and new buildings constructed.⁵²

Soon after statehood, Hugo voted an additional bond issue to build three ward school buildings. Boswell, Ft. Towson, Soper, and Grant also built new brick buildings. In the rural areas, new schools were usually of cheap, frame construction, rectangular in shape, with 3 or 4 windows to the side, two doors in front, with no other openings. Most had little equipment and many had no books. During these first years it was not uncommon to see children of fifteen years in the first grade, and discipline problems were difficult.⁵³

To assist in establishing these new schools, Congress continued to appropriate \$300,000 a year for the rural schools until 1915.⁵⁴ Education of the Indian children was still supported by the

⁵⁰ Posey, "Development of Education," p. 46.

⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 51-52; Biennial Report, 1908, pp. 107-46; 1914, pp. 154-58; Records of Choctaw County Superintendent, Choctaw County Courthouse.

⁵² Posey, "Development of Education," p. 48; Biennial Report, 1908, p. 107; Ballard to Benedict, November 27, 1907, Dawes Commission Files, Indian Archives.

⁵³ Posey, "Development of Education," pp. 49-50.

Tribal funds. Provision was made that in all districts, outside incorporated towns, having an enumeration of eight or more Indian children, tuition would be paid at the rate of 10¢ per day for the actual attendance. However, reports strongly indicate the exact number of Indian children was never really considered. In fact, many schools aided had no Indian children at all.⁵⁵

Table 9
Schools in Choctaw County, 1912^a

LeFlore School	Honey Springs School
Hunter School	Atlas School
Karn School	Forney School
Pine Hill Church School	Sand Hill School
Mayhew School	Maxwell School
Boswell School	East Long Creek School
Graham School	Hamden School
Oak Grove School	Shady Grove School
Unger School	Goodland School
Barnhill School	Hugo School
Big Springs School	Boggy School
Sugar School	Nelson School
Soper School	

^aSchools in Choctaw County, U. S. Geological Survey, 1912, Indian Archives. Reports during these early years following statehood vary as to the number and names of the schools.

⁵⁵Ibid., 1910, p. 65; Joe E. Jackson, "The History of Education in Eastern Oklahoma from 1898 to 1915," As a requirement for the Degree for Doctor of Education, University of Oklahoma, 1950, p. 407.

For about three years after statehood, Benedict and his officials remained in office to supervise Federal aid payments. Benedict even worked out a plan to hold joint summer normals with County Superintendents. This atmosphere of cooperation, however, proved to be short-lived. Superintendents resented the interference of the Federal officials, and no joint normals were held after 1909.⁵⁶ Choctaw County reported a Teachers' Normal held in 1908, 1909, 1910, and 1911.⁵⁷ A major function of these normals was to upgrade certification. In 1909, Southeastern Normal at Durant had been founded. By 1914, such normal schools had practically replaced the county institutes. As these schools opened, superintendents insisted teachers improve their academic training, a trend which continued as the years passed. Normals in Choctaw County were discontinued by 1913. By 1915, certification of teachers had largely been transferred to the normal schools.⁵⁸

Hughes died in the fall of 1909, and H. G. Bennett was appointed to replace him. He served until September 1910, when he resigned to become superintendent of the Hugo Schools, a position he held for nine years. This distinguished educator then served as President of Southeastern State Teachers College for nine years; after

⁵⁶ Benedict to Supervisors, March 14, 1908; Ballard to Benedict, February 28, 1908; June 24, 1908; Reid to Benedict, October 31, 1908, Dawes Commission Files, Indian Archives; Commission to Five Civilized Tribes, 1909, p. 82.

⁵⁷ Biennial Report, 1908, p. 107; 1909, pp. 172-80; 1910, pp. 364-72, 396-97; 1911, p. 47.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 1914, pp. 57-63; p. 59, pp. 169-71; Posey, "Development of Education," p. 53.

Table 10

A Partial List of Teachers in the Early Schools
After Statehood in Choctaw County, Oklahoma^a

R. V. Posey	T. L. Collier
H. G. Bennett	W. E. Downs
J. T. Reed	A. H. Abbott
M. P. Hammond	H. N. Condor
M. G. Orr	A. D. Henry
Ida Begg	Ben Herman
Carl McDaniel	Fannie Glenn

Mabel Sharpe Beavers	Ava Mashburn
Nellie Janes Jones	Earl Bryan Stanley
Eugene Nash	Mary K. Griggs
Ruth Robinson	Bertha Robison
Edna Perkins Harris	Bertha Collins
V. V. Bradley	Mattie Lois Glenn
Maud K. Hand	Tillie Craft
Rudolph K. Perkins	Daimon Antwine
H. B. Hartgraves	

^a Records in the Office of the County Superintendent, Choctaw County. These two lists were compiled with the help both of the records and of County Superintendent Eugene Nash himself. The first group consists of those earliest teachers who spend most, or all, of their teaching years within Choctaw County, or who made some unusual contribution to the educational field, such as H. G. Bennett. The second group is made up of those who began their teaching careers in Choctaw County a few years after Statehood, but who also spent their entire teaching careers within this County. A number of teachers in each group are known to be of Indian descent; however, since no verification was available, these have not been identified.

which, in 1928, he became President of Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College in Stillwater, Oklahoma.⁵⁹

J. T. Reed was appointed County Superintendent in September, 1910, serving until May, 1927, when he accepted a position with the State Department of Education. In 1927, R. N. Conder of Swink was appointed to succeed Reed. In addition to those previously mentioned, by this time Swink, Sawyer, Forney, and Mayhew had brick buildings. In 1936, Rudolph C. Perkins became County Superintendent; he was followed by Eugene Nash in 1951.⁶⁰

In 1914, rural and town schools had replaced the Indian schools. In state reports of many years, as if they had literally ceased to exist, the number of Indian scholars were no longer given. Yet, these children were definitely a part of the school population in Choctaw County, and the practice of aiding schools with Indian children in attendance continued. Until 1947, the Federal Government allocated and supervised these funds. After that year, the Department of Interior contracted with the State to distribute the funds on the basis of average daily attendance of Indian children.⁶¹

In the meantime, Choctaws continued to be deeply concerned over educational and tribal affairs. In 1922, a large number of Choctaws met at Albion, LeFlore County, to review tribal matters.

⁵⁹ Ibid., pp. 46, 51; Biennial Report, 1910, pp. 364-72; 376-97.

⁶⁰ Records in Office of County Superintendent, Choctaw County.

⁶¹ Daily Oklahoman, August 23, 1947; Jackson, "History of Education," pp. 408, 439; Kappler, Laws and Treaties, Vol. IV, 1914, p. 24; 1916, pp. 78, 119, 214; 1920-21, p. 309; 1922, p. 354; 1926, p. 537; 1927, p. 924.

This convention appointed a Choctaw Committee of Five to work in tribal interests and declared themselves openly in politics. As a result of their work, an election for Principal Chief was held in August, 1926, with Dr. Eliphalet N. Wright elected by an overwhelming majority. Although this election was not recognized by the Indian Office, Choctaws showed considerable political strength in the Congressional elections in Oklahoma in 1926 and 1928. They also exerted a strong influence upon the Office of Indian Affairs.⁶²

By 1928, considerable interest had been aroused in the status of the Indian. The Meriam Report of 1928, had a great impact upon Congressional leaders. From 1928 to 1943, the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs conducted a survey of Indian progress and policies that had far-reaching repercussions. In 1933, steps were taken to emphasize the right of Indians to practice their own customs and religion. In 1934, Indian legislation, such as the Wheeler-Howard or Indian Reorganization Act, officially reversed the trend to break up tribal governments; and the Johnson-O'Malley Act provided educational, medical, agricultural, and social services for the Indians.⁶³

Before the passage of these bills, in the spring of 1934, the Choctaws organized for action. Conventions were held in Oklahoma, Tulsa, and Muskogee Counties where many Choctaws lived. Then, June 5-8, 1934, at Goodland Indian School near Hugo, in Choctaw County, an

⁶²Wright, Indian Tribes, pp. 113-15; Muriel H. Wright, "A Brief Review of the Life of Doctor Eliphalet Nott Wright," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. X, No. 2 (June, 1932), pp. 267-82.

⁶³S. Lyman Taylor, A History of Indian Policy (Washington, D. C.: United States Department of Interior, 1973), pp. 115-24; 314-16.

important convention met with 168 delegates present, in addition to large numbers of other Choctaws. Judge T. W. Hunter of Hugo, was among those notable Choctaw leaders who addressed this meeting at Goodland. An advisory committee of eleven was elected to assist Chief Ben Dwight, who had recently been appointed by the President. The Choctaw Advisory Council and the appointed Principal Chief, met annually at special sessions from October 1934 to 1946. Although it had no legislative power, this worthy body promoted the educational, financial, and social welfare of the Choctaws, studied recommendations from the Indian Office in Washington, and promoted the honor of the Choctaws in Oklahoma.⁶⁴

In 1935, George C. Wells, Supervisor of Indian Education in Oklahoma, issued a report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. James M. Swartz, Hugo, was the Educational Field Agent for the Choctaws and Typhia Folsom, Idabel, the School Social Worker. In Choctaw County, Swartz reported 314 Choctaw children of one-fourth or more degree Indian blood enrolled in public schools. The tendency to drop out of the public school was marked. In the State of Oklahoma, enrollment of Indians in the 12th grade was only 43% of the enrollment in the 9th grade; comparatively, white enrollment in the 12th grade was 57% of the enrollment in the 9th grade. No exact percentages given for the dropout in Choctaw County. However, tuition and relief paid for Indian children attending public schools in 1935 in Choctaw

⁶⁴Wright, Indian Tribes, pp. 112-113.

County was \$8,688 to 255 children.⁶⁵

The report gave the enrollment of Indian children in high school, Choctaw County, as 84 in public schools, 15 in Government boarding schools, and 9 in Choctaw contract schools. Total Indian scholastic enumeration in Choctaw County for 1934-35, was 580; in boarding schools, 53; in Choctaw contract schools, 70. Boys in the area attended Jones Academy, Hartshorne; girls, Wheelock Academy, Millerton. The contract school referred to was Goodland Indian Orphanage. In this school year, Choctaw County had two districts in incorporated towns, with a combined Indian school enumeration of 75; 34 rural districts, with a combined Indian school enumeration of 502.⁶⁶

The interest generated in the forgotten American was brought to a halt by the advent of World War II. Many hundreds of Indians joined the armed forces, or flocked to cities for war work. Choctaw County furnished its share of Indians to this National crisis. By the close of the War, these broadened experiences had wrought considerable change in the attitudes of Indians, changes which were greatly to affect Indian actions of the future throughout the United States.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Report of the Supervisor of Indian Education for Oklahoma to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs (United States Government Publication, 1935), pp. 7-8.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-9, 20.

⁶⁷ Hildegard Thompson, "Education Among American Indians: Institutional Aspects," American Indians and American Life: Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science (Philadelphia: American Academy of Political and Social Science, 1957), pp. 99-104.

Goodland Indian Orphanage

During the three terms from the fall of 1898 through 1900 when Goodland was a day school, attendance was small. Elizabeth Rood had married Robert Alison, and the couple moved to Cold Springs where Mrs. Alison continued her teaching. Miss Bella McCallum arrived August 22, 1898, to assist Rev. Gibbons and to teach the school. Meanwhile, Gibbons filled his preaching responsibilities and guided the work. For several years Mrs. Gibbons had been ill; she finally died in 1900, leaving five small children. In 1901, Gibbons married Bella McCallum.⁶⁸

Mrs. Bella McCallum Gibbons was one of the most outstanding women ever associated with Goodland. For thirty-nine years she taught Indian children. She served as a teacher; as a mother to Gibbons' children; as a worker in the church and community; as editor of the Indian Arrow (1928), the school publication; and as member of the Board of Directors of Goodland. In 1907, when Oklahoma became a State, she was appointed by Benedict as Chairman of the Board of Examiners for the granting of teacher's certificates in Choctaw County. On November 15, 1933, in Oklahoma City, she was honored at a special banquet by Governor W. J. Holloway, who made her a colonel, the first woman ever to be appointed in the state to a governor's staff. Her picture hangs in the Hall of Famous Oklahomans, in the State Historical Society Building.⁶⁹

⁶⁸Sammy D. Hogue, The Goodland Indian Orphanage (Goodland, Oklahoma: The Goodland Indian Orphanage, 1940), p. 65.

⁶⁹
Ibid., pp. 66-69.

When Indian Territory became a part of Oklahoma, by law the home Solomon Hotema had given to Gibbons seventeen years earlier reverted to the original family. In 1909, the Presbyterian Home Mission built a manse on the campus at a cost of \$1,000. Mr. Gibbons lived there until his death, June 6, 1918; Mrs. Gibbons, until her death, December 4, 1937. She and her husband were buried in Goodland Cemetery.⁷⁰

By 1900, the Choctaw Council was negotiating with the Federal Government over the establishment of small boarding schools, including Goodland. At this time, the orphan children had been staying in the homes of people in the community, particularly J. P. Gibbons, H. L. Gooding, and Silas L. Bacon. In 1901, the old log dormitory was reopened and a contract made with Silas L. Bacon, Superintendent; for \$6.00 per month for nine months toward the support of forty pupils. Later, the contract provided for sixty pupils at \$7.00 per month for nine months. This amount was far short of what it cost to maintain a child but at least the orphanage was able to reopen.⁷¹

A report on Goodland in 1905, gave an enrollment of 71; cost, \$3,614.49; average cost per pupil, \$63.41.⁷² As has been

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 65; Field Trip by writer with Tony Thomas and Lucien Spear, August 23, 1969.

⁷¹ Hogue, Goodland Indian Orphanage, p. 68; Bacon to Hitchcock, May 14, 1906, Dawes Commission Files, Indian Archives; Ruth W. Messinger, "The History, Present Program, and Population of Goodland Presbyterian Children's Home in Hugo, Oklahoma," Thesis for Master of Social Work, University of Oklahoma, 1964, p. 12.

⁷² Indian Inspector, 1905, p. 48; A copy of a contract, dated October 12, 1908, is in the Dawes Commission Files, Indian Archives.

suggested, most boarding schools did not survive, but Goodland remained operative. Benedict kept a close eye upon Goodland, as he did the other boarding schools. At statehood, by a special Act of Congress, 640 acres of land were granted to this school.⁷³

Silas L. Bacon, a devout full blood, had been orphaned at an early age and raised by his grandmother, Mrs. Betsy Pitchlynn.⁷⁴ Having had no children of their own, Bacon and his wife adopted nine. These were difficult years, yet Bacon was totally dedicated to his beloved school. During his administration, four dormitories, an administration building, homes for the faculty on the edge of the campus, and a bath house were added to the facilities. In 1913, the school was transferred to the control of the Indian Presbytery, and a contract for 80 children was granted from Tribal funds. In 1914, the Choctaw Council made a gift of \$10,000 with \$3,500 being used to build one of the boys' dormitories. Other buildings and improvements were partially financed through gifts and donations from many sources.⁷⁵

As the Choctaws experienced their institutions and their identity as a people being stripped from them, more and more they turned to Goodland as the last vestige of their autonomy. Thus, they responded to Silas Bacon and his pleas for assistance as best they could. Bacon resigned in 1920 because of ill health from tubercu-

⁷³ Ballard to Benedict, August 10, 1901; Bacon to Hitchcock, May 14, 1906, Dawes Commission Files, Indian Archives; Jackson, "History of Education," pp. 319-23.

⁷⁴ Betsy Pitchlynn was not a member of the same family as the famous Peter Pitchlynn family.

⁷⁵ Hogue, Goodland Indian Orphanage, pp. 72-78; Indian Arrow, March, 1929.

losis which had plagued him for many years. He died December 28, 1922, and was buried at Goodland, having lived all his life in or near this place.⁷⁶

Samuel Bailey Spring, one-fourth Choctaw, assumed the superintendency in 1921, holding the position until his death April 17, 1930. He attended school at Spring Chapel and Spencer Academy; later, graduated from Lamar College, Blossom, Texas and from Southwestern Presbyterian College, Clarksville, Tennessee. He married Miss Maud Terry in 1895. He taught school in a number of places in the Choctaw County area; served as County Clerk for Kiamichi County; was a member of the Board of Education for the Choctaw Nation in 1898; was elected to the Council in 1899; was Secretary to Principal Chief Victor M. Locke from 1910 to 1912; and for two years was supervisor of schools for the Choctaw Nation. He played a major role in establishing the town of Hugo; had a drug business in Hugo; and served one term as postmaster and one as city clerk of Hugo. In 1890, he joined the Goodland Church, and he and Mrs. Spring became charter members of the First Presbyterian Church of Hugo.⁷⁷

Under Spring, educational facilities were expanded; additional land was acquired; roads were built to make the school more accessible; and in 1929, the school was wired for electricity.

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Hogue, Goodland Indian Orphanage, p. 73; Bacon's stone reads, in part: "During his supervision of the orphanage, both (he and his wife) gave freely of their time, talents, and means, impoverishing themselves, for the needy of their race." Field Trip by writer June 1, 1969.

⁷⁷

Hogue, Goodland Indian Orphanage, pp. 85-86; Indian Arrow, March, 1929; April, 1928.

Besides this, two new cottages and two new dormitories were built. In 1925, a high school building was constructed and a high school course was added. In July, 1923, the control of the orphanage and the school was once more transferred, this time from the Indian Presbytery to the Synod of Oklahoma of the Presbyterian Church, U. S., operating under a Board of Directors appointed by the Synod.⁷⁸

Also, under Spring, a Goodland publication was started. Called The Oklahoma Presbyterian Messenger, the first issue was September, 1922, with Spring as editor-in-chief. In September, 1925, the name was changed to The Indian Orphan; in September, 1928, the name was changed again to The Indian Arrow, with Mrs. Bella Gibbons becoming editor after the death of Bailey Spring.⁷⁹

Because of its history of association with the Presbyterian Church, Goodland Indian Orphanage was closely allied with the ministers who preached at the church located on the Goodland Campus. After he resigned as superintendent of the school, Rev. Gibbons continued to preach at the church until his death in 1918. Roscoe Hooker, a theological student, filled the place for a few months; then, from 1918 to 1920, Dr. Ebenezer Hotchkin, grandson of Ebenezer Hotchkin of Living Land, was the minister at Goodland Church, followed by Rev. C. J. Ralston. From 1923-1935, Rev. M. Firebaugh preached at Goodland twice each month.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Ibid.; Hogue, Goodland Indian Orphanage, pp. 87-89.

⁷⁹ Ibid., pp. 90-91.

⁸⁰ Ibid., pp. 34-36; Indian Orphan, October, 1925.

The Firebaughs lived on the Goodland campus, and Mrs. Firebaugh served as librarian, taught Bible, and grade school. Mrs. Lucy Forest also taught during these years. A sister to Dr. Ebenezer Hotchkin, she was a granddaughter of Ebenezer and Philena Hotchkin. She taught the primary grades for two years under Bacon; three years under Spring; and taught Bible three years under Miller.⁸¹

Under Silas Bacon, financial problems had been difficult; under Spring, these difficulties multiplied. Enrollment was always strained beyond its limits with hundreds of applications turned down. An annual meeting of the Board of Trustees was held Tuesday, April 27, 1926, with the following members present: Rev. E. Hotchkin; Rev. Chris Mattheson; Rev. S. A. McElroy; Rev. J. S. Bacon; Mrs. J. P. Gibbons; Mrs. W. F. Semple; Mrs. J. B. Wright; and T. W. Hunter. Reported were 178 Indian boys and girls enrolled; 1,229 applications denied. Following this meeting, Superintendent Spring wrote: "From a financial standpoint this has been the most trying, the hardest times; our treasury has been entirely empty more than once. We did not know where our next meal was coming from."⁸²

With the death of Spring, a crisis was reached. The Synod was unable to provide additional funds. The contract with the Choctaws and the Federal Government provided for less than one-fourth of the operating expenses. Moreover, the school had a debt of \$30,000 against it. Yet, the Indian children still needed Goodland. With

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Ibid.

82

Indian Orphan, June, 1926.

only 200 places, each year more than 1,200 continued to be turned
83
down.

In April, 1930, Rev. E. D. Miller -- a teacher; a lawyer; for twenty years a farmer and rancher near Atoka; in 1929, an ordained pastor at Yale, Oklahoma; most of all, a man of action -- became the new superintendent of Goodland. While not entirely successful, Miller sought to help solve the financial problems of the school by making the institution self-supporting. Using the farmer's approach, grounds were improved; buildings repaired; farm land terraced and irrigated; and the dairy herd increased. He also enlisted the aid of Senator Elmer Thomas of Oklahoma in Washington in renewing the Federal
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contract for Goodland.

In 1930, the rural school of the Goodland community was consolidated with the Goodland Indian Orphanage. As day students, 60 pupils were now accepted in the Goodland School; thus, except for the Bible chair, all teachers' salaries were paid from state funds. In 1932, Goodland High School was accredited by the Oklahoma State Board of Education.
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While Miller was criticized for sullyng the image of Goodland as an "all Indian school," nevertheless Goodland experienced many increased and beneficial educational activities at this time.

⁸³ State Homes for Orphans and Veterans in Oklahoma (Oklahoma City, Okla.: Oklahoma Planning Board, 1937). Goodland is merely mentioned on several pages in this publication but little specific or reliable information is given. Hogue, Goodland Indian Orphanage, pp. 93-95.

⁸⁴
Ibid.

⁸⁵
Ibid., p. 97.

The Goodland gymnasium and auditorium became a community center for all kinds of parties, programs, lectures, meetings, and athletic events. One beloved teacher who began her service about this time was Mrs. D. A. (Norma) Stovall, music teacher. Her programs and musical groups became known throughout the area and the state as she presented the young people from Goodland Indian Orphanage.⁸⁶

In May, 1931, a homecoming was held for former students of Goodland and the dedicatory services of the Annie Corsett Schooler Memorial Museum. Used as an office, this one-room log cabin had been located near the residence of Basil and Carrie LeFlore about a mile west. W. E. Schooler, of Hugo, had the old cabin removed to the Goodland campus and rebuilt as a memorial to his deceased wife. On this May afternoon a group of Choctaw Tribal leaders gathered in front of the old cabin for a picture. These included: Celve Palmer, Wilber-ton; C. B. Bascom, Quinton; W. A. Durant, Oklahoma City; James Culber-son, Durant; Miss Muriel Wright, Oklahoma City; Ben Dwight, Chief of the Choctaws; his mother, Mrs. Mary Jane King of Goodland; Silas Cole, Antlers; Elam Johnson, Smithville; Edgar Moore, Spiro; and Victor M. Locke, Jr., Antlers.⁸⁷

Many others made significant contributions to the historical and financial interests of Goodland. In June, 1931, J. R. McChesney, of San Jose, California, purchased an eight-acre tract of land adjoining the campus on the south, making the donation in memory of his wife. The archway at the entrance of the campus completed this Minnie McChesney

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 107; Interviews by writer with Mrs. W. E. Schooler, June 3, 1963; with Mrs. Norma Stovall, May 30, 1965.

⁸⁷ Hugo Daily News, July 24, 1973.

Memorial. Then, in 1937, largely due to the efforts of Miller, the debt against Goodland was paid off. In the meantime, a barn had been built and four other buildings constructed of brown native stone under the Works' Progress Administration. One of these was the Daniel F. Wade Memorial Hospital, provided through the contributions of Dan Wade, a Christian Choctaw. Wade, an old-time cowboy born southeast of Boswell, was a large stockholder in the Boswell National Bank.⁸⁸

By 1946, at the resignation of Miller, Goodland had a large campus of fourteen buildings and an 800 acre farm. Nevertheless, the school faced a variety of problems. During the war years, financial matters had again become acute. In addition, a number of questionable policies had developed over a period of years. Indians from 6 to 24 years of age were admitted to the orphanage upon application from the family or from one of the government field workers. Some were orphans or half-orphans, while others had evidence of neglect or need. Emphasis was upon the school-term and religious services. Little attention was paid to other aspects of the child's care.⁸⁹

Rev. Oscar Gardner, Choctaw, became Superintendent of Goodland Indian Orphanage in October, 1946. Born in 1906, near the old Bennington Community, he attended school at Bennington, Durant, and Jones Academy. His grandfather had been a judge of Blue County; in his youth he had served as a Christian worker under Rev. Lloyd and Rev. Firebaugh. He was ordained as a minister September 14, 1935. When he moved to Goodland, he faced problems of the physical welfare

⁸⁸ Hogue, Goodland Indian Orphanage, pp. 99-104; Indian Arrow, March 11, 1941.

⁸⁹ Messinger, "History and Present Program," p. 19.

and health of 200 boys and girls. The institution was in debt for \$13,000; the water supply was inadequate; farm operations were losing money; the staff was unhappy and in a state of confusion; income from the churches was low; health problems among the children were varied and persistent.⁹⁰

Whereas Miller had tried to make the institution self-supporting, Gardner appealed to the churches. To establish harmony, some of the staff were dismissed. He ordered the staff to eat at the table with the children instead of at separate tables. When he found some of the staff removing supplies, he simply changed the locks. To get rid of the empetigo, he supervised the bathing of the children. He sought better relations with the people of Hugo; struggled with debt; spoke at every opportunity; sought contributions. After three years, the school had no indebtedness and \$20,000 worth of improvements.⁹¹

Gardner's energy in behalf of Goodland seemed limitless. He began a financial campaign in the Synod of Oklahoma. As a basis for this effort, he built a mailing list of over 16,000 names and wrote a multitude of letters. He wrote: "Goodland has served 107 years. Down through the decades God has put it into the hearts of

⁹⁰Walter Angelo Bennett, "Life and Letters of Oscar Gardner," Thesis for Master of Theology, 1961, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Austin, Texas, pp. 21-29; 61-109.

⁹¹Ibid., pp. 110, 112, 115.

people to support our church's only home for Indian children."⁹²

As a result of this campaign, Bacon Hall, the dining room, was completely renovated and refurnished at a cost of \$150,000. This structure was dedicated April 18, 1855. Also, a new well was dug and a water tower erected at a cost of \$15,000. Gardner resigned the school on August 30, 1957; he died of a heart attack on June 13, 1958.⁹³

Oscar Gardner was the last of the superintendents of the Goodland Indian Orphanage who adhered firmly to the historical purpose upon which the school had been founded. Although for a number of years children of other Indian tribes, besides Choctaws, had been admitted, the principle -- that the boarding school itself was for Indian children -- remained intact.

In 1957, Rev. H. Grady James followed Gardner. Soon after James took charge, the final payment was made by the Choctaws to the boarding school. This money had come from the Tribal mineral rights. The matter with the Federal Government had finally been settled, bringing to a halt the subsidy.⁹⁴ After this, income came only from donations, the Church, and the farm. The plant deteriorated, fire hazards grew, and money for food diminished. James found the

⁹² Ibid., p. 116. Gardner was known for his many thought-provoking sayings, often expressed in the Indian idiom. He wrote: "The Indians have been ruined by hearing talk of being robbed by the white man. Granted there may be much truth in the statement, it can do no good to believe this." (p. 184.)

⁹³ Ibid., pp. 116-27.

⁹⁴ Wright, Indian Tribes, p. 114.

staff untrained and overworked. The children no longer helped on the farm as this was considered a violation of child labor laws. An effort was made to reduce the number in the orphanage, but children of all ages continued to be accepted.⁹⁵

In the meantime, the entire concept of child welfare and care had been undergoing change. Since 1946, new developments gave rise to an interest in neglected children, a trend approved by many private orphanages who felt the dire need of additional operating funds and facilities. The new ideas had been shaped by such events as the first White House Conference on Children, held in 1909; the Children's Bureau, formed in 1912; and the Social Security Act of 1935, with provision for dependent children. Such milestones, and others, involved the entire concept of dependency from which emerged the Social Work Profession.⁹⁶

These developments had a profound effect upon Goodland. Investigation and placement became a major aspect of child welfare, along with court decisions regarding children. Changes in the nature of the population also had a marked effect. The needs of children now centered around abuse, neglect, and broken homes because of divorce, imprisonment, or alcoholism. Recognizing the changing times as well as the needs of Goodland, James requested help from the local Child Welfare Supervisor in Hugo and asked a consultant from the Synod be sent to evaluate the orphanage.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Messinger, "History, Present Program," pp. 27-29.

⁹⁶ Ibid., pp. 21-26.

⁹⁷ Ibid., pp. 27-29.

In 1960, Dr. Alan Keith Lucas, from the Division of Homes and Christian Welfare of the Presbyterian Church, investigated and submitted his report. Among other findings, he concluded that goals were not clearly defined and no criteria for acceptance or intake procedure was established. He estimated 48% were placed in Goodland for schooling; 24% for child care; 28% for a combination of reasons. He suggested the responsibility of parents should be developed, and he recognized problems in the staff, physical plant, and finances. He was particularly alarmed at the disturbed behavior of some of the children he observed. He reported he saw children worrying and capable of only limited relationships with others.⁹⁸

James presented his reports to the Board, along with his list of suggested changes as a result of the investigations. At this time, little action was taken except that the name of the institution was changed from "Goodland Indian Orphanage" to "Goodland Presbyterian Children's Home," by which it is known today. James met with strong resistance, especially on the part of the Choctaws. He resigned in April, 1961, and in October, 1961, James Gabbie took his place.⁹⁹

Under Gabbie, the Board gradually accepted the innovations suggested by James, and in the next ten years, Goodland underwent drastic changes which remained in effect. In 1971, Rev. Bob Stevens and his wife Carolyn followed Rev. and Mrs. Gabbie. Stevens stayed

⁹⁸ Ibid., pp. 35-36.

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 37.

only three years, succeeded by Rev. Ralyn Parkhill and his wife Nadine, who are at Goodland Children's Home today.¹⁰⁰

By 1964, the population of the Children's Home had been reduced to 57; of this number, 30 were Indians' 15 were part Indians; and 12 were Caucasian. As indicated by this report, white children were accepted; and in 1971, black children were also admitted. Church activities were moved off the campus, the children being bussed into the Presbyterian Church in Hugo. In 1960, the high school program was discontinued, the young people attending Grant High School. Today, high school students at Goodland have their choice of going to Hugo High School or Grant High School. At first, the Board had voted to refuse court committed children; later, the ruling was reversed and judge appointed, delinquent cases were accepted by the institution.¹⁰¹

In 1964, a statement was issued by the Board: "The Goodland Presbyterian Children's Home has as its primary purpose to provide for the welfare of all orphaned, dependent, or neglected children in the area of the Oklahoma Presbyterian Synod who meet with the institutions admission requirements."¹⁰² This remained the purpose of the institution. Historically, and to the Choctaws, Goodland will always be an Indian School. Yet, in 1977, few Indian children are to be found among the children in Goodland Children's Home.

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Linda Rabon, Choctaw, Elementary Teacher at Goodland Elementary School, May 23, 1975.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.; Messinger, "History, Present Program," pp. 41-45.

¹⁰² Ibid., pp. 44-45.

From 1950 Until 1977

In the years preceding World War II, records regarding the educational affairs of the Choctaws, and of Choctaws in Choctaw County, were almost non-existent. Even in 1977, a dearth of reliable material remained. As one writer stated: "The Oklahoma Indian became -- and is -- a melancholy case study in social invisibility."¹⁰³

In May, 1947, an event occurred which severed the last slender hold the Choctaws had over their schools -- that is, an agreement was made that the United States would purchase the coal and asphalt resources. This stipulation -- that the Federal Government would buy these rights -- had been a part of the Atoka Agreement made a half century before. The total amount paid by the United States was \$8,500,000, only a fraction of its worth. The Choctaws chose to take the money in per capita payments. The transaction was completed with individual payments of about \$300 in 1949-50.¹⁰⁴

Within five years after the Atoka Agreement, the output of the coal mines had more than doubled and royalties paid to the Choctaws had soared. In 1899, royalties were \$110,145.25; in 1904, \$277,811.60; and in 1907, \$240,199.23.¹⁰⁵ By 1950, when affairs were finally settled, most of the mines were inoperable because of depression, labor difficulties, and the competition with gas and oil.

¹⁰³ "Great White Father We Are Also Your Children Love Us," The Oklahoma Observer, December 10, 1972.

¹⁰⁴ Wright, Indian Tribes, p. 114.

¹⁰⁵ Report of Indian Affairs, 1899, pp. 330-31; Kappler, Laws and Treaties, Vol. I, p. 652; Frederick Lynne Ryan, The Rehabilitation of Oklahoma Coal Mining Communities (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1935), pp. 42-43; 61-76; 29-31.

Furthermore, the older Indians wanted the matter closed. They had long believed this money had not been used for the education of the Choctaws as provided under the Atoka Agreement, and they wanted something from these tribal rights -- no matter how small the amount might be. However, with this settlement no longer were apportionments of any sizable amounts available for the few remaining boarding schools and, in Choctaw County, the contract school -- Goodland Indian Orphanage.¹⁰⁶

During these years, another important event took place. For the first time since statehood, an election for Principal Chief of the Choctaws was held under the order of and to be approved by the Indian Office. On June 12, 1948, Harry J. W. Belvin was elected by the Choctaws and was approved by the Bureau. Chief Belvin served in this position for twenty years, continually fighting for the right of tribal elections. When this effort finally succeeded in 1971, he became the first freely elected Chief of the Choctaws since the termination of the Choctaw Nation as a governing force.¹⁰⁷

Chief Belvin lived in and near Boswell, Choctaw County, later in Bryan County, and the Belvin family is prominent in Choctaw County today. After receiving his university degrees, Belvin taught school in Choctaw and Bryan Counties and was County Superintendent in Bryan County from 1941-1952. He served in the Oklahoma State Legislature for ten years, six years in the House of Representatives, and

¹⁰⁶Ibid.; Interview with Chief Harry J. W. Belvin by J. D. Morrison, January 31, 1950, in Morrison, "Social History," p. 165.

¹⁰⁷Wright, Indian Tribes, p. 115; Hugo Daily News, June 2, 1775; Daily Oklahoman, June 3, 1975.

four in the State Senate. He received many honors and his biographical sketch appeared in many notable publications.¹⁰⁸

As all the Choctaw Chiefs before him, Chief Belvin was deeply concerned for the education of the Choctaw youth. On most occasions when he spoke to his people, he urged parents to insist that their children stay in school and he reminded the young people in the audience of their need for an education. Frequently, he quoted his own father as saying:

Son, you must go to school and get good education.
The old way is gone. Indian must live like white
man. Education will make you useful.¹⁰⁹

The 1950's were a time of great disturbance for the Choctaws, as well as all Indians in Oklahoma and the United States. For over a hundred years, the "guardian-ward" relationship had developed between the United States and the Indian Tribes. In the mid 1940's, a new approach began in Congress, culminating in the idea of "termination."¹¹⁰ In the 1960's, "preparing for termination" had replaced the term "termination." In the 1970's, "self-determination" became a dominating concept.¹¹¹

In the meantime, other forces stirred in the Nation. In 1964, the Civil Rights Act provided for equal opportunity in education regardless of race, color, religion, or national origin. Thus,

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Hugo Daily News, June 2, 1975.

¹¹⁰ Kirke Kickingbird, "The American Indian and the Land, 1974," Education Journal, Vol. 2, No. 7, pp. 4-16.

¹¹¹ Tyler, Indian Policy, pp. 230-32.

the 1960's were a period of intense examination of educational programs for American Indians. Increased educational effort on behalf of Indian youth by Indian leaders, parents, and dedicated educators was evident. A statement published by the National Education Association included a strongly worded section on American Indian Education, prefaced by the words: "An adequate and equal program in Indian education can no longer be postponed."¹¹²

In Oklahoma, Indian leaders and concerned educators had a vital role in these trends. Studies revealed the Indian in Oklahoma had ten times the unemployment rate of any other ethnic group, and the average Indian family income was less than \$2,000 per year, 50% below the poverty level. The Oklahoma Indian student had a 44% school dropout rate -- 10 to 15% higher than that of white children.¹¹³ Many conferences, seminars, committee meetings, and study groups met to examine these disturbing facts and to seek answers and solutions.

Within the school context, problems of the Indian student centered around such areas as: (1) Social expectations and academic achievement; (2) Self-concept and its effect upon learning; (3) Environmental conditions and academic success; (4) Language barrier.¹¹⁴

¹¹²"The Position Statements of the National Education Association on Some Important Human Relations and Human Rights, Issues and Problems," Manuscript, p. 3.

¹¹³Daily Oklahoman, September 15, 1971; "Great White Father," Oklahoman Observer, December 10, 1972; Interview with Overton James, Administrator of the Indian Education Division of the State Department of Education and Governor of the Chickasaw Nation, by writer, June 16, 1973, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

¹¹⁴"The Coordinating Committee for Oklahoma Indian Education," July 19-21, 1971, Conference at Arrowhead Lodge, on Lake Eufaula, Oklahoma.

On the part of teachers, problem areas were concerned with: (1) Lack of training of teachers and administrators in the background of Indians; (2) Lack of understanding of the special problems and needs of the Indian student; (3) Lack of understanding and commitment to human rights and human relations.¹¹⁵

Causes for the high dropout rate were also a matter of great concern. Bob Miller of the University of Oklahoma Southwestern Center for Human Relations suggested the following reasons for the Indian dropouts: (1) Failure of the classroom teacher to understand the Indian student; (2) Failure of the white community to accept the Indian students (and their families) as persons of equal value with equal abilities; (3) Poverty on the part of many students who do not have the money for extra-curricular activities of the school; for clothing, books, supplies, etc.; (4) Failure on the part of the Indian parents to see the value of education for their children.¹¹⁶ Overton James, Administrator of the Indian Education Division of the State Department of Education and Governor of the Chickasaw Nation, identified cultural differences and poverty as the two principal reasons for the high drop-out rate.¹¹⁷

In these investigations, problems peculiar to the Indians of Oklahoma emerged. One of these was the problem of identifying the

¹¹⁵ Boyce Timmons, at a meeting of the National Advisory Council on Indian Education, June 17-20, in Green Bay, Wisconsin, 1976, Daily Oklahoman, June 4, 1976.

¹¹⁶ Interview with Bob Miller by writer, University of Oklahoma, June 16, 1970.

¹¹⁷ Interview by writer with Overton James, June 16, 1973.

Indian. In Oklahoma, extensive racial intermarriage of whites and Indians had been achieved. Thus, the question of "Who is an Indian?" was not easily answered. Interestingly, the 1960 Bureau of the Census reported the Oklahoma Indian population as 64,689; in 1970, the Oklahoma Indian population was 97,731 -- surpassing Arizona, which has 95,812. Some observers attributed this increase to "a new pride in Indianness." However, that may be, with the accelerated interest in Indian education and the necessity of identifying Indians to comply with government programs, the question of Indian identification became increasingly relevant.¹¹⁸

In discussing this problem, Chief David Gardner, of the Choctaw Nation, stated that in recent years governing agencies attempted to establish a rule that an Indian would be identified as one with one-half blood quantum, but the Five Civilized Tribes objected so violently the decision was set aside. In 1977, the matter was still under Congressional consideration.¹¹⁹ Charles (Beaver) McIntyre, Choctaw, the Executive Director of the Choctaw National Housing Authority with headquarters in Hugo, pointed out that a survey in 1976 in Durant, Bryan County, Oklahoma, identified only 119 Indians; yet, at least 1500 persons had Indian blood and claimed to be Indians. McIntyre's answer to the question was, "If you look like an Indian, claim to be an Indian, can speak a little of the Indian language, or wear Indian

¹¹⁸

Boyce Timmons, Daily Oklahoman, June 4, 1976; Ivy Coffey and Allen W. Cromley, "The Red Man's Crisis," A series of articles appearing in Daily Oklahoman, September 12, 1966 through September 23, 1966, reprint, p. 2.; Tyler, Indian Policy, pp. 235-39.

¹¹⁹

Hello Choctaw, Vol. 2, No. 10, October 1, 1976, p. 8.

clothes -- then you are an Indian."¹²⁰

Another problem of special significance to the Indian Tribes of Oklahoma, particularly the Five Civilized Tribes, was that these tribes continually had to fight for eligibility for Federal programs. Most regulations written in Washington used the term "reservation Indians," forgetting or ignoring the fact that Indians in Oklahoma did not live on reservations. Thus, Oklahoma Indians did not receive many benefits because they did not comply with the category of "reservation Indians."¹²¹

The 1970's saw not only an interest in the educational problems of the Indian but a concerted effort to find answers to these problems. As a result, a variety of approaches and enrichment programs were instigated. Some of these innovations were short-lived, others showed continued or additional promise, while others needed to be activated or re-activated.¹²² Possibly, one of the most significant developments was that Indian parents had a vital role in shaping educational programs for Indian youth. In 1977, this parental

¹²⁰Interview with Charles McIntyre by writer, April 20, 1973, Hugo, Oklahoma.

¹²¹Interview with Bob Miller, University of Oklahoma, by writer, June 16, 1970; Daily Oklahoman, March 18, 1977.

¹²²Hildegard Thompson, ed., Education for Cross-Cultural Enrichment (U. S. Department of the Interior, 1964.) This book contains a large number of selected articles on Indian Education which discuss problems and suggest solutions. Today, many of the predicted trends are accepted as policies.

involvement was an accepted policy.¹²³

In Choctaw County, as it was for many years, the Indian population was smaller than that of surrounding counties. A survey of 1940, indicated a county population of 28,358 with 1,041 Indians or 3.7% of the population. By comparison, to the east, McCurtain County had a 5.5% Indian population; to the west, Bryan County, a 4.8% Indian population; and to the north, Pushmataha County had a 5.5% Indian population.¹²⁴ In the following years, Choctaw County showed a steady decline in population with a report of 15, 673 in 1960 and 15,141, in 1970, or 3.2% in the ten year period. A 1971 profile showed 56% of the population living in rural areas, a high unemployment rate, and a median family income less than one-half of that of the United States.¹²⁵

A survey conducted in the summer of 1975 was in response to requests from school districts wanting to know how many Indian students they had within given areas. A ten county area was included comprising the counties of the Choctaw Nation. McCurtain County had the largest number of Choctaws with 2,286; LeFlore County had 1,067; Bryan County, 1,067; and Choctaw County, 721. While only full bloods

¹²³Tyler, Indian Policy, pp. 231-32; "JOM Regulations Get Major Overhaul," Educational Journal, Vol. 2, No. 6 (1974), pp. 12-13; "Review of Havighurst Report," Journal of American Indian Education, Vol. 11, No. 8 (May, 1971), pp. 26-27; Bob Randquist, "A Summary of Promising Practices in Oklahoma Related to the Education of Indian Students," Manuscript, Conference, Arrowhead Lodge, July 19-21, 1970.

¹²⁴County Situation Profile, Choctaw County, Information from many sources, including U. S. Census Bureau, 1960 and 1970 (U. S. Government Publication, 1971), pp. 1-14.

¹²⁵"Report of Choctaw Nation Census Project in Southeastern Oklahoma," Hugo Daily News, October 14, 1975.

Table 11

Distribution of the Population of the
Six-County Area and Oklahoma by Race and Nativity, 1940^a

County	Native white	Number Foreign white	Negro	Indian	Total	Percent Indian
Atoka	17,063	25	1,001	613	18,702	3.3
Bryan	35,017	73	1,222	1,826	38,138	4.8
Choctaw	22,070	38	5,207	1,041	28,358	3.7
Coal	11,603	264	490	454	12,811	3.5
McCurtain	30,960	35	8,050	2,273	41,318	5.5
Pushmataha	17,906	27	470	1,063	19,466	5.5
Ok. State	2,083,869	20,359	168,849	63,125	2,336,434	2.7

^a 16th U. S. Census Bureau, 1940, Characteristics of Population, Table 22, in Social and Economic Survey of Six Counties in Southeastern Oklahoma: Atoka, Bryan, Choctaw, Coal, McCurtain, and Pushmataha Counties (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma, 1946), p. 107.

Table 12

Choctaw County Education Profile, 1975^a

1970-71	Total enrollments in all levels of primary and secondary education	4,073
	Number of school children representing percentage of population	26%
	Number of school children representing percentage of population in State	25%
	<u>Pupil-Teacher Ratio in the County</u>	<u>Pupil-Teacher Ratio in the State</u>
	17.4	
Students entering 10th grade in 1968-69	<u>County</u> 304	<u>Oklahoma</u> 49,002
Students graduating from high school in 1970-71	214	37,896
Percent	70%	77%
Students enrolled in college from:	291	98,125
Total high school graduates, 1967-68, 1968-69, 1969-70, 1970-71	848	144,643
Percent	34%	63%
In 1960	Population	15,637
1970		15,141
	Decline of 3.2%	
	(State of Oklahoma grew 10% Population of U. S., 13.4%)	
1975		15,300
1980 (Projection)		15,500
	(State projection increase of 9.4%; of Choctaw County, 2%)	

Table 12 (cont'd)

1970 -- 56% of County lived in rural areas.
(32% in State)

in Choctaw County --
15.8% lived on farms.
(7.8% in the state)

1970 -- Median Family Income

<u>County</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>All U. S.</u>
\$4,791	\$7,725	\$9,867

^aChoctaw County Profile, Choctaw County, Information from many sources, including U. S. Census Bureau, 1960-70 (U. S. Government Publication, 1971-75), pp. 1-14.

or half-bloods were identified, nevertheless the results served as an indication that Choctaw County had fewer Indians than some other counties in the Choctaw Nation.¹²⁶

In spite of a smaller Indian population, however, Choctaw County, and particularly Hugo, was recognized as a central location for Indian activity. By 1977, a number of important Choctaw centers were located in Hugo. Completed in about 1969-70, the Choctaw Cultural Center provided an adequate, and beautiful, facility for all kinds of Choctaw dinners, gatherings, and programs; a center for Choctaw crafts; and office space for tribal activities. In this building was located the Choctaw National Housing Authority with Charles McIntyre, Choctaw as Executive Director.¹²⁷

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Hugo Daily News, November 13, 1975; Daily Oklahoman, November 5, 1976.

On Sunday afternoon, June 1, 1975, a dedication was held in Hugo, for the Harry J. W. Belvin Indian Health Center. Considered one of the most modern Indian facilities in the Nation, the center was established as an out-patient operation which referred patients requiring hospital care to Talihina Indian Hospital or to private consultants. Walter White, President of the Choctaw County Chamber of Commerce, said: "The center will perform a great service to the area's Indian population and will bring hundreds of visitors to Hugo each year."¹²⁸

On August 23, 1975, Clark David Gardner, thirty-five years of age, of Muskogee and Durant, was elected Chief of the Choctaws in a run-off against Calvin Beames, Kingston. Chief Gardner is the grandson of Chief Jefferson Gardner who was Principal Chief of the Choctaws from 1894 to 1896. This was the second election in modern history, and Chief Gardner succeeded Chief Belvin who served the Choctaws for twenty-seven years.¹²⁹

Chief Gardner brought new vigor and enthusiasm to the Choctaws. He appointed a Tribal Advisory Council of the Choctaw Nation. Choctaw County Representatives included J. A. Campbell, Simon Belvin, and Lester Tims. Gardner also announced the Choctaw Nation was taking over many of the functions now handled by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. To assist in many of these matters, Hollis Roberts of Hugo, State Representative of Choctaw County, was appointed by

¹²⁸

Hugo Daily News, May 30, 1975; June 12, 1975.

¹²⁹

Hugo Daily News, August 25, 1975; August 27, 1975.

Table 13

Choctaw Nation Census Project, 1975^a

County	Number of Choctaws
Atoka County	612
Bryan County	1,067
Choctaw County	721
Coal County	499
Haskell County	284
Latimer County	598
LeFlore County	1,363
McCurtain County	2,286
Pittsburg County	982
Pushmataha County	606
Total	9,018

Tribes Identified

Tribe	Percentage
Choctaw	66.4
Cherokee	25
Chickasaw	4.5
Creek	1.4
Seminole	.3
Soux	.3
Pottawatomie	.2
Osage	.2
Apache	.2
Blackfoot	.1
Navajo	1.1
(40 Tribes in all)	

^a Choctaw Nation Census Project in Southeastern Oklahoma,
Hugo Daily News, October 14, 1975.

Chief Gardner as Administrative Officer of the Choctaw Tribe.¹³⁰

These varied events and trends -- whether national, state, or local -- whether economic, social, or educational -- all were reflected to some degree in Choctaw education in Choctaw County in 1977.

In an interview schedule recently completed in Choctaw County by a number of teachers, Choctaw parents, and Choctaw school children, the problem of identifying Indians was cited. Indian teachers had a wide range of blood quantum from 4/4 Choctaw to 1/32 with a mixture of Caucasian, Chickasaw, Cherokee, and Creek. Choctaw parents and children ranged from 4/4 Choctaw to 1/32 with a mixture of Caucasian, Chickasaw, Seminole, Shawnee, Kiowa, and Comanche. These teachers, parents, and young people all identified with the Indian culture.¹³¹

Benefits from government programs for Indians in Choctaw County also reflected the problem of Indian identification. For example, for many years the Oklahoma State Plan for Administration of the Johnson-O'Malley Funds required, among other things, that eligibility to be based on need and the possession of 1/4 or more degree of Indian blood on the part of at least 10% of the school population.¹³²

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Hugo Daily News, September 15, 1975; November 13, 1975; November 17, 1975; February 19, 1976.

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The Interview Schedule for Teachers in Choctaw County was filled out at a County Teachers Meeting in the Spring of 1975, conducted by the writer; and Choctaw Parents and Children, at a Mother's Day all-night Singing at the Choctaw Cultural Center in Hugo in the spring of 1975.

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Twenty-Second Report of Indian Education in Oklahoma (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma: State Department of Education, 1969), pp. 33-34.

Table 15

Summary of Interview-Schedules of Educators
in Choctaw County, 1975

Ethnic Background						
Position	Indian married to Indian	Indian married to White	White married to Indian	White married to White	Negro	Total
Superintendent	0	1	0	9	0	10
Prin., H. S.	0	1	2	5	0	8
Prin., Jr. H.	1	1	0	1	0	3
Prin., Elem.	0	1	1	2	3	7
Tchr., H. S.	2	3	2	26	0	33
Tchr., Jr. H.	0	0	0	9	0	9
Tchr., Elem.	5	6	5	37	0	53
Other	0	2	1	7	1	11
Total	8	15	11	96	4	134
Percentage	5.9	11.2	8.2	71.7	3	100

Tribes Represented:

Choctaw -- 21

Chickasaw -- 2

Cherokee -- 9

Shawnee -- 1

Creek -- 1

Since Choctaw County was one of the most economically deprived areas of Oklahoma, with a high unemployment rate, the need requirement was often evident. Thus, the problem of proving the necessary blood quantum eliminated many needy students who considered themselves Indians. Again, the students who did meet the blood degree were frequently so few in number when compared to the whole school population that the school did not qualify for the JOM Funds. However, in 1976, no longer was the 10% Indian enrollment of the total school enrollment required. Thus, while for many years the Hugo School System did not receive JOM Funds, with the removal of the percentage stipulation, in the school year 1976-77, Hugo used the JOM funds for the first time. Tutoring services were provided for needy Indian students in the 10th, 11th, and 12th grades who had the blood quantum. Under the JOM Funds, other worthy programs for these Indian students, about 100 in number, were in the offing.¹³³

Of those Indian parents and adults interviewed, 48% were employed; 39% were unemployed; and 13% were retired. The large majority of those employed held professional positions and jobs requiring some special training, thus emphasizing the rewards of education for the Indian in the world of work. In many answers given throughout the

¹³³ Choctaw County Profile, Choctaw County, pp. 1-14; Interview with Simon Parker, Superintendent of the Public Schools of Hugo, Oklahoma, by author, May 22, 1975, Hugo, Oklahoma; Education Programs in the Muskogee Area (Muskogee, Oklahoma: Bureau of Indian Affairs, United States Department of Interior, 1972), pp. 20-21; Interview with Pat Braudrick, Secretary to Superintendent of the Public Schools of Hugo, Oklahoma, April 14, 1977.

interviews, the role of the home environment and of parents in encouraging education was stressed. Although some few gave credit to relatives, friends, or teachers, by far the majority, whether Indian or non-Indian teachers, Choctaw parents, or Choctaw students, indicated the mother or the mother and father provided the greatest encouragement for educational achievement.¹³⁴

Problems with regard to the Indian student also emerged. Among the many areas identified by teachers were the following: lack of resource materials; lack of understanding the Indian culture; the language barrier; the Indian child not considered in the curriculum; no concern for cultural differences. Some teachers took the position that no special problems existed relating to the Indian student. However, one non-Indian teacher commented: "We do not encourage them to be proud of their heritage." Of the parents, 45% felt needs of their children were not being met; 41% felt needs were being met; the remainder were not sure. Parents made few comments, but several identified needs in such areas as health problems and the teaching of the Indian culture.¹³⁵

When asked about the causes of school failure, the young people gave such answers as: "They skipped class too much;" "Talked too much;" and, from an elementary child, "Their mother didn't help them." Parents commented: "Lack of understanding by the teacher;" "Needed more individual attention;" "Need more Indian Counselors;"

¹³⁴ Brief summary of answers to questions on Interview Schedules.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

"Need a better self-image;" "Not enough encouragement at home."

Teachers and administrators attributed school failure to such problems as: "Poor environment;" "Lack of encouragement from family;" "Poor language communication;" "Poor attendance;" "Lack of interest on the part of the teacher in Indian culture;" "Broken homes;" "Backwardness or shyness;" "Lazy;" "Lack of motivation and understanding;" "Lack of identity."¹³⁶

Many of these same ideas were repeated with regard to the greatest problem facing Indian education today. Superintendents and principals suggested: "Cultural conflict;" "Not enough parental involvement;" "Poor discipline at home;" "Lack of identity;" "Parents do not encourage children;" "Drop-outs." Teachers also indicated these problems as well as: "The language barrier;" "Poor reading ability;" "Poor self-concept;" "Teachers trying to push Indian students to meet standards which are irrelevant to them." Again, another non-Indian teacher said: "The greatest need is to obtain college graduates to take their places in teaching the Indian culture and promoting the welfare of their people."¹³⁷

In answer to the question regarding prejudice on the part of teachers, 75% of the Indian students replied they had felt no prejudice; 25% replied that they had. Remarks included: "Sometimes I feel like teachers do not like me because I am a full blood;" "Teachers hate Indians;" "One of my teachers talks about Indians all the time." This last remark was made by three different students, all

¹³⁶
Ibid.

¹³⁷
Ibid.

identifying the same school but not revealing the name of the teacher. Of the parents, 54% answered they knew of no prejudice against Indians in the public schools; 28% answered affirmatively to the question. Most of the latter group did not explain this answer. Some, however, made comments such as: "No attempt to understand the Indian," and "Not in school, but in the community." On the positive side, remarks included: "Yes, but the Indian isn't trying to get to know the people;" and "Not this year because my children protect their teachers when I question them." One parent replied: "Not in Hugo or Choctaw County, but in some other places."¹³⁸

Of the teachers and administrators, 59% replied they knew of no prejudice in the schools in which they taught; 23% stated that they did. Comments on both the positive and negative side were varied: "Yes, because they are not expected to achieve as high;" "Our area is an economically poor one. Some students and teachers resent Indian benefits;" "The minority groups of blacks and whites are in competition;" "Yes, the tendency to class all Indians as weak and shiftless; also, prejudice against Indian beliefs and culture;" "Some teachers are prejudiced because of lack of knowledge;" "No, most of the time here in Choctaw County you can't tell who is Indian and who is not Indian;" "Yes, in our school the teachers feel the Indian children are good in art, but otherwise forget it!"¹³⁹

As might be expected, of those teachers with Indian backgrounds, 64% felt they understood the Indian and his viewpoint, while

¹³⁸
Ibid.

¹³⁹
Ibid.

15% replied negatively, and 12% were not sure. On the other hand, of the non-Indian teachers, 35% felt they did not understand the Indian viewpoint; 32% replied in the affirmative; and 11% were undecided.¹⁴⁰

With regard to Indian militancy, 53% of the Indian teachers were opposed to such tactics, while 18% felt this was the only way the Indian could call attention to his needs. Of the non-Indian teachers, 57% were opposed to militancy, while only 12% expressed an understanding of such action. The majority of Choctaw parents also opposed such militant tactics, with 55% against and 20% in sympathy. Surprisingly, 86% of the young Indians were opposed to militancy, with only 12% in favor of such action.¹⁴¹

In describing their traits, Indian young people saw themselves as: (1) Shy; (2) Do not talk much; (3) Artistic; (4) Gregarious. Parents saw their children as; (1) Do not talk much; (2) Shy; (3) Sensitive; (4) Respectful. Indian teachers described Indian students as: (1) Shy; (2) Low voice; (3) Sensitive; (4) Non-competitive. Non-Indian teachers saw Indian students as: (1) Sensitive; (2) Shy; (3) Artistic; (4) Non-competitive. Of special interest is that all groups identified "shy" as a characteristic and that only the Indian students the the non-Indian teachers suggested the trait of "artistic." Also, both Indian and non-Indian teachers identified "non-competitive,," while with Choctaw parents and Choctaw children this characteristic was not even considered.¹⁴²

¹⁴⁰
Ibid.

¹⁴¹
Ibid.

¹⁴²
Ibid.

Information obtained from these interviews was by no means conclusive; the information served merely to suggest the many facets of Indian education reflected in Choctaw County in 1977. Furthermore, these opinions were not the total picture. A number of outstanding programs directly or indirectly related to Indian education were operating in the county and the surrounding area.

In the Hugo City Schools the Indian Education Project, Title IV, Part A, was implemented in the school year 1974-75. Title IV programs included Health Education, Art, and tutoring services for elementary students for about 59 Indian children. The project was under the combined supervision of the school and the Parent Committee. Chairman of the Parent Committee was Charles McIntyre; school coordinator, was Mrs. Margaret Webb, Federal Program Coordinator of the Hugo Schools, assisted by Mrs. Winnie Caldwell, Elementary Coordinator. The project also called for a parent counselor to work with parents and children involved. In 1977, Joe Self served in this capacity. Meetings of the Parent Committee were held regularly to hear reports and discuss the participation of the Indian children. This committee was composed of sixteen members -- all outstanding Indian leaders and young Indian parents concerned for the welfare of the Indian children.¹⁴³

Another important project in the Hugo Public Schools which gained wide recognition was the Reading Laboratory Program. Along with others, Indian students needing special help were directed into this reading program. In 1977, a Reading Laboratory operated in each

¹⁴³Ibid.

of the four grade schools and in the Junior High School. Each was fully equipped with a variety of reading machines as well as other special equipment and aids.¹⁴⁴

In addition to these, other projects of various kinds operated throughout Choctaw County. A number of individual teachers offered units of study and special assignments in Indian culture and history, especially that of the Choctaws. Buff Parker, part-Chickasaw and a long-time teacher and coach at Hugo High School, made regular use of the field trip to interesting historical sites in the county as a teaching aid.¹⁴⁵

Again, recent trends indicated a revival of interest in the Choctaw language. While not in Choctaw County, the Choctaw Bilingual Education Program in Broken Bow, McCurtain County, was most successful. Instruction was given in both English and Choctaw to almost 200 Indian students, with a study of the history and culture and the involvement of the parents as an integral part of the bilingual education.¹⁴⁶ A course in the Choctaw Language was offered at Southeastern State University at Durant, Oklahoma. A number of new editions of the old Choctaw books were re-published in Choctaw. In 1976, under

¹⁴⁴ Interview with Mrs. Margaret Webb, at that time Director of the Reading Laboratory Program, Hugo Public Schools, by writer, May 26, 1973, Hugo, Oklahoma.

¹⁴⁵ Interview with Buff Parker, Teacher of Social Studies, Hugo High School, by writer, August 26, 1973, Hugo, Oklahoma.

¹⁴⁶ Bilingual Education Project in Choctaw," Education Journal: Institute for the Development of Indian Law, Vol. II, No. 2, (September, 1973), pp. 12-13; "Bilingual Projects in Oklahoma," Oklahoma Foreign Language Newsletter, Vol. 6, No. 1 (January, 1971), pp. 7-9.

the auspices of the Indian Adult Education Agency of the Choctaw Nation, a course in an introduction to the Choctaw Language was offered in an evening class at the Choctaw Cultural Center in Hugo.¹⁴⁷

Many other courses for Choctaw adults were also being offered in Choctaw County. Indian adults were encouraged to take the practical courses offered at the Kiamichi Area Vo-Tech School located in Hugo. In addition, adult classes in basic education were offered whenever and wherever a group could be organized to meet regularly. Some of these classes met in private homes. Courses in Math, Reading, Social Studies, Science, and English were offered. Betty Spencer was the Area Director of Indian Adult Education; James Dry, Specialist in the Field of Adult Education, served as Counselor. Dry organized classes, distributed literature, and encouraged Choctaw adults to take advantage of these opportunities.¹⁴⁸

No study would be complete without recognizing a number of outstanding Indian leaders who had their educational roots in Choctaw County. Many have already been mentioned in this discussion. Chief Harry J. W. Blevin, of Durant, and his brother, Dr. Frank Belvin, of Okmulgee, both had their childhood roots in Choctaw County. Joe Anderson, Choctaw-Chickasaw, whose home was near Hugo, coached at Goodland Indian Orphanage, then was Area Director of the Veteran's Administration with offices in Muskogee. Dr. Aaron Dry, Choctaw, a product of Jones Academy and Goodland Indian Orphanage, was in the

¹⁴⁷ Interview with Betty Spencer, Area Director of Indian Adult Education Agency, April 14, 1977, Durant, Oklahoma.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

Area Indian Office in Anadarko, Oklahoma. Thomas (Jack) Ellison, Choctaw, born near Frogville, received his schooling at Ft. Towson before going to college. In 1974, he was honored at a banquet at the Hugo Cultural Center as he assumed the position of Area Director of Indian Affairs out of Muskogee. Charles (Beaver) McIntyre, Choctaw, was the Executive Director of the Choctaw Housing Authority with offices in Hugo. Both McIntyre and Hollis Roberts, Choctaw, State Representative of Choctaw County, were products of the Hugo Public School System.¹⁴⁹

Special mention should be made of the Superintendent of the Hugo Public Schools, Simon D. Parker, one-fourth Chickasaw. Superintendent Parker was recognized in October, 1975, for outstanding humanitarian work in the state at the third annual Oklahoma Education Association Human Relations Awards Banquet with Governor David L. Boren presenting the award. Superintendent Parker received the F. D. Moon Educational Humanitarian Award for his work "in advancing student and teacher rights and effective human relations in education."¹⁵⁰

Summary

When John D. Benedict, who had been appointed by the United States, took over the Choctaw schools, his scathing criticisms shocked and offended the Choctaws who were so proud of their system. Their desperate struggle to maintain control of Spencer Academy and the futility of these efforts served as an example of the trauma of

¹⁴⁹ Interview with Charles McIntyre, April 20, 1973; Indian Arrow, December 25, 1969; Hugo Daily News, December 24, 1974.

¹⁵⁰ Hugo Daily News, October 6, 1975.

these people as they realized their institutions were being stripped from them. Surviving the initial shock, for a time the Choctaws operated their schools concomitantly with the Federal System. At last, a compromise was reached when Eli Mitchell, Choctaw, was named by the Council as assistant to Benedict.

In spite of the castigation of the Choctaw neighborhood schools, nevertheless Benedict did not hesitate to use these schools in Choctaw County, and throughout the Nation, as the base upon which to build the new system. No provision had been made by Congress for the support of the white school population, and from the beginning many Indians were convinced their funds were being used illegally for the education of the white children. At any rate, in spite of a Federal appropriation and subscription schools which were sometimes established, as statehood approached, the white children, particularly in the rural areas, did not have adequate educational facilities.

Schools for the Freedmen were in an even more pathetic condition since these people were desperately poor and totally without resources, especially in the rural areas.

Town schools fared better. These were entirely independent of Benedict. In addition, towns were able to support subscription schools, and those of 1,000 or more were allowed to issue bonds to build school buildings. The schools in Hugo were organized in 1902, and by statehood were a well-organized system. As for the Choctaws, their schools no longer existed and their children were scarcely noticed, lost in a sea of white faces.

Goodland Indian Orphanage was the only Indian school in Choctaw County which survived the upheaval brought about by statehood.

Dedicated workers such as Rev. and Mrs. J. P. Gibbons, Mr. and Mrs. H. L. Gooding, and Rev. and Mrs. Silas Bacon kept the school operating. In 1900, when the Choctaws were negotiating for the establishment of small boarding schools, Goodland was given a contract and a small appropriation. Under contract with the Presbyterian Church, the Choctaws continued this fund until a final disposition of their coal and mineral rights was made, with the last appropriation received by the school from the Choctaws in about 1957.

In the meantime, such men as Samuel Bailey Spring (1921-1930), E. D. Miller (1930-1946), and Oscar Gardner (1946-1957) saw the school through both destitute and expanding times. As in the entire history of Goodland, they were assisted by a dedicated band of teachers and staunch supporters, many of these Choctaw leaders in Choctaw County. With the coming of Rev. H. Grady James (1957) and James Gabbie (1961), drastic changes took place at Goodland. Although to the Choctaws, Goodland would always be their school, in 1977, few Indian children were among those at Goodland Children's Home.

As for the Indian children and youth, records of these students were almost non-existent from statehood until 1977. The Mariam Report of 1928, and the Johnson O'Malley Act of 1933, raised questions concerning the education provided for Indian students. However, not until the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's and 1970's, did educators seriously consider the special needs of these children.

An informal interview-schedule completed by teachers, Choctaw parents, and Choctaw students indicated that the Choctaw County area reflected, in varying degrees, the problems and needs which Oklahoma educators, both Indian and non-Indian identified. However,

some definite, positive actions were initiated to help meet these needs. Under the revised requirements of the Johnson-O'Malley Act, plans were activated for a number of enrichment programs. In 1977, the Hugo School System had an excellent Reading Laboratory Program for children of all grades who needed this kind of special help. Under the combined supervision of the Hugo Public Schools and the Indian Parents Committee, special courses were offered Indian children in health and art as well as a tutoring service. A revival of interest in the Choctaw language was also in evidence. Throughout the county, many other such programs were in operation, and a number of teachers offered special units and assignments in Choctaw culture and history.

Under the Adult Indian Education Agency of the Choctaw Nation classes were sponsored in basic education courses. Adults were also urged to take courses at the Area Vo-Tech School, and an adult counselor encouraged participation in these adult education programs.

Many modern outstanding Indian leaders and educators had their educational roots in Choctaw County. Among these were Harry J. W. Belvin, Chief of the Choctaws for more than twenty years; Frank Belvin; Joe Anderson; Buff Parker; Aaron Dry; James Dry; Thomas (Jack) Ellison; and Charles (Beaver) McIntyre. Also, Simon D. Parker, Superintendent of the Hugo Public Schools, was recognized in 1975 for outstanding humanitarian work in education in the state of Oklahoma.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND ANALYSES

Education is a three-legged stool involving parents, teachers, and students.¹

Rev. Oscar Gardner

The Choctaws were the first of the Five Civilized Tribes to be removed from their old home east of the Mississippi to the section now known as Oklahoma. After suffering untold hardships, the first group reached the Kiamichi River area in Choctaw County in the early months of 1831. Led by Alexander Talley, a Methodist minister, this group was soon followed by a second party. Assisted by two Choctaw Christians, Moses Perry and William Winans Oakchiah, Talley ministered to the starving Choctaws as best he could and set up churches and Sabbath Schools near Doaksville.

Almost one-hundred and fifty years have passed since that first school -- a Sabbath School -- was conducted in Choctaw County. Yet, this unpretentious event marked the first sign of the comprehensive school system which was to develop in the Choctaw Nation. The

¹Rev. Oscar Gardner, Choctaw, in Walter Angelo Bennett, "Life and Letters of Oscar Gardner," Thesis for Master of Theology, 1961, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Austin, Texas, p. 131. Rev. Gardner was Superintendent of Goodland Indian Orphanage from 1946 to 1957.

establishment of this educational system was unprecedented in the annals of Indian history and this institution became a model for other Indian tribes in Oklahoma. The schools in the area known today as Choctaw County were an integral part of the Choctaw School System. Thus, as this study was made, a number of broad understandings emerged concerning the Choctaw schools.

First, the Choctaws designated the largest proportion of their funds for school purposes. The schools in Choctaw County received an equitable share of these apportionments.

Many years before removal, when the United States first began to treaty with the tribes over their lands, the Choctaws insisted that amounts be set aside, with interest from the investments being used for the education of their children. Other treaties, including the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek of 1830, contained sections related to educational benefits for Choctaw youth. These actions were a source of amazement to government agents. For a brief time after removal, the Choctaw gathered at Ft. Towson to receive their "per capita" checks. However, even before the School Act of 1842, the monies were once again being used by the Choctaw Council for tribal affairs and especially for the construction of the new school, Spencer Academy. From this time on, the largest apportionment of available funds was channeled into school expenses.

As the system expanded, the Choctaw Council felt the need for additional school funds. In 1853, a delegation headed by Peter P. Pitchlynn was appointed to go to Washington to settle with the Federal Government all removal inequities and non-fulfilled treaty obligations. Negotiations regarding this fund came to be called the

Net Proceeds. These proceedings dragged on for years with the matter not settled until plans for Oklahoma statehood were underway. Nevertheless, as far as this study is concerned, the importance of the entire Net Proceeds affair was due to the fact that, in the beginning, the Choctaws were concerned for funds with which to expand and operate their schools. Note should also be made of the fact that, although the church boards and missionaries supervised and taught in the schools, especially in the early period, the Choctaws themselves withstood by far the largest amount of the school expenses.

After the Civil War, the schools were re-established under the able leadership of Chief Allen Wright and Superintendent Forbis LeFlore. However, the Choctaws were in dire financial need for support of their educational institutions. Then, in the late 1870's, the opening of the coal mines and the coming of the railroads caused revenues to pour into the Choctaw coffer. Hence, the Choctaws channeled substantial amounts of money into their greatest source of pride -- their schools. Under the leadership of distinguished tribal chiefs and able administrators, the Choctaw School System rapidly developed, possibly becoming the most advanced school system in the West at that time.

Thus, from the beginning, the Choctaws designated a large portion of their funds for their schools, including the schools of Choctaw County. Of special interest is that, fifty years after they had lost their schools, the tribe made a final apportionment payment to their beloved Goodland Indian Orphanage in Choctaw County.

A second understanding which emerged was a knowledge of the large number of schools and the different kinds of schools which

were established in Choctaw County.

Although Alexander Talley, a Methodist, was the first missionary to reach the West; he was soon followed by other missionaries and their families, most of them Presbyterians, who traveled with the parties of Choctaws. Ebenezer and Philena Hotchkin opened a school at Clear Creek in 1833. Early in 1835, Rev. Joel Wood reached Doaksville where he established a church and opened a school at Pine Ridge in anticipation of the arrival of Rev. Cyrus Kingsbury. In the same year, Rev. and Mrs. Ramsey D. Potts, a Baptist and a Treaty Teacher, opened a school at Providence, a location not far from present-day Hugo, which later became the site of the beautiful plantation home of Robert M. Jones. In 1837, Potts organized the first Baptist church in the Choctaw Nation at this place.

In May of 1836, Cyrus Kingsbury and his wife and two small boys, reached Pine Ridge to take over the work begun by Wood. During these early years, J. E. Dwight, Pliny Fisk, and Allen Wright, all young Choctaw theological students, studied at Pine Ridge under Kingsbury. In addition, Mrs. Kingsbury conducted the day school, later taught by Harriet Arms.

In 1837, Ebenezer Hotchkin moved his school from Clear Creek to Goodwater. At the same time, Hotchkin became busily engaged in assisting Kingsbury in opening up preaching points and Sabbath Schools in the western part of the Kiamichi Area, most of these located within the boundaries of Choctaw County. The Sabbath Schools served as a means of adult education, teaching the Indians in their own language such subjects as reading, writing, spelling, and simple arithmetic. In 1839, Miss Tryphena Wall was appointed as a government teacher to

the day school at Mayhew -- the first young Choctaw woman who had been taught in the mission schools to be appointed to teach in the public schools of the Choctaw Nation.

These, along with other neighborhood schools of which there is little or no record, were the earliest schools in Choctaw County. These schools survived in spite of great difficulties. However, by 1840, the Choctaws had begun to recover from the trauma of removal. With recovery came a rebirth in the interest in education. This interest was stimulated by dissatisfaction with the Choctaw Academy located so far away in Kentucky.

In 1842, a Comprehensive School Act was passed by the Choctaw Council setting up boarding schools to be followed later by neighborhood schools. Even before this School Act became law, however, Spencer Academy, north of Fort Towson, was already in the process of being constructed and was formally opened on February 1, 1844. Chuahla Female Seminary, at Pine Ridge, under Cyrus Kingsbury, was opened March 1, 1844; and Koonsha Female Seminary, at Goodwater, under Ebenezer Hotchkin, was opened May 1, 1844. At each of these mission stations and schools, the superintendents and their wives were assisted by a dedicated group of missionary-teachers and workers. Also, as the years passed, more and more educated Choctaws became teachers, particularly in neighborhood schools.

Other changes were made as a result of the School Act of 1842. Providence was closed, and in 1844, Potts went to the Chickasaw Nation to become Superintendent of Armstrong Academy. Then, after the establishment of the boarding schools, neighborhood schools and Sabbath Schools sprang up in ever increasing numbers. In 1850, O. P.

Stark and his wife went to Good Land to take over the work begun two years earlier by Mr. and Mrs. John Lathrop. Thus began the school known as Goodland Indian Orphanage. In 1854, Ebenezer Hotchkin left Goodwater to open a small station at Living Land, while Hamilton Balentine, George Ainslie, and others continued the work at Goodwater.

Although generally the schools were closed during the Civil War years, Mrs. Jones kept the day school operating at Goodwater; Stark, at Goodland; and Hotchkin, at Living Land. Alexander Reid, at Spencer, and Cyrus Kingsbury, at Pine Ridge, stayed at their posts but apparently no schools existed at these two places during these tragic years. Following the war, most of the old missionaries had died or left the Nation, opening the way for the development of a more independent Choctaw School System.

After the Civil War, one of the first actions of the Council was to determine the condition, number, and state of the schools of the Nation. This time, the Choctaws established the neighborhood or day schools before the boarding schools. Chuahla at Pine Ridge, and Koonsha at Goodwater, were not reactivated as boarding schools, but Spencer Academy was reopened and moved to a new location north of Soper, Choctaw County. For a time, Spencer continued under the auspices of a missionary board. However, the Choctaws assumed complete responsibility for the reconstitution of their school system. This culminated in the establishment of a system of neighborhood schools which formed the base of the public school system of Choctaw County at the time of statehood, and even today.

The Choctaw school laws and the organization of the Choctaw schools which resulted in the development of a modern, comprehensive

school system suggested a third important consideration.

In 1842, the School Act passed by Choctaw Council established the boarding schools and the neighborhood schools, the system to be governed by a Board of Trustees. Peter P. Pitchlynn was the architect of the school plan which provided for an equal number of boarding schools for boys and girls and also arranged for an equal number of each sex to attend colleges and schools of higher learning in the States. This concept itself was an innovation in a day when the tenor of the times did not consider advanced education as important for young women as for young men. Although several years passed before any students were advanced enough to take advantage of this opportunity, nevertheless for more than fifty years, many Choctaw young people earned college degrees in the North and received various kinds of special training.

The office of Superintendent of Schools was not established until 1853. Peter P. Pitchlynn was officially the first school superintendent, but Robert M. Jones actually served first in this capacity since Pitchlynn was absent in Washington most of the time on affairs of the Choctaw Nation. However, in the preceding years, and those that followed, the largest proportion of the time of the Choctaw Council was taken up with school reports, discussion of educational problems, and passing of schools laws. In the meantime, the duties of the Trustees had increased considerably. This distinguished body supervised closely both the boarding schools and the neighborhood schools, required reports, and attended the annual examinations held at the end of the spring session in each school.

After the Civil War, when the mineral revenues fattened the treasury of the Choctaw Nation, the Choctaws greatly expanded the schools, especially the neighborhood schools. In 1884, a compulsory attendance law was enacted for children between the ages of 7 and 18 years. This was the third such law passed in what is known today as the United States -- the first being passed in Rhode Island in 1840, and the second in Massachusetts in 1852. In 1887, this Choctaw law was modified to impose a ten cents a day fine for failure of parents to send a child to school, unless unusual circumstances prevented. In 1885, schools for the Freedmen were established. However, the crowning accomplishment with regard to the Choctaw School laws was the School Act of 1890.

Although in many ways a re-statement of the policies which had long been in force, the Act of 1890 is a detailed, comprehensive document giving the operational functions of the entire educational system and worthy of any people or of any nation or state. An official Board of Education was designated to supervise and control the schools and related endeavors. The Board was composed of the Principal Chief as an ex-officio member, the Superintendent of Schools, and three District Trustees. Meeting at the Capitol while the Council was in session, the Board adopted modern methods of administration and submitted their accounts and reports.

Under this School Act, the boarding schools, neighborhood schools, and schools for the Freedmen were expanded, and additional rules and regulations were made with regard to these schools as well as with regard to the students attending colleges in the States. Text-books were approved and furnished, curriculum planned and supervised,

and books and other teaching aids were provided both for teachers and students. Standard printed forms were required and used for monthly reports, teachers' institutes and normals were held, a professional magazine was published, and certification requirements for teachers were outlined with examinations becoming much more strict. In addition, the Act of 1890 provided increased benefits for the orphaned, the blind, and the deaf; and detailed sections outlined the duties and responsibilities of superintendents and local trustees.

This, then, was the school code under which the Choctaw Educational System was operating when the Choctaws abruptly lost control of their schools in the spring of 1899.

A fourth understanding which emerged from a study of the Choctaw Schools in Choctaw County was the many and varied problems which were faced by these schools.

The problems which confronted the first schools were almost insurmountable. Emigrants suffered from the bitterness and heartache of being forced to leave the homes they loved, many of them blaming the missionaries as having had a part in this tragic event. Once they reached the new land, both emigrants and missionaries suffered from hunger, disease, crop failures, floods, and the want of practical tools and utensils -- in short, for the first few years they all struggled to stay alive. As for the missionaries, as they sought to open the schools, they reported poor attendance, the want of buildings, and most of all the apathy of the people.

By the close of the first decade, however, once more the pride of the Choctaws in their schools was aroused. Thus, in the period immediately preceding the Civil War, the problems faced by the

schools were of a more sophisticated nature. One problem area centered around curriculum, including methodology. At this period in their history, the Choctaws wanted their children taught the more practical subjects, along with the rudiments of education. The girls were taught to cook, sew, and perform household tasks, while the boys worked at mechanical and agricultural pursuits. Since one purpose of the boarding schools, however, was to prepare students to enter colleges in the States, McKinney and Ramsey, at Spencer, and Hotchkiss, at Goodwater, aspired to teach the more advanced and classical subjects. Most of the Choctaws resented this approach and serious problems resulted. Interestingly, the Choctaws enjoyed singing and they seemed to approve of singing as being a part of the curriculum.

The language problem was a barrier faced by both teachers and pupils. Few teachers learned to speak Choctaw, most of them convinced the Choctaw student must learn English if he were to receive an education. The struggle to teach English to the Choctaw children, therefore, was a continual problem. The mixed-blood child had an advantage because he heard English spoken at home as well as Choctaw, but the full blood had a most difficult time. Most teachers recognized these problems and felt the great need for some new methodology for the teaching of the English language.

Some disagreement existed in this area, however, even among the missionary-teachers. The Sabbath Schools were taught almost entirely in the vernacular and teachers in the neighborhood schools believed the Choctaw language could be a useful tool in the teaching of English. Therefore, subjects in the neighborhood schools were taught both in Choctaw and English.

Financial and personnel problems were also of constant concern during these years. Missionary-teachers were difficult to find and to replace. Many of these teachers, or members of their families, suffered from sickness, loneliness, difficulties and hardships of the pioneer life, and the never-ending responsibilities. Many died and were buried far away from their homes in the North. Administrative problems of the boarding schools were complex and burdensome. An effective superintendent was required to be an agricultural-home economist and a building engineer, as well as an educator and a minister. He also had to possess some knowledge of medicine, to carry on the work of the temperance meetings, the churches, and the Sabbath Schools as well as the mission school; and superintendents, along with the missionary-teachers, had little time to themselves.

In spite of the many problems, however, the Choctaw schools flourished. They were overcome at last by the issue of slavery. As war became a reality, most of the schools were closed and most of the missionaries left the Choctaw Nation forever.

After the war, once again the Choctaws were faced with all the problems of reconstituting their school system. However, as has already been suggested, once funds became available, the schools developed rapidly.

Two of the more persistent problems of this period related to the old problems of curriculum. One of these was the former debate over the teaching of practical subjects as opposed to classical subjects. By this time, the Choctaws had come to realize that, if they were to compete in the civilized world of the white man, they

must become a college educated people. They argued they could teach the practical subjects to their children at home; therefore, the Choctaws wanted increasing emphasis placed upon college preparatory subjects. In the meantime, in the United States the movement to emphasize pragmatic subjects in the school system had begun. Thus, whenever and wherever teachers gathered the debate over the two opposing viewpoints raged.

Another problem centered around the teaching of English. By this time, a new methodology had developed which was not unlike that used today in Modern Language Laboratories. On the other hand, many teachers, especially in the neighborhood schools and the Sabbath Schools, believed the Choctaw Language could be used as a useful tool to that Choctaw students, whether child or adult, who was struggling to learn English. The old-time missionary John Edwards, took this latter view, and to his last day at the turn of the century, he continued his work of translating the English into the Choctaw language.

While many problems persisted during this period, by 1890 the Choctaw School System had many of the characteristics of a modern school system. Then, once again, the Choctaw Schools were closed -- this time forever. Although the Choctaws fought to the last to hold onto their schools, in the end they were innundated by the sheer numbers of the white people who flooded the Nation. Thus, only in recent years have educators and teachers become aware of the Choctaw Indian child in Choctaw County and of his special needs.

Although others could be mentioned, this brief summary has suggested four broad educational understandings which emerged from a

study of the Choctaw Schools in Choctaw County. In addition, a broad, general understanding of the Choctaws as a people and of their culture emerged.

Reviewing the historical past, one became sharply aware of the many admirable qualities of these people who carved out their institutions -- including their school system -- in a remote, untamed wilderness and under such trying conditions. Many attributes came to mind -- fortitude, courage, perseverance, persistence, determination. Perhaps, all of these could be summed up in one word -- strength. The Choctaws were -- and are -- a strong people else they could not have survived as they are surviving today.

When the Choctaw Indians reached Oklahoma, and Choctaw County, they were not living in teepees, shooting bows and arrows, using wampum for money, nor engaging in beadwork as a pastime. Instead, they had already lived among white man for three hundred years; they had been exposed to the Christian influence; they had schools established within the tribes and they had written a rudimentary code of laws. While the majority of the tribe were of limited financial means, yet they dressed as the white men around them who were in comparable circumstances. True, the old-time Choctaws may have been superstitious, uneducated, and may have clung to the old ways; yet, a large number of the Choctaw leaders were men of foresight, of affluence, and were well-educated for that day.

During the first years in the new land, the Choctaws struggled to survive as any frontier people would have done under the same circumstances. Once the shock of removal had subsided, however, with unusual fortitude they accepted the reality of the situation and

resolutely set about restoring their shattered institutions. This same strength and courage was exemplified in the dark days following the Civil War.

Strangely, after statehood -- at least, as far as reports were concerned -- the Choctaws ceased to exist. This time, not only were they covered up by white people but by other Indians as well. For seventy-five years, for the most part, reports lumped all Indians together as if they and their problems were the same. On occasions, Indian reports gave information on the Five Civilized Tribes in Oklahoma -- again, reporting as if the tribes were all the same. Almost never did these reports separate the Choctaws apart from other tribes, much less the Choctaws of Choctaw County.

Yet, to the Choctaws, they were not Cherokees, not Chickasaws, not Creeks, and certainly not Plains Indians. Possibly, at this last point, the Choctaws had to contend with the greatest amount of stereotyping. To most white people, and even to many Indians themselves, an Indian was not an Indian -- that is, not a real Indian -- unless he was bedecked in a large, feather headdress, feathered pompoms, war paint, and a variety of beads. Even the Indian Arrow, a publication of Goodland Indian Orphanage whose first issue was printed many years ago, was a misnomer. When this school was founded, several hundreds of years had passed since the Choctaws had used bows and arrows.

Thus, for decades, the Choctaws as a distinct people, seemed to disappear from sight. Then, suddenly, in recent times they reappeared. Only, ironically, the Choctaws have been here all the

time -- still surviving, still characterized by fortitude, by a deep abiding courage, by the ability to endure.

In addition to their great strength, the Choctaws were a sensitive people. Even before the Civil War, the Choctaws considered themselves a civilized nation, thus an honorable people and a people who responded to the amenities of civilization. Of special interest, was that in the Interview-Schedules, teachers, both Indian and non-Indian, and parents, all saw the Indian young people as "sensitive." Moreover, Indian parents characterized their young people as "respectful."

In this study, historically this sensitivity was reflected in many ways. Their council meetings, school examinations, and other gatherings were opened and closed with prayer. Their National Councils were conducted with the greatest solemnity and decorum. Even though the actions of some individuals within the tribe might negate the assertion, the Choctaws considered themselves to be a people who kept their word. Thus, they were shocked when the white man failed to honor their treaties and the sworn patent assuring them the land would be theirs forever.

Perhaps the most dramatic evidence of the sensitivity of the Choctaws was the deep pride they felt for their schools. They were hurt and stunned when Benedict degraded this most beloved of all their institutions. As has been previously suggested, no wonder the Choctaws have a deep bitterness as a part of their race heritage.

Besides the sensitivity of the Choctaws, the educational level of these people was most impressive. In many of the school reports throughout the years, teachers commented that these children

learned as easily as students they had taught in the States. The large number of college graduates among them -- especially in a day when college graduates were the exception and not the rule -- spoke for itself.

The educational level of the Choctaws was evidenced in many other ways as well. A comparison of the correspondence of the period indicated how far better educated the Choctaws were than their neighbors. Furthermore, any number of their national documents -- the inaugural speeches of the chiefs, the addresses given at school exercises, resolutions and statements sent to Congress in Washington, the composition of their laws -- many of these were masterpieces of rhetoric and thought, worthy to be revered and preserved among the great state papers of a Nation.

Again, the Choctaws had been noted throughout their history as shrewd diplomats and politicians, and in the areas of law and education they excelled. Many of their young men became lawyers and attorneys, as well as doctors, ministers, and teachers. Even in 1977, their leaders are to be found in the professional fields -- as Senators and Representatives, as teachers and educational administrators, as social workers and medical doctors. Whatever their profession might be, however, the Choctaws enjoyed the political arena. Even today, the common man actively participates in local, state, and national politics. Rarely is a Choctaw gathering of any kind held without giving an opportunity for political announcements, especially if politics is the general topic of the particular time.

Many other understandings of the Choctaws as a people emerged as a result of this study. The importance of the parents in encouraging

their children and seeing that they attended school was stressed over and over again in the school reports of the past. This same importance was stressed in many different ways in the Interview-Schedules completed in 1975.

Again, the Choctaws enjoyed their feasts and social gatherings. They especially enjoyed singings, and among their number, in 1977, were several groups of young people with their electronic guitars, mikes, and other such instruments and complicated equipment. Of special interest was that few, if any, artists were among the Choctaws. On the Interview-Schedules, no parent indicated "artistic" as a characteristic of their young people, neither did the Indian teachers check this as a characteristic. On the other hand, the non-Indian teachers and the Indian young people both indicated "artistic" as a characteristic.² One wonders if this was not a case of stereotyping and of a self-fulfilling prophecy -- that is, the non-Indian teacher believed that all Indians were artistic and the Indian child himself sought to fulfill the expectancy of the teacher.

Thus, the Choctaw Indians in Choctaw County emerged as a distinct people with historical roots and individual needs distinctly their own. With these understandings as a broad background, possible solutions to help meet the needs of the Indian child in the public schools today suggest themselves.

The history of the Choctaws should be taught both to the Indian and the non-Indian child, to Indian adults and parents, and to

²Interview-Schedules completed by Parents, Teachers, and Choctaw students, spring, 1975.

teachers. Such experiences would serve to enhance the self-image of the Indian youth, to make him proud of his heritage, as well as to increase his understanding of the past and his pride in his people. For the non-Indian child, such experiences would make the history, which is all around him, come alive and be meaningful and would increase his respect for the minority group in his midst.

As for the Indian adults, many said at various interviews: "We do not know these interesting things you are telling us. We have not been taught. We would like to know."³ Teachers also admitted their ignorance of the historical past and the Indian culture and their desire to know more.

Many possibilities for ways to teach this historical past come to mind. Activities which could be utilized include the following: seminars, week-end conclaves, historical tours, evening classes, short courses, units of study, special reports, and round table-discussions.

Again, the entire broad area of the language barrier and communication continues to be a problem in teaching the Indian child. Could not the Choctaw language be used as a teaching tool? Why should the Indian child not be encouraged to speak both English and Choctaw? Why should the Indian child be made to feel inadequate and inferior as he struggles to master the English language? As all teachers of English know, even children who have the English language as their heritage -- even most of these do not master English. Furthermore, many nationalities in America speak fluently another language besides English.

³Ibid.

Perhaps, a new approach and a fresh attitude on the part of teachers as they work with the Choctaw children might make a great difference in helping meet the needs of these young people. As Governor James, Director of Indian Education in Oklahoma, stated: "The Indian child does not have to give up his culture; many people in American live in two cultures, choosing the best from both worlds."⁴

Again, Indian parents need to be involved, as in the past, in the education of their children. The pride in their schools which the Choctaws felt so deeply should be revived, respected, and utilized in the public school system of today. Local administrators and teachers hold the key in meeting this need. Frequent consultations with parents regarding the progress of their children; giving Indian parents places of responsibility in school decisions; even visits to the homes of the children -- these are merely a few ways in which Indian parents may feel they are a part of the public school institution.

Counselors and teachers alike should seek to inspire the individual child and to help him meet his own individual needs and develop his own individual potentialities. As with all races, no two Indian students are exactly alike: each has his own personality and his own deep-felt emotional problems. Yet, differences between Indians and other races do exist.

Based on this historical study and the results of the Interview-Schedules, the self-concept of the full blood child seems

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Interview with Overton James, Director of the Indian Education Division of the State Department of Education in Oklahoma and Governor of the Chickasaw Nation, June 16, 1970, State Capitol, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

to be more inadequate than that of the mixed blood. The full blood has more serious communication problems; he feels teachers are more prejudiced against him. Also, in the Choctaw County area, the Indian child, whether full blood or mixed blood, more likely than not, has a background of poverty. Those who work with these children and youth should be sensitive to these covert needs.

As these Indian children develop an increasing pride in their heritage, they should be inspired to accept their responsibility of living as Americans, but to preserve and continue the noble background which is theirs alone. All of this requires trained, professional teachers who themselves know the Choctaw history and perhaps the Choctaw language. Social workers and counselors are needed to work with maladjusted Indian children; competent teachers are required in the field of adult education. Furthermore, Choctaw lawyers, politicians, doctors, and ministers must be educated and trained. This means a host of Indian youth must be encouraged to seek college educations and other special training if the Choctaw tradition is to be preserved and held sacrosanct.

If these goals are to be accomplished, then history books need to be written; books related to the teaching of the Choctaw language must be revised, republished and produced; and professional books of many kinds must be available to assist in the training of these special workers in these special fields. Furthermore, much objective, scientific research needs to be done in a field which is so barren of reliable data.

Many of these suggestions are already beginning to develop in Choctaw County, or nearby areas, today. Indian parents are becoming

more involved; adult education classes are being held in increasing numbers; a bilingual project is being successfully conducted in McCurtain County; counselors and tutors are being employed in ever-increasing numbers to work with the Choctaw youth and adults; and a growing interest in the historical and cultural background of the Choctaws is evident.

Many other events are taking place in Choctaw County and throughout the Choctaw Nation. In recent developments, the Choctaws have a possibility of receiving a sizable amount of money from mineral rights in the Arkansas River bottom. With the practice of electing a Chief restored, under dynamic young Chief Gardner, the Choctaw Council has been reactivated and is in the process of promoting the welfare of the Choctaw people and preserving their historical past. In the area of education, many activities and curriculum projects are now underway in Oklahoma, designed to produce instructional aids and materials to assist teachers as they plan to include in the school curriculum appropriate elements of Indian culture and history. Active in these efforts are the Consultative Center for Equal Educational Opportunity and The Southwest Center for Human Relations, both Curriculum Division of the State Department of Education.

As of now, no one knows what the future holds for the Choctaws and for Choctaw education in Choctaw County. Doubtless, other studies will reveal the results of the events which today are only neoteric developments. However, an aura of excitement pervades the Choctaw Nation and is felt among the Choctaw people. Once more, the pride of the Choctaws is emerging to help form a new age.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE -- INDIAN STUDENTS

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE -- INDIAN STUDENTS

1. What kind of school do you attend? Elementary____ Junior High____
High School____ Vocational School ____ College or University____
Indian School____
2. Are you an Indian? Yes____ No____
What degree? _____ What tribe or tribes? _____
3. Who encourages you most to go to school? Mother____ Father____
Brother____ Sister____ Friend____ Teacher____ Somebody Else____
4. Why do you think you or your friends failed in school?

5. Have you ever felt a teacher did not like you because you were
an Indian? Yes____ No____
6. Do you think Indians should fight for their rights in the same
way they did at Wounded Knee? Yes____ No____
7. Do you understand the way the Indian thinks?

8. Check three of the following you feel describe Indian young people.

Lowering head to show respect	_____	Calm	_____
Superstitious	_____	Humble	_____
Shy	_____	Respectful	_____
Artistic	_____	Sensitive	_____
Loyal	_____	Non-competitive	_____
Gregarious (stay together)	_____	Does not talk much	_____
Curious	_____	Low, soft voice	_____
Truthful	_____	Honorable	_____

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE -- PARENTS AND ADULTS

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE -- PARENTS AND ADULTS

1. Are you an Indian? Yes ____ No ____
What degree? ____
Are you married to an Indian? Yes ____ No ____
What degree? ____
What tribe or tribes? ____
2. Are you retired? ____ Unemployed? ____
Employed ____
If you are employed, what is your work? ____
3. Did you attend an Indian school? Yes ____ No ____
Name of school ____
4. Who encouraged you most to attend school? Mother ____
Father ____ Brother ____ Sister ____ Friend ____ Teacher ____
Somebody else ____
5. Do you think the public school today meets the needs of the
Indian student? ____
6. Why do you think Indian children fail in school?

7. What do you think is the greatest problem in Indian education
today?

8. Did you ever feel a teacher was prejudiced against you because
you were an Indian? _____

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE -- PARENTS AND ADULTS (cont'd)

9. In the public school today, do you know of any prejudice against Indians? Yes____ No____
10. Do you think Indians should fight for their rights in the same way they did at Wounded Knee? Yes____ No____
11. Do you understand the way the Indian thinks? Yes____ No____
12. Check three of the following you feel describe Indian young people.

Lowering head to show respect	_____	Calm	_____
Superstitious	_____	Humble	_____
Shy	_____	Respectful	_____
Artistic	_____	Sensitive	_____
Gregarious (stay together)	_____	Non-competitive	_____
Curious	_____	Does not talk much	_____
Truthful	_____	Low, soft voice	_____
Loyal	_____	Honorable	_____

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE -- TEACHERS IN CHOCTAW COUNTY

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE -- EDUCATORS IN CHOCTAW COUNTY

1. (a) Are you an Indian? Yes ____ No ____

If so, what tribe or tribes? _____

What degree? _____

- (b) Are you married to an Indian? Yes ____ No ____

If so, what tribe or tribes? _____

What degree? _____

- (c) If you are not an Indian, what race are you? _____

2. Check one of the following: Are you?

Superintendent ____

Principal of High School ____

Principal of Junior High or Middle School ____

Principal of Elementary School ____

Teacher in High School ____

Teacher in Junior High or Middle School ____

Teacher in Elementary School ____

Other position? ____ If so, what? _____

3. Did you attend an Indian school? Yes ____ No ____

Name of school _____

4. Who encouraged you most to attend school? Mother ____ Father ____

Brother ____ Sister ____ Friend ____ Teacher ____ Somebody else ____

5. Do you think the public school today meets the need of the Indian student? _____

6. Why do you think Indian children fail in school?

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE -- EDUCATORS IN CHOCTAW COUNTY (cont'd)

7. What do you think is the greatest problem in Indian education today?
- _____
- _____
8. Did you ever feel a teacher was prejudiced against you because you were of another race?
- _____
9. In the public school today do you know of any prejudice against Indians? Yes _____ No _____
10. Do you think Indians should fight for their rights in the same way they did at Wounded Knee? Yes _____ No _____
11. Do you understand the way the Indian thinks? Yes _____ No _____
12. Check three of the following you feel describe Indian young people.
- | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------|--------------------|-------|
| Lowering head to show respect | _____ | Calm | _____ |
| Superstitious | _____ | Humble | _____ |
| Shy | _____ | Respectful | _____ |
| Artistic | _____ | Sensitive | _____ |
| Loyal | _____ | Non-competitive | _____ |
| Gregarious (stay together) | _____ | Does not talk much | _____ |
| Curious | _____ | Low, soft voice | _____ |
| Truthful | _____ | Honorable | _____ |